

COMPARING THEORIES OF THE POLICY PROCESS AND
STATE TUITION POLICY: CRITICAL THEORY, INSTITUTIONAL RATIONAL
CHOICE, AND ADVOCACY COALITIONS.

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

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STATE TUITION POLICY: CRITICAL THEORY, INSTITUTIONAL RATIONAL
CHOICE, AND ADVOCACY COALITIONS.

presented by Tara R. Warne,

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and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Chapter One: Comparing Theories of the Policy Process

Introduction

Harold Lasswell (1951) inspired early generations of policy researchers with a vision of a unified theory of policy choice emerging from interdisciplinary research on public policy. While his vision remains unfulfilled, indeed the possibility of such grand theories seems unlikely; scholars in the policy subfield have developed a rich diversity of approaches to understanding the entirety of the policymaking process. This dissertation brings four of those theories into conversation with each other in order to understand state level tuition policy choice. Lasswell thought that triangulation or comparative theory work would lead teleologically to the merging of different theories into one. I contend that the strength of triangulation lies in the increased depth of understanding added by using multiple theories in concert. The act of triangulation itself yields new insights into policymaking by playing to different theories explanatory strengths and in the questions raised by the tensions among them.

This chapter has four main objectives. I first outline the research questions addressed in this dissertation. Second, I trace an ongoing debate within the policy sciences about the epistemological and ontological foundations of theories explaining policy processes. Although abstract, this discussion is important for understanding the differing aspirations of theoretical and scientific explanations of policy processes. This section also describes the benefits of comparing disparate theories. The third section outlines the four theories deployed in this

study: the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert (DSH) framework; Ostrom's (1990, 1999) Institutional Rational Choice (IRC); Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's (1993) Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF); and Habermas' 1975 and Fairclough's (2003) Critical Theory. Each theory is described in terms of its structure, major hypotheses, key assumptions, major findings, and policy arenas. The third section concludes by outlining some hypotheses regarding the outcome of the comparative policy analysis using the three theories indicated above. This section essentially answers the question, "What do we get out of doing comparative policy analysis?" Finally, I sketch out the remaining chapters.

Research Questions

The questions motivating this dissertation take place on two levels. The primary level is theoretical, while the second is empirical. Specifically, I compare four theories of the policy process: DSH, IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory in their ability to explain states' decisions to centralize or decentralize tuition policy between 2000 and 2006. By comparing theories within the same policy arena, in this instance a narrowly defined aspect of higher education finance policy, I answer a series of questions.

- What does comparing theories tell us about the nature of the policy process?
- How does comparative analysis explain policy outcomes?
- How does it contribute to theory building both for individual theories and at a meta-theoretical level?

- Is the benefit derived from comparative analysis the result of new insights generated or by the act of triangulating differing lenses?
- Does using comparative analysis help scholars make connections between macro and micro level policy dynamics?

Reviewing the Comparative Theory Literature

The debate about the role of theory in policy studies goes back to the field's early years in the work of Harold Lasswell and Charles Merriam. Through his involvement with the National Resources Planning Board during the Depression and WWII, Merriam, Lasswell's mentor, developed a strong belief that science could aid democratic decision-making (Garson, 1986). Policy sciences drawing on sophisticated empirical studies could, in Merriam's view, assist leaders with national planning. Science would underpin a new consensus among differing cultural and capitalist value systems. Lasswell also believed that progressive planning and science could serve democracy, advancing a vision from which several scholars discussed below draw inspiration. In particular, Lasswell was concerned about the increasing disciplinary fragmentation he witnessed in the social sciences. In his view, policy sciences would bring scholars from different fields together in search for a unifying theory of human choice (Lerner & Lasswell, 1951). Lasswell emphasized the application of sophisticated statistical methods to the study of policy problems; believing a general theory of choice would emerge from the collective work of social scientists from different fields.

According to Garson (1986), however, Lasswell's vision embodied a tension over the role of theory in policy analysis that split policy sciences from political science. My reading of the literature reveals three distinct phases of this debate running from the synoptic/anti-synoptic debates of the 1950s and 1960s, through the positivism/post-positivism debates of the 1970s and 1980s, to what appears to be the rise to prominence of theory-builders in the 1990s and early 2000s. While the ensuing discussion of these phases is necessarily brief¹, I provide an overview in order to make the case that conducting analyses comparing theories is both interesting and important to the field of policy studies. The brevity of the discussion leaves out a great deal of nuance and context. A more sophisticated treatment of these debates throughout the history of the field, however, is beyond the scope of this study².

Synoptic versus Anti-Synoptic Approaches

Charles Lindblom (1965) coined the terms synoptic and anti-synoptic to characterize the debate over the role of theory in the policy sciences in the 1950s and 1960s. The synoptic tradition emphasized the empirico-analytic approach to studying policy, advocated statistical precision, and with the goal being systemic theory, à la Easton's system theory. More importantly, the synoptic tradition held

¹ A number of edited volumes published in late 1980s and early 1990s staged debates about the role of normative theory in policy analysis. Some authors contended that normative theory is essential for good policy analysis, while others insisted its use was pernicious. Still others argued that normative theory should remain above the concerns of empirical policy analysis. I leave much of this territory uncovered in the interests of keeping the discussion focused.

² There are two key shortcomings of my discussion of what might be termed "phases of debate" in the policy sciences. The claim that theory-builders have risen to prominence may be overstated or misleading. First, this assertion may over-estimate the importance of de Haven-Smith and Hawkesworth's interventions into the debate over the role of theory. Second, it may equally over-state the impact of Sabatier and Schlager's efforts to promote theory building in policy studies in that much policy analysis is still done in what many have termed the "handmaiden of government" mode. While these issues would make for an interesting dissertation in their own right, I've chosen to limit the scope of this study to the question of the value of comparing existing theories in one policy arena.

that its goal was in the service of government decision-making. Studies in this vein became dominated by cost/benefit analyses and emphasized the values of efficiency and effectiveness (Garson, 1986). The anti-synoptic view, characterized by pluralism, dominated academic political science. Those working in the anti-synoptic tradition, such as Lindblom and Simon, questioned the comprehensive rational model of cognition underlying the synoptic approach. Incrementalism, they argued tended to trump rationality in policy making. As de Leon (1997) notes, the anti-synoptics decried what they took to be the atheoretical approach of most policy analysts. The execution of cost/benefit analyses and the application of a narrowly defined set of efficiency criteria were no substitute for theories explaining how policy makers formulated policy problems, ascertained possible solutions, and implemented programs.

Positivism versus Post-Positivism

The debate about the role of theory shifted significantly in the 1970s and 1980s from a concern about whether theory was important at all and what kind of theory was important to a concern about the epistemological foundations of theory in the policy sciences. Specifically, some scholars disputed what they understood to be the positivism underlying most policy studies. Authors such as Lance De Haven-Smith, Mary Hawkesworth, and Peter deLeon argued in favor of a constructivist epistemology. While all three lay claims to the legacy of Lasswell's vision of policy analysis in service to democracy, they understand the imperatives of democracy in profoundly different ways than Lasswell. Lasswell envisioned policy science serving democracy through the provision to policy

makers of more comprehensive and more rationally derived information. Democracy would be served by harnessing the power of the positive state to create improved welfare for its citizens. De Haven-Smith, Hawkesworth, and deLeon, on the other hand, argued this approach placed technical expertise above rational deliberation, effectively limiting the scope of participation.

Peter deLeon (1997) argues, in *Democracy and the Policy Sciences*, that even contemporary scholars claiming to have relinquished the claims of positivism, such as Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith, retain a belief that rationality can promote consensus building among policy elites. Disagreement about policy problems and solutions, however, can never be reduced to strictly empirical dimensions. Policy analysis, according to deLeon, should promote more direct and meaningful participation for citizens. Habermas's Critical Theory, he argues, promotes democracy by examining the technical basis for bureaucratic domination and ideology, which largely exclude actor's value structures. For Habermas, it's the value structures that drive politics. Accordingly, policy analysis should promote greater communicative rationality over technical rationality. The point of analysis from deLeon's perspective is not only to reconcile conflict but also to aid in the design of political institutions that promote rather than stymie discourse.

deLeon (1999) reiterates his position in his contribution to Sabatier's *Theories of the Policy Process*. Defending the stages heuristic, deLeon argues that a framework's contribution to our understanding of the policy process does not stem from an ability to highlight causality. Rather, a framework should be

judged on its ability to generate insight about the nature of policymaking and stimulate discourse about public problems.

Hawkesworth (1988) also attacks positivism in favor of a constructivist epistemology. While her criticism of positivism is similar to deLeon, her analysis of the epistemological difficulties and political implications of positivist policy analysis are much more sophisticated. First, she argues that policy analysis' claim to objectivity masks the ways in which analysis can be politically driven and deployed. She takes both the comprehensive-rational and incrementalist scholars to task for sacrificing citizen participation in favor of technically informed elites. Second, Hawkesworth believes the legitimacy of the positivist enterprise rests on the mythology of the fact/value dichotomy. Specifically, scholars tend to take an empirically verifiable statement as though it were true. This entails getting people to assume the truth of factual statements that haven't yet been verified. We assume facts speak for themselves. Moreover, positivism argues that theories are created and applied independently to events.

To make her point Hawkesworth (1988, 85) paraphrases Polanyi, "[T]heories are not mere tools or instruments which individuals use; rather they are the medium in which individuals live: they are constitutive of what individuals are and may become." The empirical world itself is theoretically constituted in that human cognition is unable to grasp its external world without it. Moreover, aspirations to certainty and objectivity do not resolve the fundamental need for parties with different interests to engage in rational debate. Policy analysis needs to direct greater attention to the concepts that organize perception, create the

conditions for facticity, and accredit events as normal, natural, or expected. Analysts should also devote more effort to explicating contestable definitions, evidentiary claims, and the internal logic of policy arguments.

Finally, De Haven-Smith (1988) argues, in *Philosophical Critiques of Policy Analysis*, that policy analysis ignores the contributions of political theory to its peril. Political theory, he contends, has much to offer the study of public policy given the failure of policy sciences to resolve seemingly empirical debates about the impact of major policy frameworks such as the Great Society. Policy analyses without philosophical frames of reference miss the most important policy impacts. De Haven-Smith argues that empirical theories on their own can offer little “evidence” analysts may use to choose the best among them because theories deploy similar evidence in different ways.

For De Haven-Smith theoretical issues are unavoidable in political disputes. Indeed, the objects of interest in policy research cannot be identified outside of a theoretical framework. Political theory, from his perspective, is most helpful to understanding policy making for three reasons. First, it enables scholars to analyze the theoretical commitments actors hold. Second, it allows scholars to see that the most important policy change occurs across policy arenas within the context of larger policy frameworks such as the Great Society or the Reagan Revolution. Third, political theory highlights the ebb and flow of overarching policy frameworks across different eras. From De Haven-Smith’s perspective, using the lenses of multiple political theories reveals the explanatory theories held by decision makers as they craft and promote public policy.

Theory-Builders' Rise to Prominence

The third phase in the debate about the role of theory in policy analysis represents a complex reaction to both phases of the debate discussed above. My reading of the literature suggests a marked shift in the terms of debate beginning in the late 1980s and running through at least the early 2000s. I term this period the rise of the theory-builders because scholars embarked on a concerted effort to develop causal theories of the policy process. Clearly disturbed by the atheoretical approaches of the 1960s and 1970s, scholars such as Elinor Ostrom, John Kingdon, Frank Jones and Bryan Jones, and Paul Sabatier began looking for explanatory theories of the policy process as a whole. Specifically, these scholars reacted against both the predominance of the stages heuristic and to the incorporation of normative theory. They believed that the task of policy analysis resides in explaining the ways in which (1) institutions and institutional choice influence the likelihood of conflict and cooperation—Ostrom (1990, 1999); (2) streams of problems, policy and politics come together to create windows of opportunity for actors to alter existing policy arrangements—Kingdon (1994); (3) the nature of policy change as either gradual evolution or characterized by punctuated equilibrium—Baumgartner and Jones (1993); (4) the role of advocacy coalitions, beliefs, and policy learning in the policy process—Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993).

While all of these scholars engage in research that could be considered post-positivist, at least in some sense, they distinctly reject the claims made for the relevance of political theory and constructivist epistemology in policy

analysis. Sabatier (1999) made this argument most clearly in the introduction to *Theories of the Policy Process*. Acknowledging that perceptions are mediated by presuppositions, Sabatier argued that the scientific method exemplified by clearly defined propositions, that are logically consistent and which provide empirically falsifiable hypotheses, offers the best hope for understanding the inherently complex world of public policy. Using the term political theory differently than De Haven-Smith, Schlager and Blomquist (1996, 653) write, “The goal of a political theory of the policy process is to explain how interested political actors interact within political institutions to produce, implement, evaluate, and revise public policies.”

Indeed, Sabatier (1999) places constructivism among the less promising frameworks for policy analysis precisely because it lacks the clear definitions, causal linkages, and parsimony of other more fully developed frameworks. Promising theories of the policy process, according to Schlager (1999), must specify the types of actors likely to participate in policy making. Moreover, theories need to address the motivations and strategies actors use. Theories must clearly define and operationalize the variables that explain policy change, processes, or outcomes. Both units and levels of analysis should be explained in terms of how they shape the relationships among variables and actors. Good theory also articulates the scope of inquiry in terms of the stages of the policy process with which it is most concerned.

The theory builders are not expressly concerned with promoting democracy, being rather more interested in mapping the policy processes in

democratic systems. One gets the feeling from reading Sabatier and Schlager that democracy is best served by scholars seeking to remain outside the political fray rather than by becoming activists within it. Indeed, Sabatier's ACF tacitly argues that democratic decision making is best served when scholars enable policy oriented learning, which improves the technical knowledge possessed by decision makers. Additionally, they implicitly contend that improved knowledge of the political processes driving agenda setting, problem definition, policy formation and implementation also serves the cause of democracy by opening up Easton's black box and making politics more transparent.

Comparing Theories of the Policy Process

While it would be misleading to say a well-defined or self-conscious literature comparing theories of the policy process exists, a small number of prominent scholars have devoted some attention to the subject. The vast majority of the work done in this area falls under the rubric of theory building {Schlager & Blomquist 1996} {Jenkins-Smith 1991}. Such studies use comparisons to highlight deficiencies in the individual theories, which might be improved upon by subsequent research. Specifically, they examine the ways in which theories characterize actors, motivations, behavior, and salient institutions. These comparisons frequently compare the hypotheses generated by the theory and assess the kinds of predictions the theory puts forth. Many comparative theory analyses try to ascertain whether some frameworks perform better with different types of policies such as regulatory or distributive policies.

While there are many theories of the policy process currently in use, only a handful of studies compare the explanatory power of these theories in the same policy arena. The most well-known is arguably Allison's (1969) comparison of the Rational Policy Model, Organic Process Model, and Bureaucratic Politics Model in explaining the American reaction to the Cuban missile crisis. Allison compares the three frameworks based on general qualities that explanatory frameworks have in common such as goals and objectives, general propositions, and basic units of analysis. Gerber & Teske (2000), Jenkins-Smith (1991), and Schlager & Blomquist (1996) argue that theoretical development in the policy sciences benefits from the discussions generated by comparisons across multiple frameworks. Specifically, they maintain that studies engaging multiple frameworks permit scholars to see heretofore seen weaknesses in their preferred theory of the policy process. Comparisons also lead to increased understanding of the dynamics, units and levels of analysis, and actor interactions that theories explain well. For example, both Schlager and Blomquist view the collection of essays in the *Theories of the Policy Process*, edited by Sabatier (1999), as an important contribution to the dialogue about theory building in the study of public policy. While each of the essays in the collection deals exclusively with one theory of the policy process, this proposal argues that the value of theoretical comparisons can be improved through the application of several theories to the same policy arena.

The study proposed here attempts to make two distinct contributions to the field of policy studies. First, taking the advice of well-established scholars in

the field of policy studies, the dissertation compares the explanatory power of four theoretical frameworks (DSH, IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory) of the policy process in the context of one policy arena—higher education tuition policy. Second, the study engages in a two-fold comparison in order to increase the level of scrutiny placed on the theoretical frameworks used. While the primary comparison is theoretical, this study also takes Schlager (1999) and Schlager and Blomquist's (1996) admonition to use comparisons across the states to test the strength of different theories of the policy process. As Schlager argues, many theories were developed for use primarily at the national level and have not often been tested in the context of explaining variation across the states. Specifically, two of the theories to be applied in this study, institutional rational choice and the advocacy coalition framework were developed initially to study national level policymaking. Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert, on the other hand, is one of the few frameworks to directly explain variation across the American states.

The theories selected for this study represent a small but prominent subset of theories designed to explain policy change. Paul Sabatier's edited volume, *Theories of the Policy Process*, partially inspired this study through its presentation of an array of policy frameworks. Each chapter in the monograph, usually authored by a prominent scholar in the genre, describes an individual framework and indicated the state of current research. The primary goal of *Theories of the Policy Process* is to foment theory building within the subfield. In reading the various chapters, however, I saw an opportunity to generate

explanatory insights by bringing several theories into conversation with one another in in-depth exploration of tuition policy change at the state level⁴.

I selected these four specific frameworks for a variety of theoretical reasons and personal interests. First, the ACF and IRC scholars have an ongoing dialogue dating back a decade or more. For example, ACF scholars have incorporated rational choice concepts of the collective action problem to explain inter and intra-coalition behavior, while IRC scholars allow for the impact of external events and coalition change to explain the alteration of institutional structures as a means to effect policy change. Second, as will be discussed below, a few studies have argued for an affinity between rational choice approaches and Critical Theory. Bringing these three frameworks into conversation to explain tuition policy change strikes me as an interesting exercise in theory triangulation. Other scholars have made initial inroads, and it is reasonable to devote a book length study to the effort.

Third, while a few other scholars have used two of the three micro-level frameworks in concert, the inclusion of Critical Theory is perhaps not an obvious choice to the casual observer. Indeed, Sabatier (1999) rejected critical and other constructivist frameworks as showing little promise in his introduction to *Theories of the Policy Process*. Specifically, he argued that these approaches do not attempt to follow the scientific method and that they are explicitly normative in orientation, making them suspect as explanatory frameworks. I contend, as have others, that all explanatory frameworks and public policy-making are socially

⁴ In a sense my study is a mirror image of Jones and Baumgartner's (2005) *The Politics of Attention*. While Jones and Baumgartner seek a more general theory of policy change across a wide number of policies, I seek a more specific explanation of one policy by using several frameworks in conjunction with each other.

constructed and theory laden. Even in Political Science, which tends to have a sharp demarcation between its empirical and normative houses, policy scholars emphasizing agenda-setting have longed acknowledged the normative and socially constructed character of political inquiry (Schattschneider, 1960; Rochefort and Cobb, 1994; Wilson, 2000; Baumgartner and Jones, 2005). With that in mind, I wanted to use Sabatier's ACF in conjunction with Critical Theory in order to challenge the claims of both frameworks.

Of the four theories included in this study the Dye Sharkansky, Hofferbert approach to analyzing policies across the states is the least suited for this project. As a macro-level and primarily statistical approach, the DSH framework relies on systems theory to explain policy change across a large number of political units. Indeed, I do not *compare* the DSH framework with the other three theories in the same way. Rather, its role in this study is to provide a macro-level context for the micro-level analyses carried out in my case study states. In that sense the DSH is the weak partner in the forthcoming analysis.

Finally, using Critical Theory in conjunction with Baumgartner and Jones (1993, Jones and Baumgartner, 2005) Punctuated Equilibrium or Kingdon's (1995) Multiple Streams frameworks might have made for more harmonious comparisons. The data requirements for PE, however, require a longer timeframe than attempted here. Moreover, I wanted to try out the idea that there is something to be learned from theoretical dissonance and tension. The four frameworks I have selected do not make entirely comfortable bedfellows. This is by design.

Overview of Policy Theories Used in this Study

This section briefly outlines the theoretical frameworks used in this study. Each framework is discussed in terms of its causal assumptions, the structure and scope of the questions it poses about the policy process, the variables it emphasizes, its conception of the policy process, and the policy arenas in which it has been applied. I provide a list of the key explanatory variables suggested by the framework in the context of state level tuition policy.

Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert

The framework developed most prominently by Thomas Dye, Richard Hofferbert, and Ira Sharkansky in the 1960s and 1970s explains macro level influences on public policy. Relying on a system's conception of policy-making, the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework examines the relationship among inputs into the institutional black box of the policy system. Dye's (1966) seminal work, *Politics, Economics, and the Public: Political Outcomes in the American States*, marked a theoretical break with the institutional/structural emphasis of earlier work on Congress and state legislatures. Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert inspired studies rely on explanatory variables thought to differentiate states with respect to policy choices. Building on Dawson and Robinson (1963), Dye (1965) argued that socioeconomic variables outweigh political variables in shaping state economic development over time. In particular, Dye contested the emphasis on thick description of institutional workings as the best mode for explaining policy outputs. Rather, he argued, macro level processes measured by aggregate social, economic, and political variables would provide better explanations of

policy outputs across the states. The DSH framework has modeled policy change in two ways, as change in appropriations or portion of the state budget going to a particular policy area, or as the adoption of a new policy such as state lotteries, or school reform policies.

The debate over the relative importance of socio-economic and political variables continued through the 1970s. For instance, Dye's (1965) found that socioeconomic factors such as levels of industrialization and per capita income outweighed the partisan balance in state legislatures. Whether a legislature was balanced or unbalanced made no difference in their policy choices. Hofferbert (1966) reached similar results in favor of socioeconomic variables. Booms and Halldorson (1973), in their study of redistributive policy also found that political variables played a lesser role in state policy decisions.

Hofferbert's (1974) introduced the use of mass and elite preferences into the framework in *the Study of Public Policy*. As Blomquist (1999, 205) summarized he argued "policy outputs were produced by elites operating within government institutions but affected by the mass public, the socioeconomic environment, and ultimately by the historical geographic setting. Tompkins (1975) and Lewis-Beck (1977) used path analysis to explore interaction effects among socioeconomic and political indicators.

Policies Typically Studied by DSH Scholars

The literature examining macro level explanations of state policy outputs revolved around the relative importance of socioeconomic versus political variables until the 1990s. Dye (1965, 1966, 1980, 1988), for instance, has

studied social welfare policy, education, economic growth, and malapportionment. Berry and Berry (1990, 1992), drawing upon early the early work of Jack Walker (1969), pioneered the use of event history analysis to explain the diffusion of policy innovation across states. McLendon et al. (2005) applied this extension of the DSH framework to the study of competitiveness in higher education. To the traditionally used socioeconomic and political variables, Berry and Berry added time-to-adoption and proximity to other adopting state measures. This modification of the DSH framework allowed scholars to understand factors contributing to the speed with which states adopt policy innovations and to describe the degree to which spatial or geographic dispersion of policies impacts the relative speed of policy diffusion.

Modeling Tuition Policy Using DSH

Many studies examining state support for higher education implicitly follow the DSH framework. Indeed the role of political variables is an important question within the field of postsecondary policy studies. Griswold and Marine (1997), for example, seek to understand the role of politics in higher education finance policy in order to learn how to insulate these policies from political maneuvering. Wellman (2001) makes a similar argument. McLendon (2003) and McLendon et al. (2005) and Toutkoushian (2001), on the other hand, have pioneered a less pejorative view of politics in higher education policy making. McLendon applied several different theories of the policy process in his and colleagues' studies of accountability and governance. Toutkoushian explored both socioeconomic and political variables in his study of higher education revenues and expenditures.

These authors' work is distinctive because they do not treat politics as exogenous to policymaking as do other higher education policy analysts.

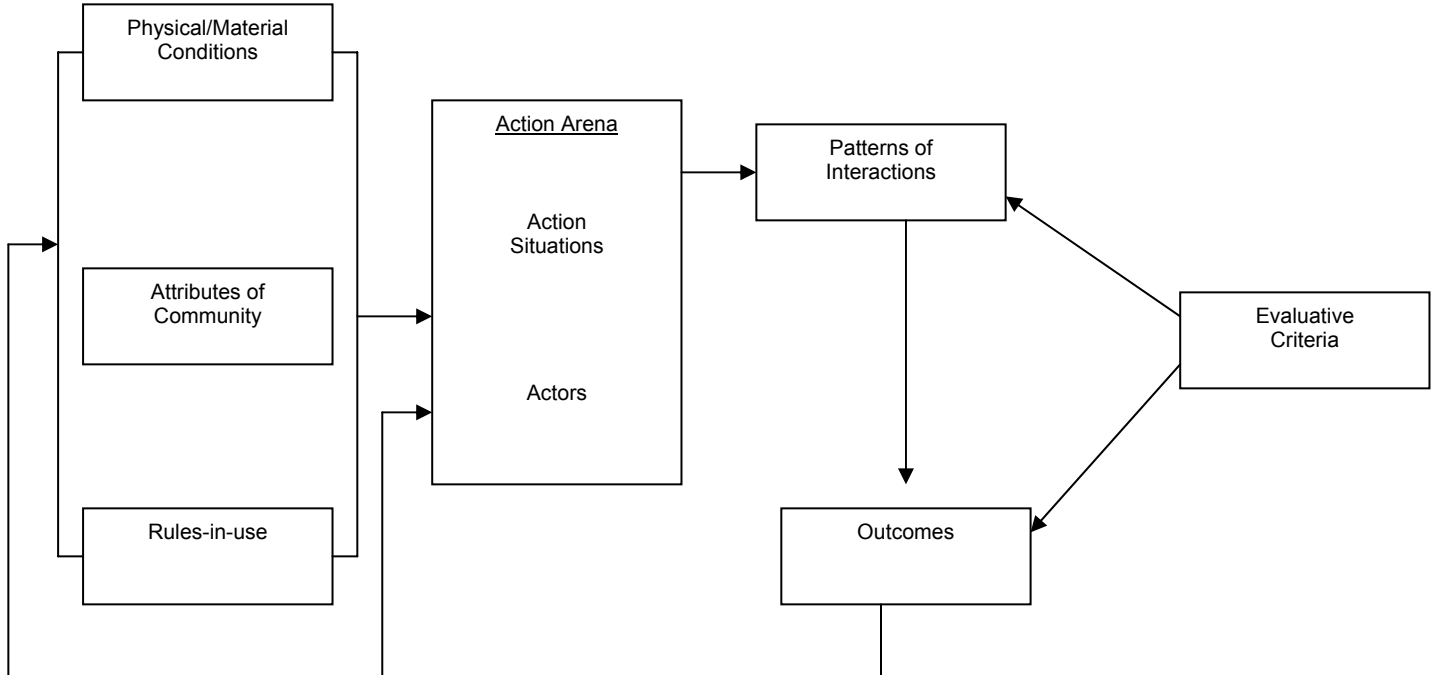
The DSH is a macro level framework, using socioeconomic, demographic, and political variables to describe and explain policy change defined either as change in expenditures or as policy adoption events. Given that I am interested in explaining tuition policy change, rather than implementation or feedback processes, this type of framework seems appropriate.

A number of variables commonly included in DSH models are used in this study as well. The model, tested in chapter 4, includes economic, demographic, traditionally used political variables, and political variables specific to higher education. I test both a binary and multinomial dependent variable indicating tuition policy change, using logistic regression to analyze data from all 50 states in a cross-sectional data set. Data availability for tuition policy change is limited to 2000 to 2006, yielding only tentative results and conclusions.

Institutional Rational Choice

Introduced by Kiser and Ostrom (1982), the institutional rational choice framework (IRC) understands public policy as sets of institutional arrangements comprised of rules and norms that pattern the interactions and strategies of actors. Policy change, in the IRC, results from the actions of rational actors trying to attain their goals by changing institutional configurations (Bromley, 1989). As Figure 1 below suggests, decision situations are comprised of the institutional rules indicating which actions are permitted, required, or prohibited (Ostrom, 1999: 42).

Figure 1.1: Framework for Institutional Analysis



Since actors are largely unable to alter the physical/material conditions and attributes of their communities, they focus their energies on altering the rules that govern behavior within the constraints imposed by their environment (Ostrom, 1999). Actors in the IRC are understood either as individuals or as groups functioning as a corporate actor. Following Radnitzky (1987), Ostrom (1990, 1999) argues that an individual's strategy hinges on his or her perceptions and valuation of costs and benefits associated with anticipated outcomes. Moreover, actors are assumed to be fallible learners, or rather that they are intendedly rational (Ostrom, Lam & Lee, 1994).

There are three levels of action posited by the IRC framework. Analysis can be conducted within or across these levels or tiers of action. The operational tier represents the world of action/practice; the collective choice (policy) tier

establishes the rules governing the interactions at the operational level; and decisions at the constitutional tier set rules about who may participate and under what conditions (Ostrom 1999; Schlager and Blomquist, 1996).

The notion of rules-in-use forms the other distinguishing feature of the IRC framework. By rules-in-use, Crawford and Ostrom (1995) mean that institutions are comprised of sets of rules and norms where rules are shared understandings of expected behavior surrounding the use of common resources. While not all of the seven types of rules will be relevant for the study proposed here, it is useful list them all: (1) entry and exit rules govern who gets to use the resource in question, (2) position rules indicate how actors can move from mere participation to performing a specialized task, (3) scope rules refer to understandings about appropriate geographical or functional boundaries, (4) authority rules indicate the degree of discretion members are allowed, (5) aggregation rules indicate which decisions require consensus from other participants, (6) information rules tell members which information should remain private and which must be made public, (7) payoff rules denote the sanctions involved for rule-breaking and incentives for rule-adherence (Ostrom, 1999). Most of these rules are implicit rather than statutory.

Policies Typically Studied by IRC Scholars

The IRC has been applied across a wide variety of policy issues and across the three tiers. Early work by Vincent Ostrom and Elinor Ostrom (1971) and Elinor Ostrom (1972) studied the delivery of police services in large cities (Ostrom, 1971, 1972). In the 1980s, the framework was expanded to develop a

theory of common-pool resources (Ostrom et al., 1994). This has been particularly successful when applied to such arenas as forest users, offshore fishing policies and irrigation systems (Schlager, Blomquist & Tang, 1994; Weissing & Ostrom, 1991).

Modeling Tuition Policy Using IRC

Of the three frameworks selected for comparison in this study, the IRC is probably the most problematic given the policy arena to be examined. On its face, studying changes in tuition policy seems not to fall into the category of policy decisions that alter institutional arrangements as suggested by the IRC, nor do these policies establish rules, either explicit or implied, governing actors' use of a common-pool resource. For that very reason, tuition policy makes for an intriguing test of the IRC. As Sabatier (1999) notes, he and Elinor Ostrom have used each other's research in order to improve their respective frameworks. Given that Jenkins-Smith's (1991) work on nuclear policy is one of the few explicitly comparing the two frameworks in identical contexts, it seems the comparison is worth pursuing here.

Briefly, alterations in tuition policy can be considered changes in the institutional relationships within the higher education community in that they shift the relationship between the institutions and state actors including the governors' office, the legislature, and any governing body that previously held some oversight authority over the establishment of tuition rates. Eliminating tuition oversight grants institutions the right to raise tuition with impunity, but we can surmise that for political reasons they may be more likely to do so under some

conditions and not others. Moreover, as noted in the discussion of the higher education literature, the relaxing of tuition controls is often coupled with the establishment of an accountability policy. Thus, actors may seek to alter the institutional arrangements governing interactions within higher education in a given state in order to change tuition policy or to realize other policy goals.

An IRC study of higher education finance takes the action arena, in this case higher education, within a given state as its unit of analysis. At first glance, tuition policy seems located at the collective choice tier in that it helps set the terms of operational relationships. Relevant actors and groupings of actors must be identified and their preferences regarding financing mechanisms for higher education, including tuition policy, need to be elucidated as well. In addition, the positions of the actors within the policy community and the information available to them about the potential effects of the policy change need to be identified. While much of the IRC literature explores the impact of new policies on behavior (Crawford and Ostrom, 1995), this study examines the strategies adopted by actors in taking positions either in favor or in opposition to the new policy, for example, the relaxation of tuition oversight.

Advocacy Coalition Framework

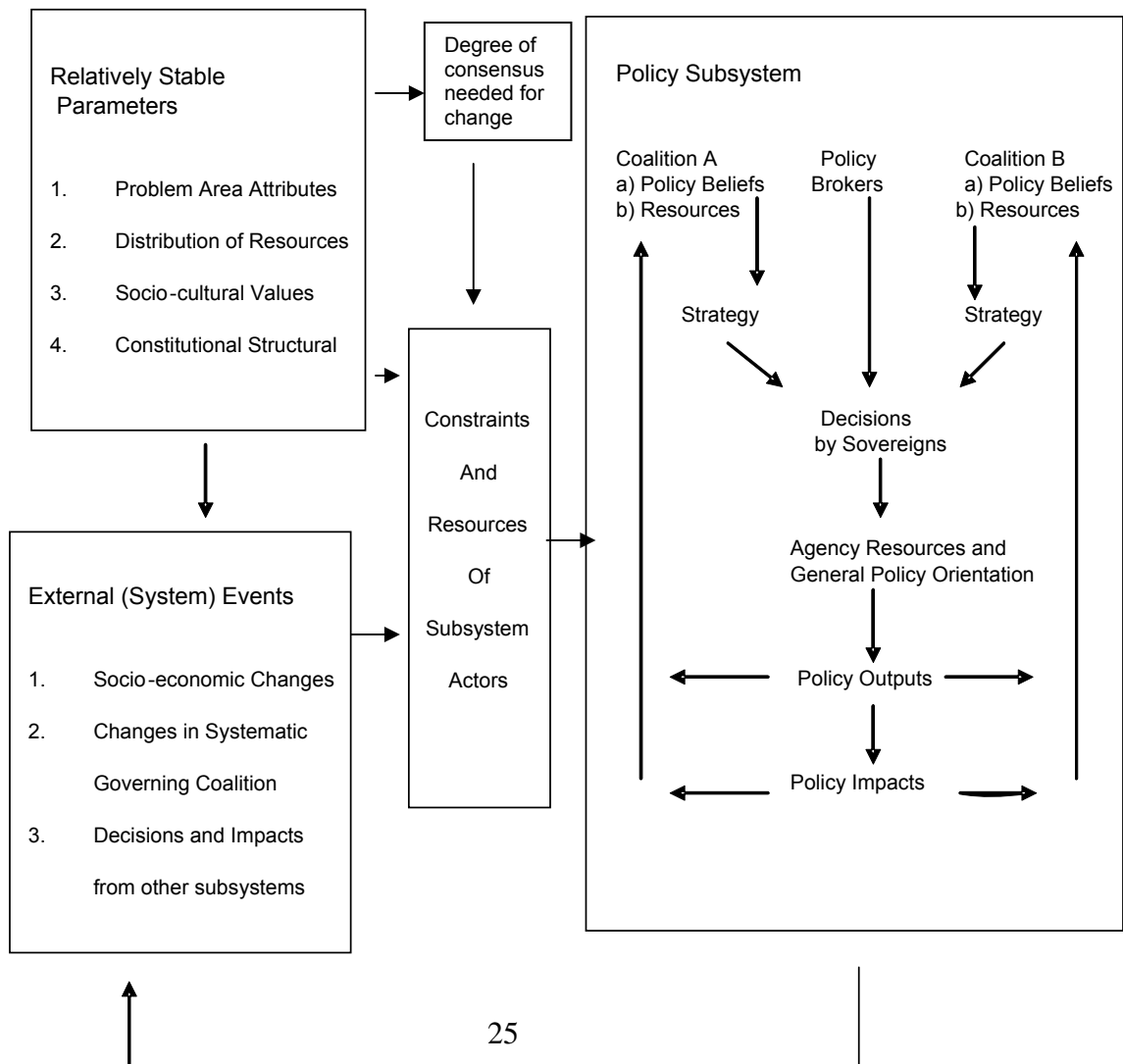
The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) explains policy change as a function of changes in the (1) dominant governing coalition, (2) events external to the policy subsystem, and (3) policy-oriented learning that improves coalition understanding of successful political strategies and causal mechanisms affecting the policy problem. The ACF

rests on the organization of actors into advocacy coalitions operating within a policy subsystem. These coalitions populate policy subsystems regularly seeking to influence policy development. The ACF improves on the iron triangle conception of policymaking in that it captures the complex interactions of actors among and across levels of government (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983). It adds journalists, researchers, and analysts to the list of meaningful actors in developing policy in addition to the traditional cast of agencies, legislative committees, state governors, and interest groups (Sabatier, 1987; Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993). Coalitions are collections of actors exhibiting a nontrivial degree of coordinated activity, shared beliefs, cutting across different levels of government. The ACF builds on the work of Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) arguing that policies reflect both values and theories about the causal relationships underlying the policy issue. Sabatier (1999, 120) contends “this ability to map beliefs and policies on the same ‘canvas’ provides a vehicle for assessing the influence of various actors over time, particularly the role of technical information in policy change.” Finally, Sabatier (1987) and Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) maintain that policy change is best understood in time frames of a decade or more in order to capture at least one complete policy cycle.

Figure 2 depicts the structure of a subsystem developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith and presents a model of the relationship among its components (Sabatier, 1999: 149). As can be seen below, the ACF offers the most detailed depiction of the policymaking process among the frameworks discussed thus far.

Characterized by two sets of exogenous and one set of endogenous variables linked together by the socioeconomic and political circumstances surrounding the subsystem in question. One set of exogenous variables consists of what Sabatier (1987) terms relatively stable parameters such as the attributes of the problem area, the distribution of resources, fundamental socio-cultural values, and constitutional structure. The other set of parameters, consisting of changes in socio-economic conditions, changes in governing coalition and impacts from other subsystems, introduce a dynamic component to the external environment.

Figure 1.2: The Advocacy Coalition Framework



Within the policy subsystem, on the other hand, there are multiple coalitions each with its own set of policy beliefs, resources and strategies. Mediated by policy brokers such as analysts and scholars, coalitions compete for influence over government decisions and policy implementation. Decisions by legislators and executives flow into agency decisions, resources, and general policy orientation, resulting in policy outputs and impacts. These impacts provide feedback for each subsystem coalition as to the salience of their beliefs and the efficacy of their political strategies.

The ACF holds a tiered conception of belief systems, each characterized by a propensity towards change and degree of specificity. Deep (Normative) Core beliefs form part of a coalition's essential philosophy and are highly resistant to change. The Near (Policy) Core set of beliefs concerns the strategies used to manifest the goals implied by the deep core beliefs. Alteration of beliefs at this level can occur if coalition members find serious and preponderant disconfirming evidence. Secondary Aspects refer to information used to make instrumental decisions and to guide searches for additional information in order to achieve the policy core. Changes in beliefs at this level are relatively easy. Schlager and Blomquist (1996) criticized the ACF for its failure to operationally distinguish between the three tiers. Sabatier (1999) offers several revisions he hopes will improve the rigor of studies exploring belief systems in relationship to policy change.

In its original guise, the ACF generated nine hypotheses. The first three concern the behavior and strategies of coalitions; hypotheses four and five deal

with the conditions needed for policy change to occur, while hypotheses six through nine outline the conditions under which policy-oriented learning is likely to occur (Sabatier, 1987, 1999). In particular, the ACF has been criticized for its failure to address the collective action problems implied by hypotheses one through three (Schlager, 1995; Schlager and Blomquist, 1996). While Sabatier agrees this is a major failing of his framework, a straightforward adoption of new hypotheses reflecting the IRC's conception of the individual does damage to the integrity of the framework. Rather, Zafonte and Sabatier (1998) distinguish between strong and weak coordination and hypothesize their effects on the duration and stability of coordination among coalition members.

Policies Typically Studied by ACF Scholars

In 34 empirical investigations of the ACF, two-thirds were conducted on some kind of environmental or natural resources policy issue (Jenkins-Smith, St. Clair & Woods, 1991; Sabatier, Zafonte & Gjerde, 1999). Three studies deal with K-12 education reform policy (Stewart, 1991; Mintrom and Vergari, 1996; Mawhinney, 1993). The remainder spans a variety of policies from airline regulation to drug policy (Brown & Stewart, 1993; Kuebler, 1993).

Modeling Tuition Policy Using the ACF

Unfortunately, the data collection required to study the ACF (and the IRC) across all 50 states is cost prohibitive in terms of time and material resources. The analysis here will be limited the data gathered through the case studies of individual state systems of higher education. The first task will be descriptive in that a narrative sketch of the subsystem surrounding tuition policy, using Figure

2, needs to be developed. Coalitions need to be identified and their belief systems outlined. The second phase involves the testing of the nine hypotheses proposed by the framework, plus the additional hypotheses developed by Sabatier to address collective action problems within coalitions.

All nine hypotheses are used to explain tuition policy change in the case study states. The following list is drawn from Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's (1994) article "Evaluating the Advocacy Coalition Framework." The first hypothesis states that when core beliefs are in dispute, the lineup of coalitions tends to be stable over a decade or more. Hypothesis two contends that actors within an advocacy coalition show considerable consensus on issues pertaining the policy core, but less agreement on secondary aspects of their belief systems. Hypothesis three states that an actor or coalition will give up secondary aspects of their belief systems before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core.

Hypothesis four contends that core attribute of a policy program are immune to significant revision so long as the coalition that initially instituted the policy remains in power, unless the change is mandated by a higher jurisdiction such as the federal government (Sabatier, 1999). Hypothesis five, on the other hand, asserts that core attributes of a policy program are resistant to change unless there are significant external shocks to the subsystem. It is interesting to note that neither policy-oriented learning, nor coalition politics (whether internal or external to the coalition) are posited as having any direct influence on policy change.

Hypothesis six explores the conditions under which policy-oriented learning influences coalition beliefs and policy change. Specifically, the ACF argues that policy-oriented learning is most likely when there is an intermediate level of informed conflict, wherein the coalitions each have sufficient technical resources for the debate and that the conflict is between secondary aspects of one or both coalitions' belief systems. Hypothesis seven asserts that problems for which there is accepted quantitative are more conducive to policy-oriented learning. On a related note, hypothesis eight asserts that problems involving natural systems are more likely to produce policy-oriented learning because variables in these policy areas are not as likely to be "active strategists." Finally, hypothesis nine contends that policy-oriented is also promoted by the existence of professional forums strong enough to compel professional participation and to enforce professional norms.

While the timeframe for this study does not quite meet the decade or more criteria set forth by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), the analyses of tuition policy change in the case study states covers a seven year period in-depth. Data from Florida going back into the early 1980s and Missouri into the 1990s is used to provide additional context and support for interpretations made about policy change or the lack thereof in the 2000 to 2006 timeframe. Both Florida and Missouri are data rich states. They provide an abundance of information making evaluation of the framework's hypotheses possible. The relatively short study period leads to one key limitation. I am unable to precisely track changing

coalition membership over time. The supplemental data from prior years mitigates this difficulty but does not completely eliminate it.

Tuition policy makes for an interesting inquiry using the ACF. Hypothesis five most likely explains changes in tuition policy, measured as the relaxation of state oversight regarding tuition rates. By eliminating statewide coordination of tuition, state governments delegate their authority over the prices charged by public institutions. States may be more inclined to deregulate tuition during times of recession, when state revenues are low and demand for other programs such as Medicaid, K-12 education, and Corrections remain high. Faced with the need to decrease direct appropriations, states may opt for deregulation to allow institutions to make up the resulting short falls in their own revenues.

Critical Theory

Critical Theory is the only explicitly normative framework included in this dissertation. Drawn from Hegelian philosophy, which understands history as the progress of freedom won through the advance of reason, Critical Theory concerns itself with both the substantive policy outcomes and with the quality of the public sphere. The facts of social life, according to Denhardt (1981), are in many ways more important for what they conceal as for what they reveal. He writes, "The task of social theory becomes one of unmasking false appearances generated in the present to permit expanded freedom in the future, it is through the act of critique that this is accomplished" (Denhardt, 1981, 629). For Habermas, the most prominent contemporary Critical Theory scholar, the ideal society is characterized by substantive rather than procedural democracy.

Critical Theory draws on the Hegelian and Marxist notions of the dialectic as well. In *Legitimation Crisis*, Habermas (1975) describes the progress of reason through a series of crises in regime stability precipitated by the breakdown of consensual understandings and norms. In traditional societies, for example, crises emerged because their class structure and legal order were inconsistent with the predominant legitimating religions. Moreover, the adoption of technical reason undermined the traditions sustaining the legal order. Capitalist societies eventually replace traditional ones with the institutionalization of technical reason. Increasing economic stratification, however, eventually undermines the value of an independent economy. Liberal capitalism gives way to organized capitalism. But even organized capitalism has difficulty increasing productivity because the state cannot mitigate economic problems without violating the boundaries between the state and the economy. For Habermas the post-modern society represents his ideal. The post-modern society is characterized by the realization of what he terms the “ideal speech situation.”

The ideal speech situation constitutes, what Dryzek (1987) calls, a counterfactual an unrealizable ideal against which actual public discourse can be evaluated. Four preconditions must be met in order for the ideal speech situation to be realized (Habermas, 1975). First, *communicative* speech acts imply that what a speaker says is understandable to all the relevant actors. Second, *representative* speech acts imply truth and sincerity; that people say what they mean without the fear of coercion. Third, *regulative* speech acts are those with legitimate normative content; that values are as relevant as facts. Fourth,

constative speech acts imply that actors have the ability to provide interpretative and explanatory analysis so that over time all actors can be heard free of communicative distortion. The result of improved speech conditions is improved democracy, where the reconciliation of conflict is but one value. The design of discourse promoting institutions is equally important.

As Braaten (1991) comments, critical theories of society highlight deep conflict or potential for crisis inherent in the socio-political and cultural institutions of late capitalism. Examining discursive practices and highlighting the deployment of three types of reason can explicate conflicts and bureaucratic domination. First, practical reason deploys the norms and values developed through public discourse. Second, technical reason uses knowledge of nature developed through empirical testing. Finally, and this is Habermas' (1975) unique contribution, critical or communicative reason illuminates the assumptions of communicative action and assesses existing discourse against the preconditions for the ideal speech situation. Political crisis is a necessary condition for the evolution of the social order from constrained freedom to one that is emancipatory. Indeed Habermas is convinced that technical and organizational capacities would have developed more quickly if elites were not so averse to opening discourse to new topics. Freedom and technical capacity are both served by the advance of reason in an unfettered environment.

Critical theory does not advance a conception of policy change as do the IRC, or ACF. Given that its primary goal is to ascertain the degree to which policy-making conforms to democratic and emancipatory ideals, theorists working

in this area have been less interested in using its concepts to explain how discourse relates to policy change. While not expressly working within the Critical Theory tradition, scholars of agenda-setting and issue definition, however, advance some similar concepts for understanding the dynamics driving policy change. Rochefort and Cobb (1994), for example, discuss the processes of issue definition emphasizing the impact of culture experience and understanding. Bryan Jones and Frank Baumgartner's (1993 and 2005) evolving work on agenda-setting places information processing and punctuated equilibrium processes at the center of explanations of policy change. While the issue-definition and/or the agenda-setting literatures would have made fine contributions to this study, I selected Critical Theory because of its expressly normative orientation. Moreover, the discourse analysis method articulated by Fairclough provides a rich set of dimensions to bring to bear on the problem of tuition setting authority in the case-study states.

Policies Typically Studied by Critical Theory Scholars

While deLeon and De Haven-Smith contend that Critical Theory is both a philosophical theory and a methodology, most research on Critical Theory emphasizes the theory's location within the field of political theory, not policy studies. Within policy studies there has been little empirical work done. Much of the work stresses making the case for Critical Theory's relevance to studying public policy, rather than exploring what Critical Theory tells us about policy dynamics. Dallmayr (1976) argues that Critical Theory allows for theory and practice to correlate with one another without one eclipsing the other. Moreover,

Critical Theory brings the question of what constitutes the “good life” into political inquiry. In his later piece, Dallmayr (1986) further argues that in adopting critical policy research we need to question concrete policies and the concept of “policy” itself. Denhardt (1981) contends that critical perspectives of public administration enable scholars to question excessive bureaucratic intrusion and domination.

Dryzek (1992) began a conversation about the relationship between Critical Theory and rational choice. Specifically, he argued that rational choice could benefit from the expanded definition of rationality offered by Critical Theory—that rationality can be communicative as well as instrumental. Critical Theory benefits as well from gaining empirical material for its abstract concepts. Building on Dryzek’s insight, Johnson (1993) makes the case that game theory can overcome Habermas’ too zealous rendering of the distinction between communicative and instrumental reason, while rational choice gains an understanding of why cooperation occurs in what should be non-cooperative games. Schiemann (2000) puts Dryzek and Johnson’s claim to the test by examining the game theory dilemma of multiple equilibria in non-cooperative mixed motive games. In these situations game theory is unable to select among different but equally plausible Nash equilibria due to uncertainty about actor strategies. He finds that using the two theories together produces better results than either is able to produce alone. He argues that successful strategy relies on intersubjective relationships enacted through discourse.

Within the policy sciences only De Haven-Smith (1988) and Hawkesworth (1988) use Critical Theory to examine real-life policy dynamics in a sustained

way. De Haven-Smith explores the demise of the Great Society and the emergence of the Reagan Revolution by reading Lindblom against Habermas. Hawkesworth, on the other hand, uses the techniques of Critical Theory to examine the plausibility of using post-positivist inquiry across a wide variety of policy arenas from the instability of Kampuchea to Affirmative Action policies in the United States. Both conclude that Critical Theory has much to offer policy analysis either as political theory or as a methodology.

While the policy sciences rooted in political science have used Critical Theory only sparingly, policy analysts in education (both K-12 and postsecondary) have used Critical Theory to analyze topics including globalization, faculty workload, and student identity. Lather (2004), for instance, provides an overview of the debate about the scientific validity of education research in light of the claims of “No Child Left Behind.” In *Academic Capitalism*, Slaughter and Leslie (1997) track changes in the academic labor market from the 1970s through the 1990s reflecting a new emphasis on postsecondary education’s utility for national economic productivity and growth. Gary Rhoades (1996) looks at the same phenomena, but places an emphasis on explaining the shift towards part-time faculty.

Modeling Tuition Policy Using Critical Theory

Critical Theory directs our attention to both the content and practice of discourse within a policy arena. Many authors have used Critical Theory to analyze higher education policy for example, Sheila Slaughter and others’ work on the impact of what they term the new economy on postsecondary politics. In

Academic Capitalism: Politics, Policies and the Entrepreneurial University,

Slaughter and Leslie (1997) argue that political and economic globalization has shifted faculty and university administrative work away from basic research and teaching. Moreover, the shift to increasingly market-based activities is accompanied by an increased policy emphasis on universities' utility to national and regional economies and increased pressure for prestige (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004; Rhoades and Torres, 2006; Metcalfe, 2006).

Tuition policy should make for an interesting test for Critical Theory for a number of reasons. First, the degree of centralization or decentralization of tuition setting authority can indicate the nature of the relationship between the state and higher education. Indeed one of the most fascinating aspects of this policy issue from the vantage point of Critical Theory lies in the fact that the critical gaze can be cast in both directions. The issue of tuition policy and its resultant impact on access and affordability may well highlight features of bureaucratic domination coming both from the state and from postsecondary institutions. Critical Theory requires that I ask what communicative and instrumental strategies are at work in the negotiation between states and their colleges and universities over college costs. What policy opportunities does the framing of the negotiation make possible; what possibilities are obscured?

Criteria for Comparing Policy Frameworks

The four theories selected for this study all have produced stimulating and fruitful research. A review of the literature reveals two sets of criteria for comparing policy frameworks. Schlager and Blomquist (1996) propose the following six criteria for conducting comparative theory analysis in the policy sciences. First, how do the compared theories draw the boundaries of inquiry, indicating endogenous variables in need of explanation and exogenous variables that are taken as given? Second, how are actors described in their roles in the policy process; are they individuals, groups, or both? What assumptions are made about the nature of the actors in terms of their rationality? Third, what role is assigned to information and its deployment in policy debates? Fourth, how does the theory understand the operations of groups and the conditions required for cooperation? Fifth, does the theory conceptualize different levels of action? Does it emphasize one in particular, or examine movement across levels? Finally, does the theory account for activity at every stage of the policy process?

De Haven-Smith (1988) and Hawkesworth (1988) share many of the same ideas about the purpose and utility of comparing policy theories, so they will be discussed together. For Hawkesworth, each theory's internal logic and predictions provide the most relevant criteria for evaluating competing theories reside in examining. But more important than the predictions are the inevitable omissions or dynamics that a given theory is unable to notice or explain within its presuppositions. Comparing theories against one another allows such omissions to be revealed and discussed. Finally, Hawkesworth poses counterfactual

criteria, asking what the world would look like if the relevant actors behaved as if the theoretical presuppositions were true. De Haven-Smith argues that the persuasiveness of any given theory lies not in its being able to withstand empirical testing but in its ability to show us impacts of the policy that we otherwise would not have seen. He is specifically interested in understanding how different theories understand sociopolitical possibility based on conceptions of human nature and appropriate political strategy.

While Schlager and Blomquist take more of a technical theory-building approach to comparing policies, Hawkesworth and De Haven-Smith are more concerned with the political implications of the comparison itself. They ask what does the act of comparison reveal about a given policy arena? I intend to use both sets of criteria. Can comparing theories and empirical data across the macro-micro level divide yield additional insights into policy dynamics obscured by studies emphasizing only one level?

For instance, the IRC and ACF are explicitly micro level theories. Critical Theory constitutes what may be termed a meso-level theory, or a theory bridging the divide between macro and micro levels of analysis (Hall, 1995). Critical Theory specifically explores the impact of macro-level discourses on micro-level behavior. The DSH, on the other hand, uses quantitative measures and statistical models to understand policy choice, thereby providing an important balance to the other frameworks deployed in this study. A key goal of this dissertation is to triangulate theories of the policy process to add dimensionality to the depth

provided by the IRC and ACF and the scope provided by the DSH and Critical Theory.

Dissertation Overview

The structure of the dissertation is straightforward. Chapter Two provides information about state level tuition policy from three perspectives. First, tuition policy is discussed in terms its location within the larger context of higher education finance. While a great deal of scholars emphasize the impact of increasing college prices on access and affordability or examine the causes of changes in appropriations, little research exists on tuition policy itself. Second, I define the conception of policy change used in the study and use it to operationalize change in tuition-setting authority. Specifically, I only count statutory policy changes that alter the degree of institutional autonomy over tuition rates as changes in tuition authority. This includes the movement of jurisdiction over tuition establish from one institutional venue to another, the implementation or lifting of tuition caps, and the adoption of excessive hours surcharges or guaranteed tuition plans. Third, trends in tuition policy-making across the states from 2000 to 2006 are described and cross-tabbed against key variables derived from the higher education literature and SHEEO surveys. Finally, I justify my selection of tuition policy as the issue of interest for this study.

Chapter Three details the research design, methodology, and data sources used in the study. The overall research design fits with Cresswell's (1996) Model III mixed methods design, wherein quantitative analysis is used to

embellish an essentially qualitative study. The bulk of the study centers on the analysis of tuition policy change in two case study states, Florida and Missouri. Using the dimensions developed by Schlager and Blomquist (1996) for comparing empirical theories in conjunction with constructs developed from deHaven-Smith (1988), I create a rubric for analyzing and organizing the discussion of each framework used in the case studies. The case studies then are analyzed using what Yin (2003) describes as an embedded, multi-case design. An embedded, multi-case design includes multiple cases analyzed using multiple units of analysis. The “units of analysis” are the dimensions outlined in the rubric. The data sources for the macro-level portion of the study include Education Commission of the States, State Higher Education Executive Officers, National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, Illinois State University’s Grapevine Study, the National State Business Officers, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Census, and State Politics and Policy data sets. Data for the case study states include over 600 documents including legislation, legislative staff analyses, state agency and governing board meeting minutes, minutes from institutional boards, policy reports from external and state agency sources, media reports, and other communications among state and institutional actors.

Chapter Four provides the macro level explanation of tuition policy change and presents the results from a series of logistic regression models of tuition policy change across all 50 states. Specifically, I used both binary and multinomial logistic regression to examine the impact of political, economic, and

socio-cultural variables on tuition policy change. Political variables traditionally included in DSH studies such as political party, legislative professionalism, and executive centralization were not significant predictors of tuition policy change. Institutional arrangements clearly influence conditions likely to produce tuition policy change. States with more centralized governance structures tend to enact fewer changes in tuition policy. Changes in state revenue and tuition rates, however, showed tentative results, yielding little support for the commonly held belief that states experiencing revenue shortfalls will allow institutions to raise tuition to compensate for declining state appropriations.

The results from Chapter Four inform the analysis conducted on the case study states by highlighting the importance of institutional arrangements in understanding tuition policy change. Moreover, the results raise questions to be answered in the micro-level analyses. What is the role of state appropriations in debates about tuition policy at the state level? And do political parties matter in tuition policy debates? As the case study states demonstrate, it's not that political parties do not matter in tuition policy-making, but rather their effects are not direct.

I use case studies of two states: Florida and Missouri to compare Institutional Rational Choice, the Advocacy Coalition Framework, and Critical Theory. Chapter Five examines the three micro level frameworks in Florida. Florida's debates about tuition setting authority stretch back to the 1980s. Institutions and the Board of Regents argued that the legislature should allow greater flexibility in establishing tuition rates by giving up its statutory authority to

set tuition. The level of visibility and acrimony associated with these debates, however, reached new levels early this decade. Governor Jeb Bush and the legislature abolished the statewide Board of Regents and merged K-12 and postsecondary governance at the state level and created Boards of Trustees for the thirteen public four-year state universities. Former Governor and Senator Bob Graham and supporters launched an ultimately successful ballot initiative create a statewide Board of Governors via constitutional amendment. While the creation of the Board of Governors was intended to devolve tuition authority from the legislature to the Board of Governors, the legislature waged a vigorous legislative and court fight to retain its authority. Indeed the debates continue into 2008.

Comparing and triangulating the IRC, ACF and Critical Theory produced a complex account of tuition policy change in Florida. The IRC highlighted the importance of structural politics and levels of action in the Florida context. Specifically, Bob Graham, leaders of the now defunct Board of Regents, and institutional presidents attempted to wrest tuition authority from the legislature since the early 1980s. The balance of power between the Board, the Governor's Cabinet, and the legislature often subsumed the tuition debate into larger conflicts about legislative prerogative and intervention into higher education. Graham and his supporters altered the terms of these policy battles to by shifting the level of action away from the collective choice tier, to the constitutional tier by gaining voter approval of the constitutional amendment creating the Board of Governors in 2001.

The ACF, on the other hand, emphasizes the relationship of policy subsystems to their environments and the role of beliefs in shaping advocacy coalitions within policy subsystems. First, I identified two coalitions as the dominant groups of actors in the postsecondary policy arena. The traditionalist coalition, led by Bob Graham, argued in favor of a strong Board of Governors to promote mission differentiation and prevent universities squabbling over resources. The traditionalist coalition believes that the Board of Governors should set tuition rates and that these rates must increase in order to promote higher quality at the state's four-year institutions. The legislative prerogative coalition, however, believed that the legislature's role in budgeting gave it control over tuition rates at universities funded with state appropriations. Moreover, this coalition preferred to keep Florida a low tuition state. The debate about tuition setting authority struck at near core policy beliefs for both coalitions making the emergence of a compromise solution unlikely. Indeed, the intractability of the conflict between the two coalitions made the traditionalist shift from the collective choice to the constitutional level of action necessary.

Finally, Critical Theory examines the ways in which material and discourse shape power relations among actors in a policy context. Four discourses shaped and limited the debates about tuition setting authority in Florida: (1) higher education and the new economy, (2) role of public higher education, (3) devolution, and (4) alumni rivalry which flowed together to produce an obdurate policy dispute regarding tuition policy. Specifically, legislators understood the role of higher education as an extension of the K-12 system, while Graham and his

supporters argued that higher education represented a fundamentally different enterprise serving very different public purposes than K-12 education. The two coalitions also held very different understandings of devolution. These disagreements led to tuition policy debates in Florida fall short of the ideal speech situation described by Habermas.

Chapter Six applies the ACF, IRC, and Critical Theory tuition policy change in Missouri. Missouri's tuition policy debates emerged as a consequence of a series of dismal fiscal years. The four-year public colleges and universities raised tuition precipitously in response to sharply declining state appropriations and budget withholdings. Legislators filed no fewer than five bills limiting tuition authority for the four-year public universities in the state between 2000 and 2006. Legislation limiting institutions' ability to increase tuition rates passed during the 2007 legislative session as part of an omnibus package which also promised capital funds to the universities.

In the Missouri context, the ways in which actors understood and reacted to institutional rules and norms profoundly shaped the direction of debates about tuition policy. A shift in leadership at the two largest institutions in the state altered the landscape in that the new presidents shifted their strategies for dealing with one another and with the legislature, opting for a much more conciliatory stance. Moreover, the IRC analysis of Missouri tuition politics demonstrated that importance of tax expenditure limitation laws, found significant in chapter 4. Missouri's TEL served to limit the state's ability to raise and spend revenue, leading to budget cuts and withholdings in 2001. Finally, the resultant

tuition bill, SB 389 pass in 2007, reflected a combination of efforts spanning both the collective choice and their operational tiers of action. While the bill itself was passed at the collective choice level, the presidents of the thirteen universities exerted a great deal of influence over the substance of the new law. SB 389 also coincided with operational level changes in tuition policy at the two largest institutions in the state, the University of Missouri and Missouri State.

The ACF, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of the relationship of the subsystem to its environment and on the ways the beliefs of advocacy coalitions shape debates about tuition policy. The larger Missouri political and economic context helped raise the salience of tuition policy in state politics. First, tensions between cities along the Interstate 70 belt and more rural areas known collectively as “out-state” shape the relations among public universities. The higher education coalition lacked cohesiveness largely due to mutual suspicion. As a result, regional and small universities thought resources and political influence favored the flagship, University of Missouri System. Second, Missouri is historically a low tax state that tends to over commit resources, creating the large structural deficits that lead to the fiscal crisis in 2001. The advent of tough financial times for universities opened the latent tensions in the higher education coalition wide, resulting in very public bickering about the distribution of resources and the need to potentially close one or more campuses.

The role of beliefs and intensity of the conflict about tuition policy was important as well. Specifically, initial attempts to pass tuition caps in Missouri met

with stiff resistance from the universities. These pieces of legislation proposed what might be termed “hard caps” in that they made no linkage between tuition and state appropriations. These bills struck at near core beliefs held by the institutions. The version of the tuition cap instituted in SB 389 tied increases to the rate of inflation, but created a safety valve whereby the Commissioner for Higher Education could exempt institutions from the cap should he or she deem it necessary to do so. The incarnation of the tuition cap envisioned in SB 389 moved the issue of tuition authority away from the near core policy beliefs toward secondary aspects, which the ACF holds are more amenable to compromise.

In Missouri, using the IRC, ACF and Critical Theory to inform one another enabled some interesting connections and insights. First, the examination of discourse and discursive practices deepens our understanding of the belief systems postulated by the ACF. For example, it would appear that something in the higher education coalition’s belief system shifted to make the adoption of a tuition cap in any form acceptable. Examining the discursive practices used by university presidents throughout the first three years of the fiscal crisis compared with the last two yields an explanation. Throughout the first half of the fiscal crisis, the presidents cast themselves as passive victims of state budget cuts. They used terms like “cut to the bone” to describe the impact of declining state support. The imposition of tuition caps, they argued would fundamentally alter higher education in Missouri in ways too horrible to contemplate. With this mindset of helplessness, the notion of a tuition cap did go to the near core policy beliefs held by universities. By 2004, the presidents began taking a more

proactive approach with one another and provided the legislature and citizens with information about the importance of strong universities and the useful activities they were already engaged in. The shift in discursive stance seems to have altered the higher education coalition's collective belief system somewhat, making compromise on tuition authority a possibility provided it contained some concessions.

The Critical Theory analysis of the Missouri context provides a different perspective on debates about tuition setting authority. First, competing understandings of the role of higher education served as the primary discourse. Proponents of tuition controls viewed higher education as providing a primarily individual benefit for students, while university presidents and their supporters asserted that higher education was engaged in a fundamentally different enterprise, one that rested on a foundation of undergraduate education but that involved research, graduate and professional education, and community service. Universities used their conception of higher education's role to make the case for increased tuition. Institutional quality would suffer if universities were not allowed to offset declines in state support with tuition revenue. Legislators answered that the institutions were inefficient and greedy for state monies. A second key discourse revolves around what has been termed the "new economy". Leaders at the state Coordinating Board for Higher Education and the Department of Higher Education urged the institutions to emphasize the importance of higher education to economic prosperity statewide. In response, each institution began producing reports and information briefs delineating their unique contribution to the Missouri

economy. While the institutions shifted their discursive tactics, those of their legislative opponents remained largely unchanged, permitting agreement on a much less stringent bill limiting tuition increases.

The final chapter examines the results of the previous three chapters together by using the criteria outlined above to draw conclusions about the substantive interpretations and overall value generated by comparative theory analysis. This chapter not only summarizes the results of the preceding chapters but provides some additional synthesis across the frameworks. For example, while the IRC seems to provide the most comprehensive explanation of tuition policy in Florida when taken alone, by using the three frameworks in concert we can see that structural change is a means to an end in Florida. During the time frame for the study and in the decades preceding it, coalitions tried to manipulate structure in order to disrupt the opposition. Because the debates about tuition policy in Florida occurred at the near core level of coalitional belief structures, the traditionalist and legislative prerogative coalitions were unable to forge a compromise position. In Missouri, on the other hand, structure played a much less central role. The difference between the two states highlights an important finding of the dissertation. Differing state contexts require a slightly different configuration of the frameworks to produce a rich explanation of the events and debates surrounding tuition policy change.

Chapter Two: Tuition Policy and Higher Education Finance

Introduction

In this chapter I map the terrain of higher education policy broadly and subsequently narrow my focus to tuition policy. First, I establish the general political and fiscal landscape shaping higher education policy over the last three decades. Second, I outline the reasons tuition policy is both a timely topic from a public policy perspective and an appropriate venue in which to address the theoretical concerns motivating this dissertation. This section locates tuition policy within the larger framework of policies dealing with postsecondary finance and describes national trends in tuition policy since 2000. I present brief descriptions of the states included in the study: Florida and Missouri, providing pertinent demographic information on each, background on recent tuition policy activity, and the major political actors in higher education finance. Finally, I close the chapter by relating tuition policy to the questions raised in the previous chapter regarding the analytical possibilities offered by comparing policy theories within the same policy arena.

The Changing Nature of Higher Education

Understanding higher education can provide some insight into the politics driving finance policy in particular. Most scholars agree that higher education is in the midst of a massive shift from a period of relative affluence and autonomy to a period of declining state subsidies, calls for greater accountability and less

institutional autonomy (McGuinness, 1999; McLendon, 2003). The affluent period lasted from the end of WWII until the mid-1970s when the period of decline began continues to the present (Geiger, 1999; MacTaggart, 1996).

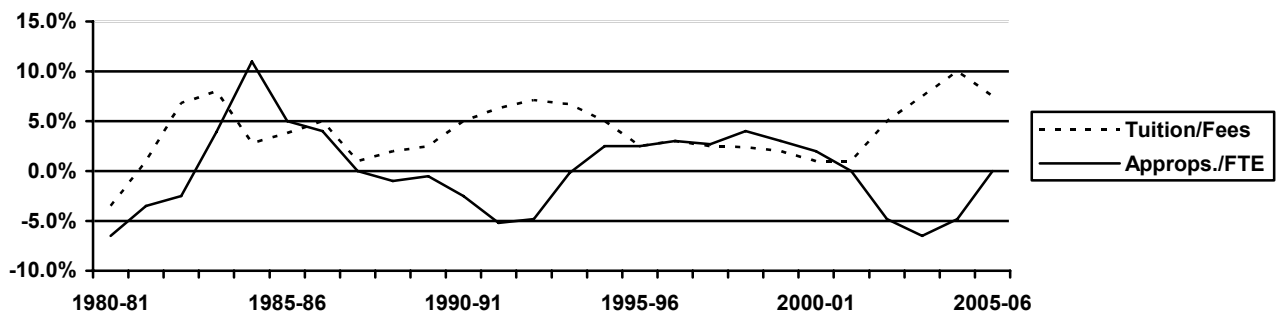
Three trends comprise the context for understanding changes in higher education finance policy. First, colleges and universities find themselves at a dangerous juncture in their relationships with both the state and the public. Altbach (1999) and Berdahl and McConnell (1999) argue that the university, historically cast as sanctuary of learning, is coming to be seen more as developer of human and economic capital. As a result, the mechanisms used to fund higher education are shifting to reflect this more tenuous and market oriented relationship. The second trend concerns the notion of the academic ratchet described by Zemsky and Massy (1990), wherein an increased emphasis on research and heightened admissions selectivity combine to push institutions into competition for prestige. Counter-intuitively, competition in this vein raises costs and prices.

Finally, there has been a noted decline in the proportion of institutional revenues coming from direct state appropriations. There are four commonly used measures of state tax effort for higher education in the literature: appropriations per \$1000 in personal income, appropriations per capita, appropriations as a proportion of the overall state budget, and appropriations per full-time-equivalent student (FTE student). This study relies on these measures as well. Direct state appropriations to public degree-granting institutions declined from 54% of total revenue in FY 1977 to 31.9% of total revenue in FY 2001, while tuition and fees

increased as a percentage of total revenues from 12.9% to 18.1% during this same period (NCES, 2004) (2003). Kane et al (2002) note that state appropriations per capita rose steadily into the mid-1980s but decreased sharply in the early 1990s. The pattern holds for appropriations per FTE student as well.

Predictably as state support declined, tuition and fees increased. The College Board⁵ reports that tuition and fees at public four-year colleges and universities rose an average of \$216 (2007 dollars) per year between 1997 and 2007. The average annual tuition and fee increases were 7.1% in current dollars and 4.4% after adjusting for inflation. Percentage increases at public institutions outpaced those of private institutions. Figure 1 shows the relationship between annual percentage changes in state appropriations and tuition and fees at public four-year institutions, adjusting for inflation.

Figure 2.1: Annual Percentage Change in Tuition and Appropriations per FTE Student



Source: The College Board, 2007

As state support for higher education declines, colleges and universities have had to search for alternative sources of revenue (Slaughter and Rhoades, 1997). Technology transfer and income from other services have become

⁵ Baum, Sandy, David Brodigan, and Jennifer Ma (2007) Trends in College Pricing. The College Board. New York: The College Board. 28.

significant sources of income for postsecondary institutions. The pressure for auxiliary income further stretches institutional missions, emphasizing research performance over instructional performance. As faculty become increasingly entrepreneurial in pursuing research and other dollars the ability of colleges and universities to provide quality undergraduate education, particularly at large research institutions, becomes increasingly tenuous (Massy, 2003). Comparing the expenditures of public institutions to their private counterparts, Kane and Orszag (2003) come to a similar conclusion. They note that between 1977 and 2002 public expenditures per FTE student dropped from 70% of that spent by private institutions to 58%. Kane and Orszag also show how declining state support for higher education has resulted in faculty salaries at public institutions falling further behind those offered by private universities.

Institutions are in many ways caught between conflicting public policies. Public and government officials emphasize undergraduate education as the primary function of colleges and universities, while continuing financing policies create incentives for institutions to deemphasize it. Tom Mortenson (2006) argues that both the national government and the states have pursued a conscious policy agenda aimed at rolling back the equity gains in higher education occurring since the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862. Many institutions, however, argue that current policies for financing higher education fail to recognize the diverse purposes served by higher education; purposes including but not exclusive to undergraduate education such as research, service, and economic development. Michael Middaugh, director of the National

Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity at the University of Delaware, presses this very point. He contends that colleges and universities are highly productive enterprises but that the academy has done a poor job communicating the volume and variety of their activities to policy makers and the public (Middaugh, 2001, 2005). A recent draft report issued by the Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education, however, focused almost exclusively on the shortcomings of undergraduate education. The report argues that bureaucratic inefficiency and lower than optimal productivity stymie efforts to promote quality and innovation in terms of instruction and cost controls (Commission on the Future of Higher Education, 2006).

Components of Higher Education Finance

State appropriations, tuition and fees, and financial aid comprise the bulk of revenue used by public postsecondary institutions. Research grants and contracts, alumni donations, and income generated through licensing, consulting, and technology transfer also contribute to the funds available for colleges and universities. States allocate appropriations in several methods: directly to institutions, to governing boards of multi-campus systems, or to statewide higher education agencies which then make allocation decisions for individual institutions. Financial aid comes from three sources: the federal government, state government, and institutional monies. Tuition and fees represent the prices charged to students for attending a given institution. While tuition is usually charged per unit of instruction or for blocks of units, fees are charged for a wide variety of purposes such as computing facilities, student activities and recreation,

and differential fees for more expensive programs. Institutions may spend funds from appropriations, tuition and fees, and financial aid as they deem necessary, while research, donations, and other income are frequently restricted in the uses to which they may be put.

Higher education is highly vulnerable to instability in state revenues. As a discretionary budget item, higher education appropriations are frequently cut in the face of increasing funding requirements for mandatory programs such as Medicaid, K-12 education, and Corrections (Kane et al., 2002; Okunade, 2004). Kane et al. found that the business cycle disproportionately impacts higher education because the growth in revenue in better economic times does not rebound from the losses incurred during down cycles. Archibald and Feldman (2006) explored the impact of Tax and Expenditure Limitation (TEL) and Supermajority Requirement (SMR) laws on higher education. Using a 41 year panel of state data running from 1961 to 2001, they found that tax revolt laws adversely impact state support for higher education. Specifically, the presence of a TEL accounted for about 1/3 of the average decline in state postsecondary spending per \$1000 of personal income, while the presence of an SMR accounted for another 1/5 of the decline. Moreover, the type of TEL explained most of the variance in impact on state spending. States with broad-based TELs, such as Colorado, experienced much greater declines in state support than states with less stringent limits on state revenues.

This study emphasizes policy developments from 2000 to the present and trends during this period mirror those established for the previous two decades.

For example, state appropriations for higher education as a proportion of the total state budget remained relatively stable at around 10.9% between 2000 and 2004 (NASBO, 2004). During that same time frame, net tuition as a proportion of higher education revenue grew from 25.5% to 31.2% (Lingenfelter, Wright & Bisel, 2004). Table 1 indicates the percent change in public college and university tuition in relation to the direction of change in four measures of state tax effort. Average tuition rates at 4-year public institutions increased more in states where the proportion of state expenditures going to higher education declined between 2000 and 2004.

Table 2.1: Ave. Change in 4-Yr Public Tuition by State Tax Effort

Direction Change (Exp. Per Capita)		Direction Change (Approp. Dollars)	
Ave. Change in Tuition		Ave. Change in Tuition	
Down	52.7%	Down	51.4%
Even	41.9%	Even	48.9%
Up	47.6%	Up	49.2%
Average	49.7%	Average	49.7%
Direction change (as % of State Exp.)		Direction Change (per \$1000 Income)	
Ave. Change in Tuition		Ave. Change in Tuition	
Down	53.6%	Down	51.5%
Even	50.0%	Even	40.4%
Up	46.2%	Up	40.0%
Average	49.7%	Average	49.7%

Source: NCPPHE and NASBO

Many states added a performance component to the appropriations process in the last two decades. As with other policy areas, legislators and governors want increased accountability—want to know whether appropriated funds are being used to support public goals and that those goals are indeed

being met. The adoption of performance funding reflects a growing sense that states can no longer afford to fund all programs well. They feel they must prioritize which programs will receive a greater share of state resources. As a result, there is greater pressure on colleges and universities to demonstrate that they are achieving their goals.

Why Tuition Policy?

Many aspects of higher education funding policy merit attention. Indeed much has been written about the impact of state appropriations on institutions and on the ability of students to afford college. Most attention has been focused on the impact on students of financial aid in all its various guises—federal grants and loans, state grants and loans, institutional aid—on students. The vast majority of studies on higher education funding address the impact of such policies on the access and affordability of college for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and on minority students (Melkers & Willoughby, 1998; Mumper, 2001; Brinkman, 2003). Heller (2001a, 2001b) and Mortenson (2006) demonstrate that while the overall proportion of high school graduates attending college has remained steady, there is increasing economic stratification in attendance patterns. For instance, the percentage of Pell Grant recipients attending four-year public institutions dropped from 60% in 1980 to 44.7% in 2002. Mumper and Freeman⁶ argue that increasing tuition disproportionately impacts those in lower income brackets. For example, between 1980 and 2001

⁶ Mumper, Michael, and Melissa L. Freeman 2005 The Causes and Consequences of Public College Tuition Inflation. *In Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*. John C. Smart, ed. Pp. 307-361. Higher education: handbook of theory and research, 20. Norwell, MA: Springer.

students from families in the lowest three income quintiles saw the proportion of their family income required to pay for college nearly double. Those in the upper two quintiles saw an increase of less than 2% of their family income required to pay for college. A few scholars have attempted to explain the impact of performance funding on institutional behavior, usually in the context of larger studies on the impact of accountability policies (Heller, 2001; McLendon, Heller & Young, 2005).

For a number of reasons, however, this study emphasizes tuition policy. First, while a great deal of research has examined the impact of increasing tuition on college attendance and the relationship between state appropriations, tuition, and student financial aid, very little research has been done on tuition policy itself. Second, as tuition becomes the primary funding mechanism for public postsecondary institutions, it seems proper to conduct an examination of the mechanisms through which tuition rates are established. St. John and Parsons (2004) strenuously argue that policy studies in higher education suffer from a lack of theoretically driven explanations of politics and policy processes impacting policy choice. Third, a number of commentators remark that the mechanisms used to fund higher education are so fragmented that they often result in policies working at cross purposes (Wellman, 1999; Jones, 2005). Specifically, financial aid policies, tuition policies, and appropriations are usually decided as separate matters, and by different sets of actors. While policymakers insist they seek to improve both accessibility and affordability for higher education, their financial aid policies and appropriations often exert inflationary

pressure on tuition rates (National Center for Postsecondary Improvement, 2002).

Finally, I detect a marked difference in the languages used to describe policymaking between scholars in higher education and those in political science. Scholars in higher education discuss policy decisions surrounding finance in terms of system design, reflecting a strategic management conception of policymaking. Such a perspective assumes that policymaking is technical exercise, selecting appropriate means to achieve desired ends. Politics is cast as an exogenous variable that intrudes to disrupt improvement in state higher education systems. One example of this is Griswold and Marine's (1997) study linking tuition and financial aid policy in the 1980s and 1990s. The title of the article, "Political Influences on state policy: higher-tuition, higher-aid, and the real world," is suggestive of postsecondary policy analysts' understanding of the role of politics in policymaking. In most higher education policy analysis, politics must be explained, while studies done by political scientists seek to understand the intrusion and manifestations of rationality. St. John and Parsons (2004) make a similar argument, contending that policy researchers in higher education tend to implicitly adopt both pluralism and rationalism as their paradigms without tending to politics.

Scholars in political science use very different language when describing policymaking processes. While most scholars agree that political actors act rationally or at least intendedly or boundedly so, they do not use the manufacturing metaphor deployed by higher education scholars (Sabatier &

Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Schlager & Blomquist, 1996; Ostrom, 1999). Political science assumes politics is endogenous to the policymaking process. For political reasons, actors may purposively create decision-making structures and rules that make policy coordination difficult (Moe, 1987).

A number of questions seem important. First, what are the components of tuition policy? How are tuition rates set in the 50 states? What criteria are used? Who has the authority to set rates? Does the method of establishing tuition impact rates? Do changes in tuition policy occur because of economic and/or political changes in states? Or, more broadly, what factors are associated with changes in tuition policy? Do different factors coincide with decentralizing policy than for policies that centralize versus decentralize tuition-setting authority? Is this an area in which states engage in a great deal of activity? What are the political divisions shaping political debates about tuition policy in the states? How do institutional rules and structures shape political strategy and decision-making? How do tuition policies reflect broader political philosophies and relations of power among policy-makers and other political actors? While the theoretically driven questions will be addressed in subsequent chapters, the more descriptive questions can be answered here.

Components of Tuition Policy

Tuition policy involves a set of dimensions combining to determine how much students pay for their educations. Policy establishes which entity or entities have jurisdiction over establishing the cost of tuition, or what is known as the

“sticker price.” In some cases jurisdiction may be, split with states establishing constraints on the size of tuition increases, while institutions or their governing boards establish the specific rates. As of 2003, four states set tuition rates legislatively, 18 states set rates through a statewide agency, 12 states use university system boards, and 16 states allowed individual institutions to establish their own rates (Rasmussen, 2003). The fact that there are potentially four layers of decision-making complicates the issue of jurisdiction over tuition setting. For example, tuition policies may be passed adopted through state law, occur as administrative rules, or they may be written into state constitutions. Constraints, tuition caps, may be established by the legislature, statewide coordinating agency, or by institutions and their governing boards. In the interests of clarity, this dissertation will examine only those tuition policies that are established legislatively

Wellman (1999) lays out five structural aspects of tuition policy. One, nearly all states use some form of mission-based tuition policy, wherein schools with differing missions charge different rates. Research institutions typically charge the highest tuition in a state, while community colleges and technical schools charge the least. Two, most states publish some form of tuition philosophy statement indicating whether policy decisions will be guided with the intention of maintaining low, moderate, or high levels of tuition. A few states have no explicit tuition philosophy. Three, authority to establish tuition is distributed across two levels of government—institutions and their governing boards and state government in the form of the governor and legislature. This sharing of

authority means that tuition decisions are inherently political. Four, many states index the amount of allowable tuition increases to some external indicator such as consumer prices, various inflation indices, rates charged by peer institutions, or ability to pay. Indexing price increases fails, however, to address the adequacy of base tuition structures. Five, states use a variety of cost differential mechanisms to charge students higher tuition for higher cost programs, residency, and degree level. Base tuition structures are not typically cost based. A handful of states use a cost sharing arrangement to distribute cost increases between taxpayers and students.

Wellman also makes an interesting distinction between tuition policy and, what she terms, tuition *budgetary* policy. Tuition policy refers to policies that establish tuition rates or those that establish the conditions under which tuition will be set. Tuition budgetary policy, on the other hand, is a policy response to increasing tuition by helping reduce the impact of rising tuition on students and their families. Tuition budgetary policies include prepaid tuition plans, college savings plans, tax benefits, and private and state student loan programs. Need-based programs have received less attention. Wellman argues the emphasis on helping students cope with rising tuition represents an acceptance of the inevitability of higher prices. This is problematic because it ignores the consequences of higher tuition that can only be addressed by changes in tuition policies themselves.

Wellman (2001) highlights this point by contrasting the relative shares of higher education costs borne by families, taxpayers, and philanthropy from 1970

to 1996. Using the original 1973 Carnegie Commission on Tuition Policy report, Wellman replicated the methodology to complete her comparison. The Carnegie Commission studied the relative shares of college costs from fiscal year 1930 to fiscal year 1970 and found that during this period the portion paid by families declined, largely due to increasing taxpayer support in the form of state appropriations. The Commission made recommendations for optimal levels of family shares of higher education costs taking the 1970 proportions as a baseline. Specifically, the Commission argued that tuition rates should be based on the actual costs of programs, with students and families paying about 1/3 of the total cost of instruction.

Table 2 summarizes information presented by Wellman and compares the relative shares of higher education costs among families, taxpayers, and philanthropy at three levels. Level (A) reflects the shares for the direct costs of instruction, meaning those expenses most closely related to the activity of teaching. Level (B) reflects the shares for instructional costs and student aid and subsistence expenses. Finally, Level (C) adds the costs of foregone income on the part of students to the first two levels to arrive at a relative share of total educational costs. The Carnegie Commission recommendations for the optimal proportion for each contributor to educational funds are in parentheses next to the 1996 actual proportion. As is evident from the table, family share of educational costs have increased significantly since 1970, growing particularly when factoring in student aid and subsistence costs into the analysis. Meanwhile, the proportion borne by taxpayers decreased significantly.

Table 2.2: Relative Shares of H.E. Expenditures from FY 1970 to FY 1996

Type	Year	Families	Taxpayers	Philanthropy
(A) Base Educational Funds	1970	30%	60%	10%
	1996	39%	49%	12%
	Difference	9%	-11%	2%
(B) (A) + Student Aid and Subsistence	1970	37%	54%	9%
	1996	57%	36%	8%
	Difference	20%	-18%	-1%
(C) (B) + Foregone Income	1970	64%	31%	5%
	1996	72%	23%	5%
	Difference	8%	-8%	0%

Source: two tables in "Looking Back, Going Forward: The Carnegie Commission on Tuition Policy (2001, pages 4 and 8)

Rationale for Choosing Tuition Policy over Tuition Budgetary Policy

I am interested in studying tuition policy for a number of reasons. First, I think the relationships between tuition, student aid, and appropriations reflect the larger political and economic relationship between states and their resident public colleges and universities. Specifically, I mean that the relationship between the three primary revenue sources for higher education influences the degree of autonomy institutions can exercise in allocating funds and making programmatic decisions. These in turn impact academic freedom. In what is considered the golden era of higher education, the late 1940s through the early 1970s (Geiger, 1999), academic freedom and institutional autonomy were at their height. As the funding climate changed so dramatically over the last 30 years, institutional autonomy and academic freedom have come under increasing scrutiny.

Focusing on tuition policy allows me to broach the question of the state-institution relationship without falling into a definitional quagmire.

Second, tuition policy has seen a fair amount of policy activity over the last five years. Although not as active an area as the budgetary type tuition policies described by Wellman, since 2000 there have been a total of 106 legislatively enacted policies dealing with tuition in forty states (data compiled by author using information from the Education Commission of the States). Some states have been much more active than others. California, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, and Maryland led in numbers of policies enacted, with eight or more changes in tuition policy since 2000.

Using the raw data provided by the Education Commission of the States (ECS), I categorized tuition policies into different types. Tuition exemptions waive tuition costs for certain portions of the population (foster children, members of the military, the elderly etc ...). Between 2000 and 2006, twenty-six states passed forty-six tuition exemptions into law. Well over half of these referred to some kind of exemption for members of the military or state national guards. Between 2000 and 2006, twenty-two states passed thirty-four new laws defining residency requirements, making this category the most active arena for tuition policy making over the past seven years. Ten states passed other tuition related legislation over this same time that do not fall neatly into one of the aforementioned categories and which deal with only peripheral matters such as methods of payment, child support enforcement, and the like.

Of most interest for this study are laws pertaining to the authority to establish and change tuition rates. Laws changing tuition setting authority address issues such as jurisdiction over portions of the tuition policy, limitations on the number of credit-hours students may accumulate without penalty, and the establishment of caps on tuition increases. Between 2000 and 2006, twenty-two states enacted thirty-seven changes in tuition setting authority.

Table (3) lists state tuition policy activity by policy type and year. Policy activity in around tuition has increased markedly since 2000 from nine changes in tuition policy in 2000 to thirty-six changes in tuition policy in 2005. While all of the categories witnessed some growth, save for the miscellaneous grouping, the increase in policies granting some form of tuition exemption accounts for the bulk of the policy activity. Policies dealing with who has jurisdiction over the establishment of tuition rates increased as well, with the number of policies addressing tuition setting authority reaching a plateau in 2003. Note that this jump in the number of changes to tuition setting authority occurred in the midst of a severe state budget crisis. Some hypothesize that states may grant greater latitude to institutions in setting tuition rates when appropriation levels are falling (Hovey, 1999; Brinkman, 2003; Jones, 2005).

Table 2.3: State Tuition Policy Activity by Type

Policy Type	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Grand Total
Authority (22)	0	2	4	8	10	10	3	37
Miscellaneous (10)	3	0	1	5	4	5	2	20
Residency (22)	4	4	4	8	3	9	2	34
Waivers (26)	2	5	3	4	13	12	7	46
No Action (17)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	9	11	12	25	30	36	14	137

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of states legislating change in this type of tuition policy
Source: Education Commission of the States

For this study, a state centralized authority if it (1) established a cap on tuition increases where none previously existed; (2) shifted tuition setting authority from individual institutions to boards of regents/governors, to state coordinating boards/departments of higher education, or reserved tuition setting authority for the state legislature; or (3) established credit hour caps. States enacted decentralizing tuition policies if they (1) relaxed a cap on tuition increases or (2) devolved authority for setting rates towards institutions or other less centralized decision-making bodies away from the state legislature.

Fifteen states centralized, decentralized, or engaged in what might be termed tuition policy “flip-flopping” between 2000 and 2006. Table 4 depicts the number of states changing tuition policy by the type of tuition philosophy espoused. Tuition philosophy refers to state higher education officers indicating their state is a low, moderate, or high tuition state on the SHEEO *Tuition and Fees Survey*. The data on tuition policy change again comes from the ECS bill summaries, while the data on tuition philosophy comes from the 2005 SHEEO survey of directors of state higher education agencies. The distribution of states changing tuition policy across the differing philosophical orientations is fairly even. Only those states responding that they held “Other” tuition philosophies were more likely to adopt a tuition policy change. All three of these states centralized their policies.

Table 2.4: Tuition Policy Change and Tuition Philosophy

Authority Change	Institution/					Grand Total
	High	Budget	Low	Moderate	None/ Other	
Centralized	0	3	4	1	4	12
Decentralized	0	6	1	2	2	11
None	1	7	7	3	9	27
Grand Total	1	16	12	6	15	50

Table 5 indicates the average 2004 tuition at 4-year public colleges and universities as a cross-tab between tuition philosophy and state tuition policy change. Counter-intuitively, average tuition was higher in states that centralized their tuition policy than in those that decentralized. States with no tuition policy change had the highest average tuition. Interestingly, average tuition rates for states espousing low tuition philosophy were only slightly lower than those states indicating they allowed budgetary or institutional priorities to drive tuition rates. There was no significant difference in the average size of tuition increases in states experiencing a change in tuition policy (50.1%) and those with no change (50.3%). There was no significant difference in the size of average tuition increases among the different tuition philosophies espoused by states.

Table 2.5: Tuition Policy Change Key Variables 2000-2006

Authority Change	Ave. Approps./ Capita	Ave. % State Budget	Ave. Approps. per FTE	Ave. Tuition	Ave. Tuition Change
Centralize	\$ 250	11%	\$ 6,075	\$4,370	29%
Decentralize	\$ 249	12%	\$ 5,749	\$3,785	22%
None	\$ 266	12%	\$ 6,589	\$3,966	20%
Summary	\$ 264	12%	\$ 6,520	\$3,984	20%

Source: ECS, NASBO, The College Board

Table 6 shows the degree to which state tuition authority was decentralized in 1999 relative to the institutional mechanism granting it. Thirty-seven states make either establish tuition authority through administrative rules, or do not formalize this aspect of their higher education finance policy. No systematic pattern emerges among states with different degrees of

decentralization. Legislatures can, however, alter tuition authority at any point save in situations where they have a constitutional prohibition against do so.

Table 2.6: Tuition Setting Authority in 1999

Tuition Setting Authority Granted by ...	Tuition Setting Authority in 1999				Grand Total
	Highly Decentralized	Decentralized	Slightly Decentralized	Not Decentralized	
Constitution	1	1	1		3
Statute	3	1		2	6
Not Formalized	5	8	1	2	16
Other	3	7	10	1	21
Varies		1			1
No response	3				3
Grand Total	15	18	12	5	50

Source: 1999 SHEEO Tuition and Fee Survey

Table 7, displays the number of states changing tuition authority relative to their tuition jurisdiction arrangements at the beginning of the study. First, states are split fairly evenly between those who changed tuition policy (23), in either direction, and those that maintained the status quo (27) between 2000 and 2006. Second, eleven states adopted policies that decentralized tuition authority, while twelve took steps to centralize. Surprisingly, no clear patterns emerge to immediately distinguish states adopting different types of policies. Third, states adopting centralizing policies were slightly more likely to have decentralized tuition authority in 1999, while decentralizing states were more likely to have 1999 tuition authority arrangements somewhere between the two extremes.

Table 2.7: Tuition Policy Change by 1999 Authority

Authority Change	Tuition Authority in 1999				Grand Total
	Highly Decentralized	Decentralized	Slightly Decentralized	Not Decentralized	
Centralize	5	2	3	2	12
Decentralize	2	3	4	2	11
None	8	13	5	1	27
Grand Total	15	18	12	5	50

Source ECS, 1999 and 2006 SHEEO Tuition and Fee Policy Survey

Case Study States

I selected two states, Florida and Missouri, as case studies with which to compare the ability of the IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory to explain the political processes surrounding tuition policy change. Following the guidelines outlined by Merriam (1998) and Yin (2003), the states used as observations were selected on the basis of purposive sampling. King, Keohane, and Verba (1994), in particular, argue that selecting cases based on the dependent variable makes explaining policy change highly biased. Accordingly, the selection criteria for the observations for this dissertation emphasize variability in some of the key independent variables. They vary in the size of their statewide undergraduate populations, their overall political culture; and whether they have traditionally been a low or high tuition state. The aim of this dissertation is to explore the analytical possibilities created when comparing multiple theories in the same policy arena. The states examined do differ on key variables.

Table 8 outlines the political, economic, and higher education characteristics used as the primary criteria for state selection. The succeeding subsections discuss the individual states in terms of the characteristics outlined

in the tables, provide a brief overview of the tuition policy change of interest to the study, and introduce the most visible actors in the policy processes involved.

Table 2.8: Salient Characteristics of Case Study States

	Florida	Missouri
Political Characteristics		
2004 Presidential Election	Republican	Republican
2004 Presidential Voter Turn Out	58.4%	64.2%
2004 Governor's Party (in office)	Republican	Democrat
Liberalism State Ranking	47.00	21.00
Legislative Professionalism Score	0.22	0.07
Lobbyists/ State Legislator	20.98	5.22
2001 Gross State Product	\$491,488	\$177,104
Term Limits	Yes	Yes
TEL	Yes	Yes
Economic Characteristics		
% Below Poverty	13.1%	11.7%
% Change in State Revenue	40.3%	14.8%
Average Approps./ Capita	\$186	\$211
Average Approps./ FTE	\$6,122	\$6,905
Tuition Policy Characteristics		
Philosophy in 1999	Institution/Budget	Institution/Budget
Formalization of Authority in 1999*	Statute	Statute
Role of Governor	No Role	No Role
Average Tuition	\$2,370	\$4,449
% Change in Average Tuition	53.6%	72.2%
Authority Change	Centralized	None

Florida's tuition authority was moved from statute to the Constitution in 2002

Florida

Florida is the most conservative state among those included in the study. It is also the poorest state among the observation states with 13.1% of its population living in poverty. Florida has the highest legislative professionalism score and the highest number of lobbyists per legislator among the observations states. Revenue limits and a supermajority requirement constrain policy making, but colleges and universities in Florida are not covered by the TEL.

Traditionally, Florida has had some of the lowest tuition rates in the country and a very large undergraduate student population. Between 2000 and

2006, Florida's tuition at 4-year public institutions increased by a relatively modest 33.6%. The proportion of state expenditures directed to higher education declined by 11.6%. Other measures of state effort, appropriations per \$1000 of personal income, and appropriations per capita also declined. Overall state appropriations, however, increased between 2000 and 2004.

Florida's higher education politics are volatile to say the least, characterized by a great deal of tension among the universities, the Board of Governors, and legislature over tuition and programmatic authority. In 2002, voters ratified an amendment to the state constitution creating a single Board of Governors to control the mix of programs and promote accountability among Florida's 4-year public institutions. The amendment also gave the newly formed Board sole authority to establish tuition rates. In 2003, however, under pressure from the legislature, the Board ceded tuition setting authority to that body. When the Board of Governors reasserted itself in 2004, the legislature refused to return tuition setting authority. Administrators from the University of Florida System and attorneys from the Council of 100 (business leaders) sued the governor and the legislature to bar the legislature from exercising increased control over higher education. In 2005, Governor Bush, citing concerns about rising tuition, signed legislation giving the legislature control over tuition rates once again (H.B. 7087). An interesting twist to the Florida story involves the Council of 100 siding with higher education elites against the conservative lead state government, arguing that increasing tuition is necessary to fuel the economic and workforce development needs of the state.

Missouri

Missouri voted Republican in the 2004 presidential election. State government changed party hands as well, completing a Republican takeover by winning the governor's office. Republicans assumed control of the legislature in 2002. Missouri is a somewhat more liberal state than Florida, with lower legislative professionalism score and far fewer lobbyists per legislator. While Missouri generally supports higher education at higher rates per capita and student FTE than Florida, Missouri took a harder hit in the 2002 financial crisis, with a change in state revenue from 2000 to 2006 of only 14.8% in current dollars. Average tuition increased much more sharply in Missouri, climbing 72.2% between 2000 and 2006.

Missouri did not change its tuition policy during the years included in the study. Tuition and college affordability rose to prominence, however, during higher education policy debates between 2000 and 2006. At the beginning of the study, tuition increases had slowed to almost keep pace with inflation after a five-year period of planned increases. The budget crisis in 2002, prompted sharp increases at all public institutions as the state withheld budgeted funds and decreased appropriations in subsequent years. The debate about college costs differed from Florida in that not even colleges and universities argued that tuition was too low. Rather, the debate centered on how best to address declining state revenues. Many in the legislature argued that the institutions are too inefficient and do little to control costs, while the institutions contended they could cut no more without sacrificing quality. For most of the 2000 to 2006 period, policy

recommendations revolved around tuition budgetary policy, with policymakers across the higher education arena trying to find ways to help students and their families cope with price increases. Only in late 2005 through 2006 did serious attempts to alter existing tuition setting authority come to the fore.

Tuition Policy as a Vehicle for Comparing Theories of the Policy Process

Does comparative theory analysis improve our understanding of state-level policy processes? While I do not test the veracity of the individual theories, their utility is well-documented in extant research, I contend that the approach used in this study can deepen our explanation of policy change in both theoretical and substantive ways. The comparative theory approach may also offer insights into linkages between macro and micro level aspects of policy change. Tuition policy provides an interesting venue for comparing theories, in part because it's a relatively untapped area for policy research. More importantly, tuition policy does not fit neatly into the kinds of policy for which the any of the theories were designed to address.

Chapter Three Research Design and Methods

Introduction

The research design for this study provides the infrastructure for answering the research questions posed in chapter one. I use a mixed methods design, patterned after Creswell's (1996) Model III design. In Creswell's classification, a Model III study employs quantitative analysis to embellish what is essentially a qualitative study. The primary research questions refer to the comparison of micro level theories: Institutional Rational Choice, the Advocacy Coalition Framework, and Critical Theory. The Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework forms an adjunct component to the dissertation.

I have four broad objectives in this chapter. First, I discuss in terms of principles of good research design, using Yin's (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd edition. It provides the primary framework for the design and data collection of my dissertation. Then I define the type of case study design and offer a rationale for applying this design to tuition policy change. Second, I outline the specific design for this study, reiterating my research questions and demonstrating how the design allows me to select and analyze the appropriate data in order to address the interests expressed in my questions. In this section, I discuss units of analysis, the types of data required, and the logical links between data and the inferences to be drawn from them. I specifically address how the design meets four measures for assessing design quality: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (King, Keohane,

and Verba, 1994). Third, I provide a detailed explanation of the sources of data and address how they will be collected. Finally, each of the theories compared here use different methodologies to analyze information about public policy. Therefore, I summarize each theory's most commonly deployed methodology as well as a method for conducting the comparative analysis to address the central question of this dissertation.

Research Design: Key Principles for Case Studies

According to Yin, case studies are appropriate for studies asking how and why questions, not requiring actual control over behavioral events, and which emphasize contemporary events. Most importantly, Yin draws a distinction between statistical and analytic generalizations. Most empirical research, such as that using surveys or other techniques where sampling is required, generate statistical generalizations. Statistical generalizations make inferences from a sample to a population based on the quantitative analysis of data, which establish degrees of confidence regarding the accuracy and precision of estimates. Case studies do not, and should not, rely on a sampling logic in the selection of cases. In this fashion, case studies resemble experiments. Each case in a study serves as the replication of an experiment, where theory provides the template used to compare the empirical results of each case study. Case studies then do not enable researchers to draw inferences about populations. In this instance, I will not be able to make inferences from my case study states to the larger population of American states. Rather, case studies enable analytical

generalization, in the same way that experimental designs do. Analytical generalization draws inferences about theory from empirical data.

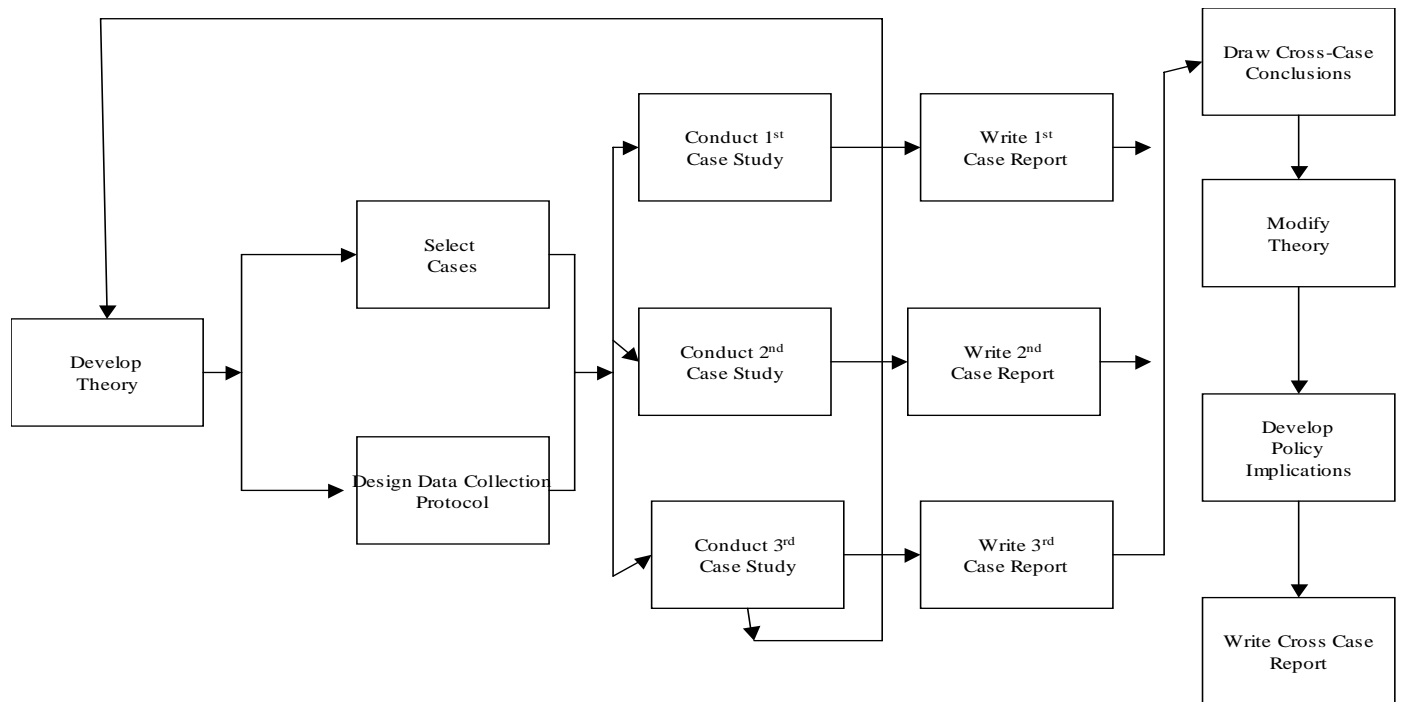
Research designs have been variously defined as logical models of proof enabling researchers to draw causal inferences from data (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992), and as blueprints for dealing with the logical problems involved in research (Philliber, Schwab & Samsloss, 1980). For Yin, research design expresses the logic linking data collection and the conclusions drawn to the research questions posed. Research designs, from his perspective, consist of five components (1) research questions, (2) propositions, (3) units of analysis, (4) logic linking the data to the propositions, and (5) criteria for interpreting the findings. Theory is the glue providing coherence to the five components of any given study. Theory and the propositions drawn from it direct an investigator's attention to the things that need examination in the phenomenon of interest. King, Keohane, and Verba (1994) argue that the research design is not a blueprint or the description of a mechanical process. Rather, researchers use their designs to guide their investigation while being open to situations requiring them to ask new questions, revise the original design, or collect additional or different data.

Yin uses two criteria to describe different types of case study design. The first dimension pertains to the units of analysis. The second is based on the number of cases. Holistic case studies have only one unit of analysis, while embedded case studies use multiple units (units and subunits) of analysis. Each of these types can be conducted with either one or multiple cases. As discussed

above, each case replicates the application of the theory being studied, where the number of cases selected depends on the degree of certainty the investigator wants about the results.

Selecting cases depends on a number of criteria. First, select on the basis of the theoretical goals for the study. For literal replications, select cases where similar results are predicted by the theory. For theoretical replications, select cases wherein contrasting results are expected, albeit for predictable reasons given the theory. While more than one case study is desirable, the overall number of case studies is not the most important factor in research design, according to Yin. Again, using a sampling logic is inappropriate because case studies are not used to assess the prevalence of phenomena. Moreover, case studies take into account both the phenomenon and its context making the statistical concern about having fewer variables than observations untenable. Yin offers the following depiction of the case study method to clarify his argument (2003, 50).

Figure 3.1: Case Study Research Process



Patton (1990) discusses four types of triangulation, of which three are used in this dissertation. First, data triangulation requires using multiple sources of data. I explain how my study uses this mode of triangulation below. Second, investigator triangulation requires a team of scholars participating in the gathering and analysis of the data. Investigator triangulation allows for greater construct validity and reliability because the researchers develop constructs together and function as checks for one another's interpretation and analysis. This study does not employ investigator triangulation. Third, theory triangulation involves using multiple perspectives to analyze one set of data. Theory triangulation is the central concern of this study. Fourth, methodological triangulation requires data analysis through a variety of analytic strategies. This project employs three methods of data analysis, two of which serve to triangulate

methods within the process of comparing theories, while the third, a logistic regression including all 50 states, serves as a macro-level check on the micro-level interpretation of tuition policy change in the case study states.

An Embedded, Multi-Case Design for Comparing Policy Frameworks

As indicated in Chapter One, the central question driving this study is how different policy frameworks alter and/or improve our causal/explanatory understanding of the policy process? Specifically, how do Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert; Institutional Rational Choice; the Advocacy Coalition Framework; and Critical Theory explain states' decisions to centralize or decentralize tuition policy between 2000 and 2006. A few secondary questions follow from the primary question. In what ways can it contribute to theory building for both individual frameworks and at the meta-theoretical level? Further, how does comparing frameworks deepen our reflections about the purposes of policy analysis? Is the benefit derived from new insights or by the act of triangulating differing lenses? Does using comparative analysis mitigate some of the logistical and methodological issues surrounding the study of policymaking across the states, what Blomquist (1999) terms the large N problem?

Units of Analysis

To answer these questions I selected an embedded, multi-case design. I selected two states for the case study: Florida and Missouri. Because multiple units of analysis are used to conduct the comparison of the frameworks, the study is what Yin calls "embedded." As mentioned above, the research protocol

will be replicated in each state in order to generate meaningful data for comparing the theories. The criteria for comparing theories discussed in Chapter One provide several units of analysis, serving as guides to data collection and as points for comparison. Table 1 outlines the relevant units of analysis and the place accorded them in each of the three theoretical frameworks used in this study.

Practically speaking, the dimensions outlined above serve as a rubric to frame each case study. It serves as the primary organizer for each chapter. The IRC, ACF, and critical theory are used independently to analyze tuition policy in the two cases. A brief analysis from each framework is presented, followed by a comparison of the frameworks using the units of analysis as “variables.” Each case study chapter closes with an discussion of how the process of comparison reveals about tuition politics in the state, what the comparison reveals about the frameworks themselves, and what insights comparing theories offers the practice of policy analysis. Each case study chapter, then, looks follows this basic format:

- State Higher Education Context
 - Overview of relationship between postsecondary institutions and the state
 - Trends in postsecondary finance
 - Tuition Policy—history and current debates
- Institutional Rational Choice
- Advocacy Coalition Framework
- Critical Theory

- Comparison of Frameworks
 - Compare along the dimensions of analysis
 - Comparison and tuition policy
 - Frameworks in Concert
 - Implications for Policy Analysis

The final chapter compiles and synthesizes the findings from the case study chapters, offering concluding remarks about the usefulness of comparative analysis for both theory building and for generating insights about the policy process. I adopt this structure over one devoting a chapter to each individual framework. The structure outlined above ties the data analysis more closely to the research questions, as the central premise of each chapter hinges on comparing the frameworks and discusses them in conjunction with one another. While treating each framework separately might allow for more sophisticated interstate comparisons, this study is not directly concerned with doing so.

Table 3.1: A Rubric for Comparative Theory Analysis

Dimension	Source	Institutional Rational Choice	Advocacy Coalition Framework	Critical Theory
Boundaries of Inquiry	Schlager & Blomquist	analyze behavior within institutional arrangements	policy making and policy change within a policy subsystem	primarily interested in the material conditions and relations of power produced through discourse
Actors	Schlager & Blomquist	primarily individual	only posits theory of individual behavior for policy entrepreneurs and policy brokers	actors are both individual and collective since groups and individuals can participate in and produce discourse
Nature of Actors	Schlager & Blomquist	boundedly rational, goal-oriented/strategic behavior	boundedly rational individuals whose beliefs drive political strategies	intentionally rational; rational communication is constrained by discursive practices
Role of Information	Schlager & Blomquist	actors rely on information about other actors' intentions to craft strategy	information is a central concern, improved technical understanding of problems can stimulate policy change	information plays a complex role because its meaning and use are not transparent
Collective Action	Schlager & Blomquist	central concern of the framework--how do institutions shape collective action	concerned with the creation, maintenance, and behavior of advocacy coalitions	not concerned with the phenomenon of collective action itself, rather with the terms on which it occurs
Levels of Action	Schlager & Blomquist	multiple action arenas high can be studied individually or in relationship	emphasizes the collective choice level	multiple action arenas high can be studied individually or in relationship
Policy Stages	Schlager & Blomquist	addresses all due to emphasis on levels of action	emphasizes all stages of policy process except implementation	addresses all stages of the policy process
Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility	De Haven-Smith	assumes pluralism among elites as dominant form of politics, but sees possibility for improved cooperative behavior	assumes pluralism among elites as dominant form of politics, seeks increased use of technical/expert analyses in policy making	assumes pluralism among elites as dominant form of politics, seeks improved democracy through emancipatory discourse

Case Selection

The cases were selected for reasons that deviate from the advice commonly given. Yin, for instance, argues that case study selection ideally proceeds in two phases. First, an initial screening should narrow the potential cases to 20 to 30, using a set of theoretically determined criteria. Second, the number of cases to be included in the study should be chosen randomly from this

set of possible cases. In the case of tuition policy, fourteen states have significantly centralized or decentralized their tuition policies through the legislature between 2000 and 2006. The remainder have either not altered their tuition policies since 2000, or have elected to do so through administrative means. Table 2 lists each of these states along with the direction of its tuition policy change.

Table 3.2: States Changing Tuition Policy Through Legislative Processes

<u>State</u>	<u>Direction of Tuition Policy Change</u>
Arizona	Centralized
California	Centralized
Colorado	Decentralized
Florida	Decentralized
Idaho	Decentralized
Illinois	Centralized
Indiana	Centralized
Kansas	Decentralized
Louisiana	Decentralized
Oklahoma	Mixed
Texas	Mixed
Utah	Centralized
Virginia	Centralized
Washington	Decentralized

I immediately removed Idaho and Utah from consideration due the small size of their higher education systems. Any of the remaining states would make fine case studies given the availability of data in each state.

I elected to do two case studies using states with different policy outcomes as a way of providing contrasting conditions for comparing the three frameworks. This strategy makes sense in that it extends the analysis done by Allison (1969) and de Haven-Smith (1988) who conducted their comparisons using one case study, albeit at different levels of analysis. Using two cases balances the need to compare the theories in multiple venues and the need to keep data collection manageable given that there is only one investigator for the study. While Yin recommends selecting cases from the list of possible cases on a random basis, I decided to make my selections using purposive criteria. In order to maximize my ability to compare across the units of analysis, I included Florida because it has a large and complex public sector and highly visible and complex postsecondary systems. The visibility is important because it tends to generate a greater number and variety of artifacts for analysis. Moreover, the complexity of the Florida system offers a rich context for comparing the frameworks. Finally, I selected one state, Missouri, as an example of a state not taking action to alter its tuition policy. While the postsecondary system in Missouri is not as large or complex as in Florida, there have been vigorous debates about tuition policy over the last six years. The two cases are diverse and rich in data and will generate meaningful comparisons among the three frameworks.

Data Sources and Collection

This study relies on several sources of data. While the quantitative data used in Chapter Two is primarily used to characterize the nature of tuition policy across the states, much of it can be used to add detail regarding the case study states. I'll first describe the quantitative data analyzed using the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework and then describe the qualitative data used to compare the IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory.

Quantitative Data

There are four classes of variables in the data set. First, the political variables describe the political ideology and structure in each state. Second, economic indicators provide detail about the socioeconomic mix in each state as well as indicators of economic health. Third, policy variables describe key social and economic policies enacted in each state. Fourth, higher education variables describe enrollments, graduate rates, ratios of state tax effort for higher education, appropriations, tuition rates, changes in tuition policy, and responses from the SHEEO survey of state higher education executive officers.

The political, policy, and general economic variables come from the U.S. Census, State Policy and Politics Quarterly. The higher education variables come from several sources as well. First, the data pertaining to tuition policy change come from two sources. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) has been producing legislative summaries of several postsecondary policy issues since 2000, including tuition policy. Other data regarding tuition policy comes from the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) triennial survey of

state higher education executives. Enrollments and tuition data at 4-year public institutions comes from the National Center for Higher Education Policy's *Measuring Up 2000* and *Measuring Up 2004* reports. Graduation rates come from the IPEDS Graduation Rate survey. Postsecondary finance data come from three sources. State appropriations come from the Grapevine study at the Illinois State University. Data regarding measures of state tax effort for higher education come from SHEEO's *State Higher Education Finance Report* and the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) annual financial report. Finally data about institutional expenditures and revenues come from the IPEDS Finance survey.

The data are collected across the time frame of this study, 2000 to 2006. While the legislative data indicating whether a state has centralized, decentralized, or maintained the status quo are available for each state in each of the years, the other higher education indicators reflect data from 2000 and 2004, save the SHEEO survey data which will be discussed in greater detail below. The data for the remaining variables were collected at various points between 2000 and 2006, mostly 2000, 2002, 2003, and 2004. While some of the variables reflect a percent change over time, most reflect a single point in time. The data set is structured as state-years, giving $n=300$.

The SHEEO survey began in 1979 and has been conducted on a triennial basis since 1999. SHEEO provided the raw data from the 1999 and 2005 surveys, as well as most of the old summarized reports dating back to the initial study. The surveys include questions about state tuition philosophy and various

state institutional features that play a role in establishing tuition. SHEEO sends the survey to the chief higher education executive office in each state. Typically the questions are completed by the chief financial officer for the Department of Higher Education or equivalent for the state. In that sense, the instrument is more an informational questionnaire than a survey in the social science vernacular. The reports provide valuable data about higher education structures and tuition policies in each state. For the logistic regression presented in Chapter Two, comparisons between the 1999 and 2005 SHEEO surveys allowed me to investigate the impact of structural and philosophical changes on the adoption of tuition policy change.

Qualitative Data

Yin outlines three principles of data collection, which are applied here. The first refers to triangulation of data, or the use of multiple data sources to enhance. Data triangulation, according to Patton (1990), enhances construct validity by making it possible to corroborate the findings from one evidentiary source with findings from another source. While Yin recommends gathering data from six different sources (1) documents, (2) archival records, (3) open-ended interviews, (4) observations, (5) structured interviews and surveys, and (6) focus interviews. Due to resource limitations, this study uses three of these types of data collection: documents, archival records, and the SHEEO survey.

Documents include communiqués, written reports of events (such as hearing transcripts), administrative documents, formal studies or evaluations, and media reports. This study relies most extensively on this source of data for

comparing the frameworks within each state. Specifically, I collected meeting notes and other communications from the case study states. I also gathered administrative documents from the central state agencies responsible for oversight of postsecondary education, from university governing board or boards of regents. The agency and university documents are invaluable sources for understanding how state agencies and colleges and universities interpret the tuition policies enacted by the state. Policy “white” papers as well as administrative rules were included. Texts of legislation and reports produced by legislative research services were gathered. I use media reports both from national higher education newspapers and trade magazines and in-state news to understand the boundaries of the public debate around college costs and tuition policy. Fortunately, both case study states have more than one statewide newspaper.

Archival evidence includes organizational records, geographical charts, lists of names, survey data, and calendars (Yin, 2003). My study includes organizational charts for the state legislative committees, state postsecondary agencies, and charts depicting the governance structure for higher education as sources of data. Other organizational records include state budgets. Maps indicating the location of all postsecondary institutions in each state provide salient information. From professional anecdotal experience, I know that regional differences exert a palpable influence on the politics surrounding higher education in Missouri. It stands to reason that in a state as large as Florida that regional differences might play a role as well. By survey data, Yin refers to

census data. I consider the IPEDS surveys collected by NCES to fall into this category of data. All IPEDS data are based on census data gathered from each institution in the United States receiving federal funds for student financial aid. While the IPEDS data are important components of the logistic regression model, they are equally important sources of data about the cases. Specifically, I will use six-year graduation rates, revenue, and expenditure data by postsecondary sector to provide some context for understanding debates about tuition policy in each state.

The SHEEO survey of state postsecondary executive officers forms the third source of data for the case study states. As discussed above, the raw data from the 1999 and 2005 surveys is analyzed in detail, while the summaries of prior year reports are used to look for older trends that may exert an impact on contemporary tuition policy debates.

Yin's second principle of data collection involves creating a case study database. The case study database helps the investigator organize and document both the data collection and data analysis. For Yin, the database and the case study report are not one and the same. Case study databases improve a study's reliability by providing other researchers access to the data and the intermediate processes of analysis. In the absence of well-worn statistical and data handling methods, the case study database allows the construction of the case study reports to be much more transparent. Comprised of case study notes, documents and associated annotated bibliography, a tabular data inventory, and narratives prepared by the investigator during data collection and analysis, the

case study database helps the investigator “integrate evidence and converge on facts and interpretations” (Yin, 2003, 104).

Yin’s final principal maintains a chain of evidence is necessary for the improvement of a study’s reliability. The chain of evidence allows the reader to track the development of evidence from the initial research questions to the study findings. The final case study report makes reference to the salient components of the case study database such that the reader understands the link between the evidence cited and the claims made in the final report. Investigators provide a credible chain of evidence by writing both the case reports and the conclusions drawn from them in such a way that readers clearly see the logic linking questions to data collection and analysis, data collection and analysis to interpretation, and interpretation back to the research questions. I strive to provide this level of evidence for this study because, both Patton and Yin argue the need to document the process of data analysis and include it in the case study database is paramount.

Data Analysis

Three methods of data analysis are used in this study. Logistic regression is used in the next chapter to analyze which variables are important in explaining tuition policy across the states. A standard coding and construct development scheme is used to analyze the case study data for both the IRC and ACF frameworks, while discourse analysis is used to analyze the data for critical theory. Each method is explained below.

Logistic Regression

In chapter four, I model states' decisions to centralize, decentralize, or maintain their tuition policies. Following the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework, states' policy decisions reflect the impact of political, economic, and social factors. The weakness of the large N studies of state policy, from Blomquist's (1999) perspective is that the models cannot address how these factors influence decision-makers and shape political processes. As mentioned above, however, the logistic model is used to describe tuition policy at the macro level. This provides a triangulating perspective, both methodological and theoretical, in evaluating the results of the other three individual frameworks.

The model in this instance estimates the likelihood, or odds, of categorical outcomes. In this case, the outcomes include: centralize, decentralize, or status quo. There is no inherent order or magnitude to the categories, necessitating the use of a multinomial logit model for estimating the policy choices. The multinomial logit is a set of binary logits run simultaneously for all outcome comparisons (Long, 1997). Specifically, there are $k-1$ comparisons, with one set of binary outcomes forming the null, similar to a dummy code in linear regression. In this study, the comparisons modeled will be centralize-status quo, and decentralize-status quo, with centralize-decentralize serving as the null comparison. The coefficients in the multinomial logit are interpreted in the same fashion as in a single comparison logistic model (Long, 1997; Vittinghoff, Glidden, Shiboski & McCulloch, 2004). They differ from coefficients in linear regression in that they represent changes in the likelihood, or odds, that the

modeled outcome will occur given the values of the independent variables. The change in likelihood is expressed as an odds ratio. For example, an increase in state indebtedness might make a state 1.2 times more likely to decentralize tuition. This likelihood is known as the odds ratio (Long, 1997; Vittinghoff et al., 2004).

Coding Textual Evidence

The second method applied in this study is the standard form of construct development used in evaluation research. I draw on Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) for developing a protocol for analysis. First, however, it is important to make a distinction between the mode of analysis employed here and that used in grounded theory. In studies using grounded theory, data analysis is used to build theory from the data itself, to “ground” the theory in the empirical world (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In grounded theory the process of coding is identical to the process of construct development. Grounded theory is more commonly applied in ethnographic studies. In this study I am using the theory driven approach to analysis advocated by Yin for case studies.

Relying on theoretical propositions requires that I operationalize the variables and the hypothesized relationships among them according to each framework used in the study. Then, using Table1, I compare the findings of each framework with each other. The data analysis documented by making a matrix of categories and placing the evidence in the appropriate category. I also use flowcharts and concept maps to assist with the analysis and tabulate the

occurrence of different events. The processes surrounding tuition policy will also be placed in temporal order covering the years from 2000 to 2006.

The process of coding the data artifacts is iterative. First the documents were placed in chronological order and coded for the key variables indicated by the three frameworks. Each state was analyzed separately. I wrote a series of analytical memos around the themes for each framework, and forming some initial thoughts about comparing them. A second round of coding grouped the artifacts by type. For example, I will analyze all of the media reports within a given state, all of the official legislative and administrative documents, reports produced by think tanks and interest groups, statements made by legislators and other policymakers, and documents from universities and their governing boards. A second set of analytical memos was then produced. At this stage the definitions of codes became more formalized and an initial report for each theoretical framework was written. The initial report was checked against the raw data a final time. During the process of writing up the individual frameworks, additional notes on comparing the frameworks were prepared. All of the notes comparing the frameworks were synthesized into the concluding remarks for each case study chapter. Finally, I asked a key member of each of case study states to read and comment on an early draft of the chapter on their state. I incorporated these “member checks” into my revisions for both the Florida and Missouri chapters. Both individuals have been long standing and active participants in state-level higher education policy debates.

Discourse Analysis

A method of analysis designed specifically for critical studies, discourse analysis applies many of the same procedures discussed above, but emphasizes the analysis of the language of the artifacts themselves. As Fairclough (2003) notes, discourse analysis is a micro-level mode of analysis and is most profitably used on conjunction with other methods. Both Norman Fairclough (2003) and James Gee (1999) have written extensively on the topic, but I rely primarily on Fairclough because of his emphasis on textual analysis dealing with archival documents and media reports. Gee's work, on the other hand, emphasizes the analysis of interpersonal conversations such those recorded during interviews or observations.

At its core, discourse analysis ascertains the social effects of texts. Texts, according to both Fairclough and Gee, can alter beliefs, values, and knowledge. Texts can also shape group identities, such as people's identity as consumers or as gendered persons. The effects, however, are mediated by meaning making. As a result, their effects are not regular effects in the statistical sense. Many factors determine the impact of particular texts. The method is particularly useful for critical theory studies because it explicitly understands discourse as a mechanism for the exercise of power and the shaping of the processes and substance of political participation.

Using the term discourse indicates a conception of language as a component of social life. Language is dialectically connected to other aspects of social life to such an extent that social research should always take it into

account (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse analysis does not, however, assume as many postmodernists do, that social life is reducible to the representations it receives in language. Not everything is discourse. For Fairclough, discourse analysis moves back and forth between a focus on specific texts and the order of discourse, which is a relatively stable structuring and networking of social and linguistic practices.

Fairclough outlines twelve dimensions of discourse analysis. Each dimension has an associated question or series of questions designed to explicate that aspect of a given text according to its possible effects on the phenomenon under study. Table 3 displays the subset of Fairclough's dimensions used in the dissertation along with their associated questions. While I avoid the use of Fairclough's terminology in the case study chapter for purposes of clarity⁷, I used these dimensions to complete the Critical Theory portion of Table 1.

⁷ I only do this to facilitate ease of reading for those unfamiliar with the more technical aspects of Fairclough's work.

Table 3.3: Fairclough's Concepts for Textual Analysis

Comparative Analysis Dimension	Critical Theory Concept	Associated Questions
Boundary of Inquiry	Social Event(s)	What is actually happening here? What social event(s)/practice(s) is the text a part of?
Boundary of Inquiry	Discourses	What discourses are drawn upon and mixed together?
Collective Action	Difference	Is difference accepted, accentuated, contested, bracketed, etc.?
Collective Action	Exchanges, Speech Functions and Grammatical Mood	What are the types of exchanges, statements, metaphorical relations etc.?
Nature of Actors	Intertextuality	What voices are excluded or included? How?
Role of Information	Assumptions	What assumptions are made--existential, propositional, ideological?
Role of Information	Semantic/Grammatic Relations	Logical relations between/among clauses, sentences and larger structures within the text
Role of Information	Modality	What are authors' commitments to truth, obligation, assertion etc.?
Level of Action	Representation of Social Events	What elements of social events are included? How are they represented?
Policy Stages	No direct correlate in Critical Theory	
Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility	Evaluation	To which values do authors commit themselves? How do exchanges conform to an ideal speech situation?

Adapted from materials received from Peggy Placier

Chapter Four

A Macro Level Approach to Tuition Policy Change: Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert

Introduction

Chapter two provided background on higher education finance and tuition policy, outlining key definitions and trends across the 50 states over the study period. This chapter takes the descriptive analysis further, modeling tuition policy change using the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework. First, I briefly describe the evolution of the DSH framework, and indicate which variables most commonly used in DSH studies I think are likely to impact state decisions to alter tuition setting authority. Second, I outline five hypotheses regarding state-level tuition policy change using the DSH framework to build the models. Third, each hypothesis is tested using both binary and multinomial definitions of tuition policy change as the dependent variable. Fourth, while the results of the logistic regressions only provide support for tentative inferences at this point, I discuss the primary findings and illustrate how they inform the micro-level analyses of Florida and Missouri.

Theoretical Framework

To understand the macro level variables influencing state policy change in tuition setting authority I use the framework developed most prominently by Thomas Dye, Richard Hofferbert, and Ira Sharkansky in the 1960s and 1970s. Dye's (1966) seminal work, *Politics, Economics, and the Public: Political*

Outcomes in the American States, marked a theoretical break with the institutional/structural emphasis of earlier work on Congress and state legislatures. Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert inspired studies rely on explanatory variables thought to differentiate states with respect to policy choices. Building on Dawson and Robinson (1963), Dye (1965) argued that socioeconomic variables outweigh political variables in shaping state economic development over time. In particular, Dye contested the emphasis on thick description of institutional workings as the best mode for explaining policy outputs. Rather, he argued, macro level processes measured by aggregate social, economic, and political variables would provide better explanations of policy outputs across the states.

The debate over the relative importance of socio-economic and political variables continued through the 1970s. For instance, Dye's (1965) found that socioeconomic factors such as levels of industrialization and per capita income outweighed the partisan balance in state legislatures. Whether a legislature was balanced or unbalanced made no difference in their policy choices. Hofferbert (1966) reached similar results in favor of socioeconomic variables. Booms and Halldorson (1973), in their study of redistributive policy also found that political variables played a lesser role in state policy decisions.

Hofferbert (1974) introduced the use of mass and elite preferences into the framework in *the Study of Public Policy*. As Blomquist (1999, 205) summarized, Hofferbert argued "policy outputs were produced by elites operating within government institutions but affected by the mass public, the socioeconomic environment, and ultimately by the historical geographic setting.

Tompkins (1975) and Lewis-Beck (1977) used path analysis to explore interaction effects among socioeconomic and political indicators.

The literature examining macro level explanations of state policy outputs revolved around the relative importance of socioeconomic versus political variables until the 1990s. Berry and Berry (1990, 1992), drawing upon early the early work of Jack Walker (1969), pioneered the use of event history analysis to explain the diffusion of policy innovation across states. To the traditionally used socioeconomic and political variables, Berry and Berry added time-to-adoption and proximity to other adopting state measures. The diffusion and innovation approach not only added some theoretical depth to the DSH framework, its main contribution came by changing the dependent variable. Early DHS studies tended to measure policy change in terms of changes in state expenditures in a given policy arena. Diffusion studies, on the other hand, model the adoption of policy innovations.

This modification of the DSH model allowed scholars to understand factors contributing to the speed with which states adopt policy innovations and to describe the degree to which spatial or geographic dispersion of policies impacts the relative speed of policy diffusion. A number of scholars have applied the event history analysis method pioneered by Berry and Berry. Mintrom and Vergari (1995) examined state adoptions of school reform policies, while Mintrom (1997) added variables to measure the impact of political entrepreneurs. More recently, scholars proposed improvements to the methodology itself. Box-Steffensmeier and Zorn (2002) proposed a method to addressing repeated

events in diffusion studies. Volden (2006) extended this work by adopting the state dyad data set format from international relations scholars. He uses this format to explain the diffusion of successful policies across states. The policy diffusion approach has been applied in higher education by McLendon et al (2005, 2007).

This chapter relies on the older versions of the model for several reasons. First, the policy changes are not innovations in the sense used by the diffusion of innovation scholars. Changes to existing systems of tuition authority do not represent innovations in the same sense as the adoption of state lottery systems or new educational accountability regimes. The policy changes examined here represent policy revision and are the result, most likely; of policy feedback loops rather than sharp breaks with pre-existing policy. While there may be diffusion effects at work in some aspects of tuition policy-making such as the adoption of guaranteed tuition plans or excessive hours surcharges, the descriptive analysis in Chapter 2 suggests otherwise when examining changes in tuition-setting authority as a whole. Second, the available data do not lend themselves to event history analysis. Policy changes here are not one-time events between 2000 and 2006. Several states altered their tuition authority policies multiple times during this period. Finally, the following analysis attempts to explain changes in the direction of authority between states and public universities rather than the adoption of specific policy instruments.

Hypotheses

I test five hypotheses listed below using a set of independent variables suggested from my reading of the DSH and the related diffusion and innovation literature and literature on higher education finance.

Hypotheses

- *H1*: Socioeconomic variables are more important predictors of tuition policy change than other types of predictors.
- *H2*: States experiencing financial stress are more likely to deregulate tuition.
- *H3*: States with higher tuition rates are more likely to tighten controls over tuition.
- *H4*: States with more centralized governance structures are less likely to change tuition authority
- *H5*: States with more enrolled students and/or increasing numbers of high school graduates are more likely to centralize tuition policy

Hypothesis 1: Socioeconomic variables are more important predictors of tuition policy changes than other types of predictors.

This hypothesis is intended to test the general argument motivating the DSH and diffusion literature. While individual scholars have tinkered with variable definition, a variety of IVs, and the statistical methods used for analysis, the DSH is ultimately concerned with which classes of variables prove more salient in predicting policy change as it has been variously defined. The models tested here include the three main classes of variables used in DSH type studies: socioeconomic, political and demographic variables.

Hypothesis 2: States experiencing financial stress are more likely to deregulate tuition.

This hypothesis tests a folk wisdom prevalent within the higher education community that states will “rationally” opt to relax controls on tuition when states experience financial stress requiring the decrease of appropriations going to

higher education. There are two key assumptions underlying the argument here. First, there is a negative relationship between tuition controls and tuition rates that only extends in one direction. Relaxation in tuition controls yields increased tuition rates, but the inverse may not necessarily be true if the state is lowering its appropriations for higher education. Second, only economic considerations determine legislative action around higher education finance policy generally and tuition policy in particular when states are facing revenue shortfalls. These assumptions strike me as somewhat spurious. I anticipate rejecting this hypothesis to indicate that a variety of variables impact state decisions to decentralize tuition policies.

H3: States with higher tuition rates are more likely to tighten controls over tuition.

The inclusion of this hypothesis is somewhat intuitive. Much of the research cited in Chapter 2 about tuition highlighted the deleterious impact rising college costs have on affordability and access to higher education (Heller et al. 1999). Moreover, many of the widely touted national reports generated from think tanks such as the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, the Lumina Foundation or the Western Interstate Consortium on Higher Education emphasize the degree to which tuition has increased at public four-year institutions in particular. These reports, such as NCPPHE's *Measuring Up* get wide play in both the national and state level media. It makes sense then to examine whether or not states respond to increasing tuition through the implementation of tuition controls, which at minimum would cap the rate of increases or guarantee tuition for a number of

years in the case of guaranteed tuition plans. While tuition rates would not likely decrease, the rates of increase might stabilize.

H4: States with more centralized governance structures are less likely to change tuition authority

I draw on Richardson et al. (1996) work on governance structures and McLendon's (2005, 2007) research on governance reforms for this hypothesis. States with strong state agencies with oversight over higher education tend to have an already close link between the legislature and the institutions. Therefore, legislature are likely to pursue other mechanisms for reigning in tuition increases than statutory changes to tuition policy.

H5: States with more enrolled students and/or increasing numbers of high school graduates are more likely to centralize tuition policy

Demographic variables form an important component of the DSH framework. The number of students in enrolled in college and or the number of potential students in the pipeline might create pressure on legislators to control tuition prices in some fashion. In this scenario, states with large numbers of college students and pending high school graduates may opt to tighten controls over tuition authority in order to at least slow down rates of increase and make college attendance a more likely choice for its young people. Additionally, increasing numbers of college students places college prices on the minds of their parents who are likely paying for at least a portion of their children's postsecondary education. This in turn places pressure on legislators concerned about reelection to keep college costs down.

Defining the Dependent Variable

Tuition setting authority refers to who has jurisdiction over the establishment of tuition rates. States vary in the latitude afforded to colleges and universities to set tuition for their students. Some states allow public institutions to set their tuition rates without much oversight from any external authority save the market and public opinion. Other states reserve tuition setting authority for the legislature. In addition, states vary in the ease with which tuition policy can be changed.

Figure 1 depicts tuition setting authority as a series of concentric circles, with the center representing concentrated authority in the central institutions of state government. For the purposes of this study the central institution of interest is the legislature. Policy-making authority located in successive outer circles indicates greater dispersion of authority. Imagine each line as a threshold across indicating the degree of difficulty attached in moving authority either closer to the center or further away. Barriers to change are greatest when change must be made via an amendment to the state constitution and easiest when only a change to an administrative rule is necessary. While it is tempting to believe that placing tuition authority within the state constitution might insulate this authority from political tampering, it probably serves to alter the political dynamics when college prices become a salient policy issue within a given state.

Figure 4.1: Dispersion of Tuition Setting Authority

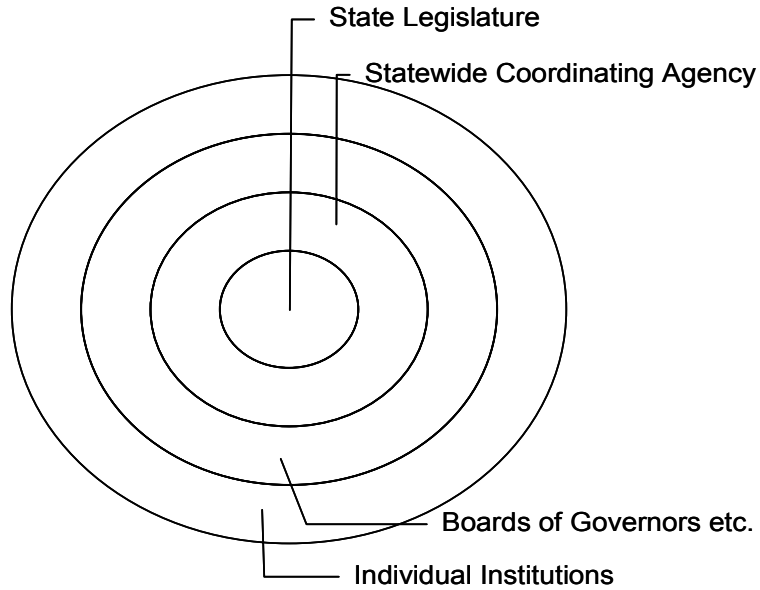


Table 4.1: Distribution of Tuition Authority in 1999

Tuition Setting Authority Granted by ...	Tuition Setting Authority in 1999				Grand Total
	Highly Decentralized	Decentralized	Slightly Decentralized	Not Decentralized	
Constitution	1	1	1		3
Statute	3	1		2	6
Not Formalized	5	8	1	2	16
Other	3	7	10	1	21
Varies		1			1
No response	3				3
Grand Total	15	18	12	5	50

Source: 1999 SHEEO Tuition and Fee Survey

Table 1, indicates the dispersion of various systems of tuition setting authority across the United States 1999 as a crosstab with the location of tuition authority within the legal framework of state government. Over half, thirty-three, of states have decentralized or highly decentralized tuition policies, meaning that

either governing boards, regents, curators, or the institutions themselves have authority to establish tuition rates. Seventeen states have either slightly decentralized or not centralized tuition policies, meaning either a statewide board or the legislature retains authority to set public college and university prices. The majority of states, thirty-seven, either do not formally delegate tuition setting authority or do so through some administrative means ('other'), indicating that tuition policy in those states is most likely fairly easy to change.

The data for this table come from two items in the State Higher Education Executive Officers *1999 Tuition and Fee Survey*. One question asks respondents, usually state higher education executives in the budget and finance area, to indicate where in the legal structure tuition setting authority is granted. Table 1, uses the categories provided by SHEEO for respondents. The degree of decentralization, on the other hand, is derived from the question asking which entity has primary authority to establish tuition rates. I coded states where institutions hold primary authority over tuition rates as "highly decentralized," states in which governing boards set rates as "decentralized," those where a statewide agency sets rates as "slightly decentralized," and those states where the legislature sets tuition as "not decentralized." I used a scale of decentralization because the folk wisdoms guiding the discussion among higher education commentators centers on states' tendency to decentralize tuition authority.

Tables 2 and 3 depict change in tuition setting authority from 2000 to 2006. Table 2 indicates the number of states changing policy, while Table 3

indicates the number of instances of policy change across all states over the same time period. Slightly less than half the states, twenty-three, changed tuition setting authority in some way between 2000 and 2006. These states split evenly between those that centralized authority away from the institutions (12) and those that devolved authority towards the institutions (11). More states with decentralized systems of tuition authority in 1999 made tuition policy changes than those with only slightly or not decentralized systems.

Table 4.2: Number of States Changing Tuition Policy: 2000 – 2006

Authority Change	Tuition Authority in 1999				Grand Total
	Highly	Decentralized	Slightly Decentralized	Not Decentralized	
Centralize	5	2	3	2	12
Decentralize	2	3	4	2	11
None	8	13	5	1	27
Grand Total	15	18	12	5	50

Source 1999 and 2006 SHEEO Tuition and Fee Policy Survey

While nearly half the states made changes to tuition setting authority, such changes were still relatively rare policy events throughout the time frame of this study. When the data are organized in a pooled cross-sectional format across the seven years of the study, we get 350 observations. During this time, states changed their tuition setting authority only thirty-seven times, leaving 313 observations with no change. Well over half of those changes, twenty-one came in states with decentralized systems of tuition authority, while sixteen changes came in states with slightly or not decentralized systems. Moreover, state legislatures more often opted to centralize rather than decentralize tuition authority.

Table 4.3: Number of Tuition Policy Changes: 2000 – 2006

Policy Change 2000-2006	Tuition Authority in 1999				Grand Total
	Highly	Decentralized	Slightly Decentralized	Not Decentralized	
Centralized	8	4	6	4	22
Decentralized	5	4	4	2	15
No Change	92	118	74	29	313
Grand Total	105	126	84	35	350

Source 1999 and 2006 SHEEO Tuition and Fee Policy Survey

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study is tuition policy change at the state level. I operationalized change in tuition policy in fairly narrow terms. First, I limit the variable in conceptual terms. My definition of tuition policy includes only those policies addressing which entities within a state have the authority to establish and alter tuition rates. I limited my dependent variable to tuition setting authority because it indirectly indicates the tenor of the relationship between public colleges and universities and state government. I limited the scope of the variable by only including policy changes brought about through the legislative process. Large changes in tuition setting authority wrought through a state coordinating board, for example, are not included here. I further limited the list of legislative activity to only those bills that were signed into law, coding a law as “centralized” if it moved tuition authority closer to the state government and as “decentralized” if it shifted authority towards individual institutions. I used these descriptions of policy change in the foregoing tables. For the binary logistic regression, I collapsed the two policy change categories into one, indicating

change and retained the “no change” category, creating a binary nominal variable—change or no change as possible outcomes. For the multinomial logit I retained the original coding.

Independent Variables

Table 4 lists all of the independent variables for which I ran univariate logistic regression on the dependent variable, a subset of which were used for the multivariate analyses. The set of socioeconomic variables run from 2000 to 2006. Percent Revenue Change measures state fiscal health. Indeed nearly all states, with Minnesota being a notable exception, experienced declines in state revenues in FY 2002; some experienced additional declines in FY 2003 as well. See appendix A for a listing of key variables by state. Obtained by calculating the year to year percent change in state revenue, this variable captures in a rough fashion captures state ability to subsidize public colleges and universities. The next socioeconomic variable averages tuition at four-year public institutions across the time frame of the study. Formulating the variable in this fashion helps determine whether states with higher tuition rates are likely to change tuition policy. Whether you believe states opt to deregulate tuition policy in the face of declining revenues or that states will tighten the reigns in light of tuition increases, tuition rates seem to be a logical choice for inclusion in the model. Finally, I included the child poverty rate for each state as a control variable for the economic well being of each state’s population.

Table 4.4: Independent Variables

Socioeconomic	Variable Type		
	State Political	Higher Ed. Political	Demographic
% Revenue Change	Dominate Legislative Party (dummy)	Governance Structure (dummy)	Postsecondary Students per Capita
Ave. 4 Yr. Public Tuition	Tax Expenditure Limitation (dummy)	Tuition Authority in 1999	Percent Public Enrollments
Child Poverty Rate	Executive Centralization		High School Graduates
	Appropriations per FTE Student		
	Legislative Professionalism		
	Lobbyists per Legislator		

Political variables are most heavily represented. I used a dummy variable with Republican legislative dominance coded as 1. I selected Republican as the reference category because Okunade’s (2004) research showed that Republican legislators tend to be more hostile to higher education. This suggests that Republican led legislatures may be more likely to vote to decentralize tuition authority in order to allow rates to rise and offset decreasing appropriations. Since the data set is collapsed across the time frame of the study, I coded states with the majority of years held by the Republican party as 1 and states with the majority of the study years held by the Democrats as 0. I included a dummy indicating whether each state had a tax expenditure limitation law as well. Archibald and Cox (2006) found that the presence of tax expenditure limitation (TEL) and supermajority laws were negatively related to state appropriations for higher education. If that is the case, one would expect that states with TELs would be more likely to decentralize tuition policy than those without them, assuming there is a causal link between state support for higher education and

tuition policy. To further gauge the impact of state-level political variables, I included a measure of executive centralization, legislative professionalism, and the number of lobbyists per legislator.

Finally, I included appropriations per FTE student as a standardized measure of state support for higher education. This variable is a statewide average rather than an average of funding per FTE student at each institution. FTE student refers to Full-Time Equivalent students, a commonly used measure in higher education to standardize student counts across institutions. This measure is obtained by dividing the number of credit hours taken at an institution during a given semester and dividing by 15, the “standard” course load for a full-time student in one semester. By dividing state appropriations by the number FTE students, a normalized variable is obtained. In the collapsed data set appropriations per FTE are averaged across the 2000-2006 time frame.

The second category of political variables pertains specifically to higher education. First, I created three dummy variables for state postsecondary governance structure. Richardson et al. (1999) developed four categories of state governance systems for higher education. Cabinet systems are defined as where the chief executive officer for higher education holds a seat on the governor’s cabinet. Segmented systems are those wherein different systems of higher education operate with autonomous boards without a central coordinating agency. Unified systems have all four-year public institutions under the control of a single statewide board. Federal systems are the most common. Under federal systems individual institutions or groups of institutions have their own boards

operating under the guidance of a statewide coordinating agency. The three dummy variables have federal, segmented, and unified structures coded as 1. I selected cabinet based structures as the null because very few states have been classified as having such systems.

The “Tuition Authority in 1999” variable provides a base line against which tuition policy change can be viewed. For use in the statistical models, I collapsed the four categories used in foregoing tables into two categories—centralized or decentralized. Those states whose tuition authority in 1999 was highly decentralized or decentralized in the earlier version of the variable were coded as 1. Those states with slightly decentralized or not decentralized tuition authority in 1999 were coded as 0. States beginning the study period with a centralized tuition authority can only go one direction should the state opt for a change in tuition policy.

I included a number of demographic variables as controls determined relevant to higher education policy. The first is the number of postsecondary students per capita, limited to those enrolled in four-year public institutions. I also incorporated the percentage of four-year students enrolled in public institutions for each state. Conversations with colleagues prompted me to investigate whether states with higher enrollments in private institutions might be more likely to decentralize tuition authority so that public school prices will be more comparable to private institutions. Finally, I included the number of high school graduates as an indicator of potential demand for higher education.

Data

The data used in this chapter come from nine sources. SHEEO administers its *Tuition and Fees Surveys* triennially going back to 1979. While the questions have evolved over time the items used in this study were consistent in both the 1999 and 2006 iterations. I developed the dependent variable using a listing of state legislative activity pertaining to tuition and financial aid policies compiled by the Education Commission of the States (ECS). ECS's tuition and financial aid policy listing indicates tuition policy changes by state from 2000 to the present. For each piece of legislation, ECS provides a brief description of each bill and a hyperlink to the source from which they obtained the information. ECS also indicates the bill number and its final disposition, signed by the governor or vetoed.

I used the raw data from the 1999 SHEEO Tuition, Fee, and Financial Aid Policy Survey to generate the governance structure, tuition policy structure in 1999 variables and the dependent variable, tuition policy change. SHEEO surveys state higher education officers triennially about their state's policies. While the survey is used to produce a descriptive report, the questionnaire has not been validated. One question directly asks respondents to indicate their state's tuition setting authority. A second question asks respondents to indicate at which level tuition setting authority is formalized, if at all. A third question asking respondents to indicate how resident tuition is set.

I also used state finance data measuring state support for higher education. State appropriations for the time period of the study were obtained

from the Southern Illinois University Grapevine study and the SHEEO State Higher Education Finance Report. I obtained measures of state support for higher education, discussed in more detail below, from the National Association of State Business Officers (NASBO) State Expenditures Report. NASBO generates annual report outlining the expenditures for each state every year.

Demographic, political and economic variables used in the model were compiled from the U.S. Census, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Statistics, and State Politics and Policy Quarterly database. I obtained data on numbers of high school graduates from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). I used data indicating whether states had tax expenditure limitation and/or supermajority laws from research conducted by Archibald and Feldman (2006).

The original data set was organized as one row per state per year for an n of 350. I initially ran a standard logistic regression on the full data set using the variables discussed above. Due to the relative rarity of tuition policy change between 2000 and 2006, however, the model failed to converge. For statistical analysis I collapsed the variables into one row per state for an n of 50 and limited the number of IVs included in the multivariate regression. In the pooled cross-sectional data set there were thirty-seven policy events out of 350 possible events, while in the averaged data set twenty-three of fifty states changed tuition policy at some point between 2000 and 2006.

⁹ The University of Florida Financial Aid Office estimates that 96% of its incoming freshmen receive Bright Futures scholarships, 65% of those did not apply for financial aid or had no financial need.

Methods

In examining tuition policy change at the macro level, I used both binary and multinomial logistic regression to analyze the data. Logistic regression is designed to examine relationships between a categorical dependent variable and one or more categorical and continuous independent variables. Binary logistic regression applies when the dependent variable has only two outcomes, while multinomial logit applies for categorical dependent variables with more than one outcome (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1999). The binary logit was coded change (1) or no change (0) on the dependent variable. The multinomial logit took the direction of the policy change into account—centralize, decentralize, with none serving as the reference category.

Put simply, logistic regression runs a maximum likelihood regression model using a dummy variable as the outcome measure. Multinomial logistic regression runs two regressions simultaneously based on the same logic. In this case, the model runs with centralize as 1 and all other outcomes as 0. Simultaneously, the model is run with decentralize as 1 and all other outcomes as 0. This allows the output generated by the statistical program to contrast the regression coefficients and odds-ratios for the outcomes of interest.

Given the categorical nature of dependent variables in logistic regression, no linear relationship can exist between the outcome variable and predictor variables. Graphing a continuous independent variable against a binary dependent variable yields an s shaped curve that cannot be accurately described by a linear equation (Peng, Lee Kuk Lida & Ingersoll, 2002). Moreover, errors are

not constant or normally distributed as required by linear regression assumptions. According to Hosmer and Lemeshow (1999), logistic regression uses a logit transformation of the dependent variable, predicting the natural (ln) of the odds of Y . The odds are in the form of ratios of probabilities of Y occurring to probabilities of Y not occurring. For this study, the odds will be ratios of the probability of tuition policy change to the probability of no tuition policy change. The relevant formulas look like this (Peng et al. 2002):

$$\text{Logit}(Y) = \text{natural log (odds)} = \ln(\pi/1-\pi) = \alpha + \beta X$$

where,

$$\pi = \text{Probability (} Y = \text{outcome of interest} \mid X = x) = \frac{e^{\alpha+\beta X}}{1+ e^{\alpha+\beta X}}$$

where,

π is the probability of the outcome of interest, i.e., tuition policy change.

This basic form can accommodate multiple continuous or categorical independent variables and ordinal or nominal polytomous dependent variables.

While logistic regression makes no assumptions about the normality of the independent variables' distributions, Hosmer and Lemeshow (1999) argue that adequate sample size is an important consideration. Large sample sizes ensure sufficient numbers for each outcome of the dependent variable. With small sample sizes, the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test is unable to detect deviations from the overall logistic model and the specific model being tested may be over-fitted. They recommend a sample size of at least 400. More importantly, they recommend having ten to fifteen events for every independent variable included in the model. Hsieh et al. (1998) offer a sophisticated method

for selecting sample sizes for clinical research. They found that sample sizes with low numbers of events relative to the overall group being studied should fall between 1833 and 2648 with a two-sided significance level of .05. As mentioned previously, these requirements are *not* met by the data available for this study. Given the resources and time needed to gather additional data, I simplified the data analysis and acknowledge the tentative and more exploratory nature of the conclusions to be drawn.

The key piece of interpretive information obtained with logistic regression is the odds ratio. The odds ratio is the measure of effect size. According to Hosmer and Lemeshow (1999), it is the ratio of the odds of an event occurring in one group to the odds of it occurring in another group. An odds ratio of 1 indicates that the outcome is equally likely across the groups. When less than 1, the outcome is less likely. When greater than 1, the outcome is more likely.

Model

Initially, I ran each independent variable as a univariate logistic regression against the binary and multinomial versions of the dependent variable. I then ran multivariate analyses on both versions of the dependent variable using the predictors that were significant in the univariate analyses. Again, this violates traditional research protocols because testing preliminary sets of independent variables should be conducted on a pilot or subset of the data collected for a given study. The multivariate analysis should then be conducted on separate data (Agresti & Finlay, 1997). Data limitations precluded taking normal

precautions against over-fitting. Using the linear form of the regression equation for simplicity the models have the following form. The equations include all of the potential independent variables.

$$\text{Tuition policy change (change/no change)} = \alpha + b_1\text{RevChg} + b_2\text{4YrTuition} + b_3\text{ChildPov} + b_4\text{LegPar} + b_5\text{TEL} + b_6\text{ExCent} + b_7\text{AppFTE} + b_8\text{LegProf} + b_9\text{Lob/Leg} + b_{11}\text{HEStruc} + b_{12}\text{99AUT} + b_{13}\text{Stu/Cap} + b_{14}\text{\%PubEnr} + b_{15}\text{HSGrad}$$

The multinomial model has the same form, save that it is running simultaneous logits with centralize and decentralize as the events of interest.

Results

While the results obtained through the binary and multinomial logistic regression models are tentative, the analyses do yield some interesting points for discussion. I present the results from the binary univariate binary multivariate logits first. Second, I present the results of the multinomial univariate and multivariate logits. The variables used in the multivariate analyses were selected from the results of the univariate regressions. Prior to running the logit models, I created a covariance matrix to check that none of the independent variables were highly correlated with one another. There was no indication of collinearity.

Binary Logistic Regression

Table 5 indicates the results for univariate logistic regression models; the dependent variable for this set of models is binary, with “No Change” as the null value. Of the 16 variables, only two were significant, with p values less than .05.

States that had tax expenditure limitation laws prior to the 2000 to 2006 period, much more likely to pass legislation changing their tuition policy. Not only is the coefficient highly significant, the odds ratio for states with TELs is quite high. The ratio of the probability that a state will change to tuition policy to the probability that it maintains the status quo is over six times higher in states with TELs. Also, states with federal style postsecondary governance systems were much more likely to enact tuition policy changes between 2000 and 2006. The odds ratio for the dummy variable for federal governance was 4.444. Finally, both variables performed adequately in predicting the correct outcome for each state. According to Hosmer and Lemeshow (1999), a percent correct rate of 50% means the model predicted as well as selecting outcomes by chance would have. Percent correct rates over 50% indicate approximately how much better the model accomplishes prediction than chance.

Table 4.5: Binary Logistic Regression Results—Univariate

Predictor (univariate)	β	SE β	Wald's χ^2	df	p	e^{β} (odds ratio)	% Correct
% Revenue Change	-0.023	0.019	1.411	1	0.235	0.978	39.1
% Tuition Change	1.674	1.256	1.777	1	0.183	5.336	39.1
Ave. Child Poverty Rate	0.093	0.061	2.28	1	0.131	1.097	43.5
Legislative Party (Rep)	-0.357	0.607	0.346	1	0.556	0.7	70
TEL (Yes)	1.876	0.631	8.843	1	0.003	6.531	69.6
Executive Centralization	-0.013	0.316	0.002	1	0.968	0.987	0
Approps. Per FTE	0.741	1.199	0.381	1	0.537	2.098	21.7
Legislative Professionalism	-1.27	2.039	0.388	1	0.534	0.281	0
Lobbyists per Legislator	0.026	0.072	0.134	1	0.714	1.027	9
Federal Gov. Structure	1.492	0.613	5.927	1	0.015	4.444	60.9
Segemented Gov. Structure	-0.865	0.685	1.593	1	0.207	0.421	82.6
Unified Gov. Structure	-0.865	0.685	1.593	1	0.207	0.421	82.6
Authority in 1999	-1.166	0.623	3.497	1	0.061	0.312	47.8
Average Students per Capita	-0.265	0.414	0.41	1	0.522	0.767	21.7
Ave % Public Enrollment	2.335	2.097	1.239	1	0.266	10.325	34.8
%Change in HS Grads	-3.449	2.494	1.913	1	0.167	0.032	47.8

Table 4.6: Binary Logistic Regression Results—Multivariate

Predictor (multivariate)	β	SE β	Wald's χ^2	df	p	e^{β} (odds ratio)
Federal Gov. Structure	-1.878	0.747	6.326	1	0.012	0.153
TEL (Yes)	-2.208	0.740	8.896	1	0.003	0.11
% Correct Model			69.6			
Hosmer & Lemeshow Goodness of Fit			χ^2 0.033	df 2	p 0.984	

Table 6 describes the results of the multivariate logistic regression using the binary dependent variable. In this instance, both independent variables remained significant, but the odds ratios dropped considerably. The direction of

the relationship changed as well; the coefficient is now negative, meaning that as the values of the independent variables approach zero, states are less likely to change tuition policy. In a round about way the findings in the two analyses are consistent. The percent correct for the model is a respectable 69.6%. The Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of fit statistic is a Pearson chi-square statistic generated using a table of observed and expected cell frequencies. An insignificant p value is desired here, as it tests the null hypothesis that the data fit the model well.

Multinomial Logistic Regression

Table 7 depicts the results of the univariate logistic regression models using the multinomial dependent variable, which allows contrasts between different directions of tuition policy change. Four of the 16 variables are significant, including the two significant independent variables from the binary models. States with TELs were more likely to change tuition policy. The odds ratios for both centralizing and decentralizing states are robust. The interesting part here, however, lies in the percent correct. The univariate model predicted 75% of the centralizing states correctly and none of the decentralizing states. States with federal style postsecondary governance structures were more likely to decentralize tuition authority, with an odds ratio of 7.619 and a percent correct 72.7%.

In addition to the TEL and federal postsecondary structure, states with the declining revenues between 2000 and 2006 were less likely to decentralize tuition authority, with an odds ratio of .002. Although, the percent correct for this

variable is only 27.3%, meaning that selecting outcomes by chance yields a higher degree of accuracy than the univariate model. States with decentralized systems of tuition authority in 1999 were more likely to decentralize tuition authority further. The odds ratio is 4.2, with a modest percent correct of 54.5%.

Table 4.7: Multinomial Logistic Regression—Univariate

Predictor (univariate)	Change	β	SE β	Wald's χ^2	df	p	e ^{β} (odds ratio)	% Correct
% Revenue Change	Centralize	-0.126	2.042	0.004	1	0.951	0.882	0
	Decentralize	-6.106	3.068	3.96	1	0.047	0.002	27.3
% Tuition Change	Centralize	0	0	0.126	1	0.723	1	0
	Decentralize	0	0	1.397	1	0.237	1	0
Ave. Child Poverty Rate	Centralize	0.06	0.074	0.658	1	0.417	1.062	0
	Decentralize	0.127	0.075	2.897	1	0.089	1.136	27.3
Legislative Party (Rep)	Centralize	-1.224	0.731	2.805	1	0.094	0.294	0
	Decentralize	-0.348	0.725	0.231	1	0.631	0.706	0
TEL (Yes)	Centralize	2.148	0.798	7.243	1	0.007	8.571	75
	Decentralize	1.609	0.765	4.422	1	0.035	5	0
Executive Centralization	Centralize	0.309	0.387	0.637	1	0.425	1.362	0
	Decentralize	-0.405	0.433	0.876	1	0.349	0.667	0
Approps. Per FTE	Centralize	0	0	0.231	1	0.631	1	0
	Decentralize	0	0	0.596	1	0.44	1	0
Legislative Professionalism	Centralize	-1.897	2.947	0.414	1	0.52	0.15	0
	Decentralize	-0.735	2.422	0.092	1	0.762	0.48	0
Lobbyists per Legislator	Centralize	0.087	0.08	1.172	1	0.279	1.091	16.7
	Decentralize	-0.093	0.127	0.539	1	0.463	0.911	0
Federal Gov. Structure	Centralize	1.05	0.725	2.095	1	0.148	2.857	0
	Decentralize	2.031	0.807	6.332	1	0.012	7.619	72.7
Segmented Gov. Structure	Centralize	-0.916	0.876	1.095	1	0.295	0.4	0
	Decentralize	-0.811	0.882	0.842	1	0.358	0.444	0
Unified Gov. Structure	Centralize	-0.405	0.782	0.269	1	0.604	0.667	0
	Decentralize	-1.609	1.125	2.045	1	0.153	0.2	0
Authority in 1999	Centralize	0.916	0.746	1.507	1	0.22	2.5	0
	Decentralize	1.435	0.762	3.545	1	0.06	4.2	54.5
Average Students per Capita	Centralize	-0.544	0.564	0.933	1	0.337	0.8	0
	Decentralize	-0.019	0.497	0.002	1	0.969	0.981	0
Ave % Public Enrollment	Centralize	-0.654	2.455	0.071	1	0.79	1.923	0
	Decentralize	4.636	2.99	2.404	1	0.121	103.1	0
%Change in HS Grads	Centralize	-1.579	2.82	0.298	1	0.585	0.206	0
	Decentralize	-6.054	3.563	2.887	1	0.089	0.002	18.2

Table 8 shows the results of the multivariate logit model run with the significant independent variables from the univariate models. The multinomial model adds nuance to the findings summarized above. Specifically, while the percent of revenue change was not significant in the binary models, revenue

change is significant in predicting decentralizing tuition policy changes. This instance is interesting too in that it illustrates the difficulty in interpreting multinomial logit models. States with declining revenues were not as likely to *not* enact decentralizing tuition policy changes, as indicated by the negative β coefficient and very low odds ratio (.0003).

Table 4.8: Multinomial Logistic Regression--Multivariate

Predictor (multivariate)	β	SE β	Wald's χ^2	df	p	e^β (odds ratio)
Centralized						
<i>Percent Revenue C</i>	-1.167	2.236	0.272	1	0.602	0.311
<i>TEL (Yes)</i>	2.349	0.944	6.186	1	0.013	10.47
<i>Authority in 1999</i>	-0.883	1.015	0.756	1	0.385	0.414
<i>Federal Gov. Struc</i>	1.983	1.012	3.84	1	0.05	7.268
Decentralized						
<i>Percent Revenue C</i>	-7.857	3.584	4.806	1	0.028	0.0003
<i>TEL (Yes)</i>	1.089	1.023	1.134	1	0.287	2.971
<i>Authority in 1999</i>	-2.289	1.195	3.7	1	0.054	0.1
<i>Federal Gov. Struc</i>	3.54	1.227	8.325	1	0.004	34.45
% Correct Model		Centralized		Decentralized		
		58.3		45.5		
Hosmer & Lemeshow Goodness of Fit			χ^2	df	p	
			100.51	90	0.211	

The results for states with TELs parallel those in the binary models, but have greater specificity. The coefficient for TEL states was significant for states enacting centralizing tuition legislation, and not significant for states passing decentralizing legislation. States with TELs were much more likely to centralize tuition authority, with an odds ratio of 10.47. Baseline tuition authority systems were unimportant predictors, at the .05 level, of tuition policy change when controlling for other significant factors. Once again federal type higher education

governance systems were significant for both types of tuition policy change. The relationship appears stronger, however, for decentralizing states given the much lower p values and higher odds ratio, 34.45. States with federal systems were more likely to decentralize tuition between 2000 and 2006.

Once again the Hosmer and Lemeshow test for the model is not significant, indicating the data fit the model well. The results of the goodness of fits tests for all the models, however, should be accepted tentatively. The size of the data set does not fulfill the requirements for a robust test. The percent correct for the multivariate model is interesting. Specifically, the variables predicting the enactment of centralizing policies performed better than chance alone, than did those predicting decentralizing events, which did worse than chance.

Hypotheses Tests

The first hypothesis asserts that socioeconomic variables outweigh other kinds of variables in predicting tuition policy change. Although consistent with much of the DSH literature, the results above call for the rejection of H1. Socioeconomic variables are certainly not the most important variables for predicting tuition policy change. Conclusions here are necessarily tentative, but political variables seem to hold more weight. Since revenue change was significant in the multinomial models, it is likely that socioeconomic variables play a more complex role than can be ascertained with this data. Following, the second hypothesis contends that states under fiscal duress will be more likely to deregulate tuition policy, finds some support. The convoluted aspect of the results for revenue change in the multinomial model, however, provides less than

resounding support for the dominant folk wisdom about state support for higher education.

Hypothesis three states that increasing tuition rates will likely result in tighter tuition controls. I reject this hypothesis, as tuition rates were insignificant in all of the models presented above. Hypothesis four contends that states with more centralized governance structures are less likely to alter existing tuition authority. While the models fail to provide direct support for this contention, the fact that states with federal systems (the most decentralized type) were more likely to decentralize tuition policy offers some back door support. Had I structured the null value in the model differently, to predict no change for instance, segmented and unified governance structures may have shown greater predictive significance. Finally, hypothesis five argues that states with higher enrollments and or more potential college students tend to decentralize tuition rates in response to public opinion. The models demonstrate no support for H5. Neither the number of students per capita nor the percent change in numbers of high school graduates was significant.

Limitations

The limitations of the analysis presented in this chapter stems primarily from two sources. First, states rarely changed tuition policy from 2000-2006. While the relative rareness of the events doesn't diminish their interest from a policy perspective, it does make meaningful statistical analysis problematic. Given the volatility of state economies over the past 7 years, however, one might

have expected greater legislative activity in this area. Certainly, the folk wisdom permeating the field of higher education policy research leads us to anticipate greater policy change in times of economic instability and retrenchment. Indeed, I expected to find that states with the weakest economies loosened the reigns on tuition authority, but this was not borne out empirically. Given the need to maintain a viable ratio of policy events to independent variables, the limited scope of the data set precludes the analysis of the role of public and elite opinion and other interesting independent variables. Moreover, the nature of the data required to it to be pooled rather than time series. I could only draw conclusions about differences among states rather than make inferences about the impact of changes within states on tuition policy.

Second, holding the time frame from 2000 to 2006 makes it impossible to draw conclusions about overall trends in tuition policy setting. While this limitation was necessary in the context of the larger study, it raises a host of interesting questions for future research. What constitutes a high level of tuition policy change in a state? Do changes in tuition policy coincide with economic cycles? How are changes in tuition policy related to other higher education policies and policy dynamics? Are their cycles of interest and hence change in tuition policy or is policy activity here more sporadic? To answer these questions, I simply need data that goes further back in time. Ideally, data on tuition policy and other higher education variables would be collected at least to 1970 to coincide with the Carnegie Commission Report of 1970 (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973), and with what Bill Massy (2003) has termed “massification.”

Third, the DSH approach itself suffers from limitations as a theoretical framework. As Blomquist (1999) demonstrates, the DSH framework does not allow analysts and scholars to explain the processes leading to policy choices. It does, however, offer a good approach for better describing the relationships between macro level variables and their impact on policy choice. Blomquist also notes that commonly used dependent variables such as expenditures and policy events do not capture the intent of policy makers. This study further highlights the murkiness of dependent variables in the DSH framework. While tuition authority policy seems transparent in its intent—either to strengthen or weaken institutions' ability to set tuition, transparency here is likely illusory. First, a decision to move tuition setting authority closer to or away from the government center may or may not be directly related to legislative preferences for institutional behavior in terms of tuition and fees. Second, knowing whether a policy centralizes or decentralizes authority does not necessarily tell us much about the intended outcomes of the policy change. For example, we cannot assume that legislative action decentralizing tuition authority is intended to yield higher tuition rates.

Conclusions

While the critics of the DSH framework question its status as an explanatory or theoretical framework, I contend that the framework provides good explanations at the macro level. Much of the most potent criticism chides the framework for being unable to answer questions it was not designed to answer.

Other frameworks offer more appropriate explanations and concepts for addressing what are essentially micro level questions.

The foregoing results suggest that macro level analyses still have a great deal to offer the policy studies field, a fact corroborated by their continued popularity across policy arenas. Studies like this one also have much to contribute to studies aimed at theory triangulation. Specifically, this chapter examined tuition policy change across the states. The results of the logistic models suggest that macro level studies can help debunk popular myths about state level policymaking. Aside from the practical application, cross state analysis will deepen the case studies presented in subsequent chapters.

Chapter Five

Comparing Micro Level Theories I

Tuition Policy Change in Florida

Introduction

Debates about tuition authority in Florida stretch back further than those in Missouri. Since the creation of the initial Board of Governors in 1965, the state legislature set the annual tuition rates for all four-year public colleges and universities. From the late 1970s through the time frame of this study (2000-2006), both higher education and business leaders periodically pressed the case for increased tuition rates and devolved tuition setting authority. Policy debate over who should have and who actually possessed tuition authority reached a crescendo between 2000 and 2006. This round of arguments revolved around three interrelated issues: legislative prerogative, postsecondary quality, and governance.

The data used to craft this case study come from multiple sources. I coded all available meeting minutes from the 13 public four-year institutions in the state from 2000 to 2007—55 sets of minutes from individual Boards of Trustees, 27 Board of Governors minutes, 8 State Board of Education minutes, and available relevant meeting materials. I examined minutes from the state association of faculty senates, gubernatorial press releases and state of the state addresses. In addition, I coded six reports prepared by the consulting firm MGT of America, the Council of 100 (group of business and university leaders) and the Council for

Educational Policy, Research, and Improvement. Finally, I coded over 150 media reports from news papers across the state.

First, I provide a historical context for understanding tuition politics in the state of Florida since the late 1990s. Second, I analyze the recent policy changes relevant to state level tuition policy using three analytical frameworks: institutional rational choice, the advocacy coalition framework, and critical theory. Each framework will be dealt with separately. I briefly evaluate each framework's ability to provide a satisfactory explanation of tuition policy change in Florida. The chapter closes with a comparison of the three frameworks and a discussion of the insights generated through the act of theoretical comparison itself.

Florida's Higher Education Context

In *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, V.O. Key titled his chapter on Florida, "Everyman for himself {Key 1949}. He notes that the state's large geographic area and demographics create conditions ripe for the high degree of what he terms "political atomization." Candidates for public office could not rely on strong party structures to assist their efforts. Key argued that Florida politics was characterized by strong factionalism, dispersed leadership, and weak party cohesion among voters and office-holders alike. While the Democratic party held most statewide offices in the first part of the century, the one-party rule did not reflect strong party discipline as the party itself was comprised of many factions.

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, Florida's demographics began to shift rapidly. Both American migrants and immigration from abroad created a fast growing population {Colburn & deHaven-Smith 1999}. Colburn and

deHaven-Smith mark the period from 1965 to 2000 as traumatic for Florida politics. The changes set in motion by the adoption of a new state constitution in 1968 made it easier for a second party to compete and elections. The new constitution retained a cabinet system wherein cabinet officials were elected separately from the governor. By the end of the 1980s, the Republican Party made sufficient gains to seriously compete for most state offices {Carver & Fiedler 1999}. Republican Jeb Bush won the Governor's office in 1998 and served in that capacity throughout the time frame for this study. In 1998, Florida passed an amendment to its state constitution replacing elected members of the cabinet, including the Commissioner of Education, with gubernatorial appointments {Mills 2007}.

These changes are critical for understanding the form of debates about higher education governance from 2000 to 2006 because they altered the relationship between the legislative and the executive branches. The historical weakness of the governor reflected longstanding suspicion of executive authority in Florida {Carver & Fiedler 1999}. Not only did the constitutional changes dilute legislative power, proposals to reform higher education governance also had the effect of loosening legislative prerogative to set tuition rates and approve new university programs (Mills 2007). As will be shown below, the governance changes also created uncertainty in university relations with the legislature. While tuition policy and governance issues are inextricably linked, contention over tuition policy predates the fight over governance structures and legislative prerogative over program approval.

Historically a low tuition state, Florida establishes its tuition rates through the legislature in the form of the general appropriations bill each year. Students are charged per credit hour (SHEEO). Undergraduate resident tuition is the same across the State University System (FL Board of Governors website). There are no differential fees among programs, save for professional programs such as medicine and law. Each year the legislature determines the amount of tuition increases, but the governing institution makes recommendations on behalf of the universities. According to the 2002 SHEEO Tuition survey, Florida's tuition policy exhibits a high degree of centralization and uniformity across institutions. These characteristics mark Florida as relatively unusual among the states. As will be discussed below, the definition of centralization and devolution depends on the actor's vantage point within the higher education policy arena. Turf battles over institutional changes form one of the key points of dissension driving tuition policy change in Florida.

Table 1 summarizes events salient for understanding why tuition policy change. Before jumping into a discussion of the salient events surrounding tuition policy change in Florida, it is important to note that, as of this writing, the issue remains unsettled and in Florida state courts. The Florida case highlights the fact that analyzing policy change as an "event" is complex. When I initially considered Florida as a potential case study state I thought that the legislature, in enacting a law establishing its authority to establish tuition, was seeking a new power for itself. Rather, the law that precipitated my interest in Florida was more of a defensive move by the legislature to reassert its existing authority over tuition in

the face of the recently created Board of Governors' claim to jurisdiction over tuition rates.

Key Events Prior to 2000

The Board of Regents, the agency responsible for coordinating higher education at the beginning of this study, was created through statute in 1965. The legislature retains its historical control over tuition rates. The adoption of a new constitution 1968 not only reorganized the cabinet and strengthened the governor, but also created a citizen initiated referendum system that proved critical in the debates about tuition authority between 2000 and 2006 (Carver and Fiedler, 1999). In 1998, voters passed a constitutional amendment altering the status of the elected Commissioner of Education. The amendment removed the Commissioner from the Cabinet and made a position subject to gubernatorial appointment. In addition, the amendment created a seven member State Board of Education to “have such supervision of the system of free public education as is provided by law” (Florida State, IX, 2006).

A number of other events besides the constitutional changes provide context for the tuition policy debates from 2000 to 2006 as well. In 1979, the Board of Regents issued a report calling for tuition flexibility for the State University System (SUS) (Harrington 2007). The report, released early in Governor Bob Graham's first term, argued that tuition increases were necessary to support quality improvements across the university system. In 1982, the state legislature passed a law abolishing the Board of Regents and replacing it with a “superboard” to govern all public education in Florida including the K-12, state

university, and community college systems (Harrington, 2007). Graham vetoed the bill.

In 1996, the Business/Higher Education Partnership released a report, titled “The Emerging Catastrophe,” arguing that Florida’s system of higher education faced significantly challenges in terms of a “tidal wave of high school graduates” between 2000 and 2010. The report chastised the state for leaving postsecondary funding flat since the late 1980s. Failure to act would cripple the state’s economic development in coming decades (Business/Higher Education Partnership, 1996). The Partnership argued that the solution involved additional state funding, tuition increases, and tuition flexibility for the state universities. In a second report, published a year later, the Partnership reiterated its support for tuition decentralization as part of a larger move to privatize and devolve decision-making to the individual institutions (Business/Education Partnership, 1997). In addition, the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission released a report in late 1996 calling for the legislature to devolve tuition authority and allow institutions to raise tuition to at least the national average (PEPC, 1996).

2000 to 2004: Governance Upheaval and Tuition Policy

In 2000, Governor Jeb Bush and House Speaker Jim Thrasher proposed the abolition of the Board of Regents. Under their plan the State Board of Education gained oversight of postsecondary institutions. The institutions were to be governed by their own Boards of Trustees. The Trustees would also be responsible for making budget requests to the legislature. Bush and Thrasher argued that the Florida needed to create a K-20 system of education, which

provided a “seamless” transition from elementary school to high school and from high school to postsecondary education. Bush argued, “we’re moving to a student-centered system. The system in place today literally holds them back.” (Bousquet, 2001; FLBOE Minutes, 2001) Under the proposed SBE system, the legislature retained responsibility for tuition setting. House Speaker, John Thrasher, however, contended that the reorganization would get the legislature out of the way of the institutions and provide them with individual attention (Thrasher, 2002; FSU Faculty Minutes, 2002).

The State University Presidents Association initially voiced opposition to eliminating the Regents and placing higher education under the purview of the SBE. They expressed concern about the possibility of each institution using different personnel policies for faculty. Moreover, they argued that Bush and Thrasher had not developed sufficient rationale for changing the postsecondary governance system. The faculty councils at all of the universities also expressed their opposition to the plan, as did the statewide Advisory Council of Faculty Senates.

In December 2001, however, the presidents association changed its position and indicated their approval for the SBE system of governance. The statement issued by the presidents through Florida International President, Mitch Maidique, said the presidents preferred to see a new system up and running than continue to have the state-level governance structures in a state of instability. “We support a cautious but expeditious approach to the governance issue. Too much hangs in the balance to allow this issue to remain unresolved for a

protracted period” (Hernandez, 2000). In addition, the Presidents saw the creation of individual boards of trustees for each university as opening the possibility for devolved tuition authority (FSU Faculty Minutes, 2000).

The most vigorous opposition came from former Governor and then Senator Bob Graham. As governor, Graham thwarted a similar attempt to change postsecondary governance by vetoing a Senate bill designed to replace the Regents with institutional level Boards of Trustees. He argued that the change in structure resulted from the Regents rejecting attempts by the legislature to open new professional schools. Characterizing the SBE system as a “cataclysmic train wreck”, Graham suggested the move would politicize higher education (Feller, 2001b). Joined by E.T. York, a former Regent, Graham formed Education Excellence for Florida. A PAC formed to gather signatures to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot to create a new statewide governance system headed by a Board of Governors but retaining the Trustees.

Table 5.1: Florida Tuition Policy Timeline

Dates	Tuition Policy	Governance Structure	Special Notes
1965	Set by Legislature	Board of Regents	Board of Regents established through statute.
1968	Set by Legislature	Board of Regents	Constitutional amendments strengthen the governor's office by reducing the number of departments and having more report to the governor.
1979 (?)	Call for Devolution	Board of Regents	BoR issues report calling for tuition flexibility for the State University System. This report is highly critical of the legislature's handling of high education policy. Tuition must rise to drive economic development in the state. This is early in Bob Graham's first term as governor.
1982	Set by Legislature	Board of Regents	The legislature passes bill abolishing the Board of Regents and replacing it with a "superboard" governing all public education in Florida. Gov. Graham vetoes the bill.
1996	Call for Devolution	Board of Regents	The Business/Higher Education Partnership released a report entitled "The Emerging Catastrophe." The report called for increased state funding, higher tuition, and tuition flexibility for the State University System and Community Colleges as a way to improve quality and drive economic development in Florida.
1998	Set by Legislature	Board of Regents	Voters pass a constitutional amendment creating State Board of Education and removing the Commissioner for Education from the elected Cabinet. The position will now be appointed by the governor.
1998	Set by Legislature	Board of Regents	Governor Bush and House Spkr Thrasher outline a "seamless" system for all public higher education in the state. Under this system public K-20 education will be governed by a single "superboard" with each university having its own board of trustees. The move would abolish the BoR.
Oct. 2000	Set by Legislature	Creation of State Board/Boards of Trustees System	Legislation abolishes BoR and places all K-20 public education under the authority of the Florida Board of Education. The bill provides for two-year transition between the BoR and the SBE. Under this system, each institution will have its own Board of Trustees.
Jan. 2001	Call for Devolution (?)	Call for creation of constitutionally mandated Board of Governors	Sen. Bob Graham forms a PAC called Education Excellence for Florida mounting a petition to place a constitutional amendment creating a Board of Governors with control over program approval and tuition policy.
Jan. 2002	Set by Legislature	SBE and Trustees assume control over State University System	The Florida State Board of Education and the institutions' Boards of Trustees assume control over university governance. The Legislature retains control over tuition policy and program approval.
Nov. 2002	Set by Legislature	Voters pass amendment creating Board of Governors	Board of Governors created as a constitutional entity, with members appointed by the governor. BoG has authority over "all aspects of State University System governance," including program approval and tuition authority. Legislation provides that the new board will begin operations in 2003.
Dec. 2002	Call for Devolution	SBE/Trustees	Higher Education Funding Task Force issues report to the SBE calling for tuition flexibility for institutions in the State University System. The task force cites the need for the SUS to generate higher quality education for its students and to produce more graduates. The report contends the SUS is under-funded by state appropriations.
Jan. 2003	Ceded to Legislature	Board of Governors/Trustees	BoG adopts rules from defunct Board of Regents, effectively ceding tuition authority back to legislature.
Feb. 2004	Governor proposes change in tuition policy/could be viewed as centralizing authority to some extent.	Board of Governors/Trustees	Governor Bush proposes tuition rate increases favored by some university presidents and the BoG, but also proposes changing to a block tuition format and charging students a surcharge for taking excessive credit hours over those required for their degree.
Mar. 2004	Council of 100 calls for tuition flexibility for the State University System	Board of Governors/Trustees	The Council of 100, a consortium of business and university leaders, releases a report calling for the devolution of tuition setting authority to the universities. The report argues that the State University System must be able to raise tuition at least to the national average in order to improve both the number and quality of undergraduate degrees.
Nov. 2004	BoG asserts authority over tuition	Board of Governors/Trustees	The Board of Governors releases a policy statement asserting its authority over tuition policy and recommending that the State University System adopt both block tuition and excessive hours surcharges, and seeks limited tuition flexibility for the universities in the the State University System.
Dec. 2004	Lawsuit asserts BoG authority over tuition policy and program approval	Board of Governors/Trustees	An interest group called Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, lead by Bob Graham, files suit in Florida court against the BoG, the Governor, and the State Legislature. It alleges that the Board of Governors has failed in its constitutional mandate to govern all aspects of the State University System. The suit specifically mentions continuing legislative control over tuition policy and program approval as problems.
May-05	Legislature reasserts authority over tuition policy	Board of Governors/Trustees	Legislature sends HB 1001 to Governor Bush, which he signs. The new law reasserts legislative authority over the establishment of tuition policies and tuition rates.
Sep. 2005	Judge orders mediation in the	Board of Governors/Trustees	Circuit Court judge orders the parties to the lawsuit filed by Floridians for Constitutional Integrity to mediation, the results of which will be binding
Feb. 2006	Mediation awards tuition authority to the BoG	Board of Governors/Trustees	Court ordered mediation results in tuition setting authority being awarded to the Board of Governors

Sources: Board of Governors meeting minutes and documents, media reports, Florida Board of Education documents, Council of 100 documents, and Carol Herrington

Under the Graham amendment, Amendment 11, the Board of Governors gained significant authority from the legislature. From Graham's perspective the most important change involved giving the Board of Governors constitutional status. Constitutional status, Graham and his supporters argued, insulated the Board of Governors from legislative intrusion into program approval and academic freedom. Modeled after the University of North Carolina system, the proposed board also gained the authority to set tuition.

While the Education Excellence for Florida petition drive proceeded, the SBE and the Boards of Trustees began meeting in January 2002. One of the first actions of the SBE in its oversight duties of postsecondary education was to create the Higher Education Funding Task Force at the behest of the universities presidents. In 2002, Florida, like many other states, experienced a severe economic downturn that impacted state appropriations for higher education. Specifically, Florida universities faced a \$40 million dollar cut in FY2003 appropriations (Grapevine, 2004). Moreover, they anticipated enrollment increases of 22,000 students across the university system (Carnivale and Fry, 2001; Kormanik, 2003). The report, "Tuition, Fees, and Student Financial Aid," argued that institutions needed to be allowed to increase tuition to the national average and that the state to increase its funding for need-based financial aid by restructuring the Bright Futures program (Education Funding Task Force, 2002).

While only one or two stories reached the print media, they mention legislators concern about the impact of increasing tuition on the College Prepaid Plan and the Bright Futures Scholarship program. These programs fall under

what Wellman (1999) termed “tuition budgetary policies.” Such policies ameliorate the costs of college attendance without altering tuition rate structures. Bright Futures Program, which began disbursing funds in 1997, provides scholarship funds to the majority of Florida residents attending the states postsecondary institutions both public and private. According to the Florida Department of Education, between FY2000 and FY2003 over \$671.5 million was disbursed to Florida undergraduates⁹. The College Prepaid Tuition Plan, now named the Stanley G. Tate Prepaid Tuition Plan after its founder, is the oldest and largest program of its type in the United States. According to the Florida Prepaid College Board, which Tate chaired for 18 years, the prepaid plan topped 1 million plans sold and \$6.7 billion in assets. Both programs are enormously popular according to media reports and meeting minutes from a variety of sources. The Bright Futures program and the prepaid plan’s sheer size make the devolving tuition authority to the institutions politically difficult for the legislature. Throughout the time frame for this study, Stanley Tate was also a vocal opponent of increased tuition and devolving tuition authority. Jim Horne, the Education Secretary, said in 2002, “We’ve let a couple of very popular policies begin to wag the whole tail of education. We can’t allow that to happen.” (Pinzur, 2002)

By July 2002, Education Excellence for Florida garnered sufficient signatures to place the amendment to create a Board of Governors over the institutions’ Boards of Trustees on the November ballot. The campaign evoked strong comments on both sides. Those in favor of the Amendment, such as former Regent E.T. York and Bob Graham, cited concerns about the duplication

of programs and professional schools. Philip Lewis, another former Regent, said, "I think you could see universities and branch campuses popping up like gas stations." (Stepp, 2001b) Richard Briggs, chairman of the University of Florida faculty senate echoed these concerns. Referring to the SBE system, he said, "This is something billed as decentralization, but it is just the opposite of that." (Stepp, 2001a) Graham furthered argued that a one-size fits all method of governing public education in the state neglected the fundamental differences between higher education and K-12 education.

In November 2002, Amendment 11, creating the Board of Governors passed with over 60% of the vote (Kumar, 2002). The new governance system left the Boards of Trustees in place. The Board of Governors assumed oversight and coordinating control of all four-year public universities in Florida. According to the new amendment, the Board of Governors received a mandate to "operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system. ... The board's management shall be subject to the powers of the legislature to appropriate for the expenditure of funds, and the board shall account for such expenditures as provided by law" (Florida State, IX, 2006). The Board of Governors consists of 17 members: 14 members appointed by the governor to 7 year terms, the commissioner of education, the chair of the advisory council of faculty senates, and the president of the Florida student association. At the Board's first meeting in January 2003, the new body ceded tuition authority to the legislature (BoG Resolution, 2003). The minutes from this meeting indicate no in-depth discussion among the members save for Steve

Uhlfelder, a businessman, worrying that delegations of authority at this early juncture might weaken the board later.

2004-2006: Competing Claims for Tuition Authority

Discussions revolving around tuition policy reemerged in February 2004 when Governor Bush sent his FY 2005 budget higher education budget proposal to the board. Bush planned to ask for a 7% increase in resident tuition and a 12.5% increase in non-resident tuition. In response to a Council on Educational Policy, Research and Improvement (CEPRI) report showing that Florida a great deal of money paying for students to take six rather than four years to graduate, Bush also asked the board and in the universities to examine the impact of implementing block tuition and excessive hours surcharges (BoG Meeting Materials, 2004). The block tuition proposal entailed charging full-time students for 15 credit hours regardless of how many credit hours they actually took. The excessive hours surcharge, on the other hand, proposed an additional 75% tuition charge for courses taken beyond 120% of those required for a bachelor's degree. Block tuition was designed as incentive for students to take additional courses, while the surcharges served as a punishment for students lingering too long (BoG Meeting Materials, 2004b).

In January 2004, the Council of 100 issued a report calling for tuition flexibility for the institutions. The Council of 100, a group of business leaders formed in 1961 to provide policy advice to the governor, argued that Florida's universities suffered from low quality primarily because they were too cheaply run. In addition to tuition flexibility, the group urged phased tuition increases of

14% annually until Florida reached the national average for tuition rates (Council of 100, 2004). The recommendations in the report were similar to the ones made just two years earlier by the Higher Education Funding Task Force commissioned by the State Board of Education. Realizing the political ramifications for tuition budgetary policy, the Council recommended converting the Bright Futures Scholarship program into a true merit-based program and diverting a significant amount of money to need-based aid. The Council also recommended relaxing the guarantee for the Prepaid College Plan.

In their responses to the governor's recommendations, the universities expressed various levels of concern about all three proposals. First, the institutions worried about the impact of the tuition increases on their respective student populations. The University of Florida and most of the other universities welcomed the opportunity to raise rates, although some of the smaller institutions such as Florida Atlantic wanted the flexibility to raise tuition less than the governor's recommendation. UF, on the other hand, wanted to be able to go slightly higher than the recommendation to meet operating needs. Florida A&M argued that raising non-resident tuition by 12.5% would damage their ability to recruit out-of-state students (BoG Minutes, 2004). FAMU also favored a smaller in-state increase because the majority of its undergraduates were from poor and minority families.

Reactions to the block tuition and excessive hours surcharge were mixed as well. While acknowledging the need to prompt students towards timely graduation, the universities contended they needed flexibility to create programs

tailored to their specific needs. FAMU, for example, cited its student demographics as reason to avoid surcharges (FAMU Letter, 2004). FAMU also feared losing revenue under block tuition. Florida Atlantic thought block tuition would help them increase their students' per term enrollment (BoG Minutes, 2004; FAU BoT Minutes, 2004). Nearly all of the universities declared their opposition to the surcharge proposal on the grounds that it would dampen students' intellectual curiosity and decrease degree production. The University of Florida, in particular, expressed concern about its ability to offer sufficient courses to cover the increased demand for classes each semester (BoG Minutes, 2004).

By October of 2004, the board was ready to send a set of tuition and fee policies to the legislature, which asserted the authority of the Board of Governors over tuition and fees policy. Miguel De Gandy, a board member from Miami, said, "It's not an assertion of power, it's what the Constitution says" (Fineout, 2004). Chairwoman Roberts characterized the move as opening a "dialogue" with the legislature. Senator Jim King, angered by the board's resistance to placing a Chiropractic school at FSU, expressed his displeasure with the board's action thusly, "Either we have an acceptance of what the legislature did or ... it's going to be the start of a very difficult time between the Board of Governors and the Legislature" (Ibid).

Prepared with the aid of board staffers and the Council of Education Policy, Research, and Improvement (CEPRI), an arm of the legislative research service OPPAGA, the proposal outlined the specifics of a devolved tuition policy

tied to accountability performance measures (Bog Meeting Materials, 2004). CEPRI, working on a comprehensive funding and leadership study of higher education since early 2003, recommended tying tuition flexibility to five-year accountability contracts with the state. The plan outlined at the October 12th meeting offered the following policies: The first proposal instituted a ceiling on resident undergraduate tuition and fees. The Board of Governors in its annual budget request to the legislature would determine the ceiling. Each university could set its own tuition and fees so long as they did not exceed the indicated maximum. Second, institutional discretion to designate fees with existing protections for student input maintained. Third, the legislature will provide the same level of funding for each undergraduate student regardless of the tuition and fees charged. Some institutions worried they would receive lower appropriations if they elected not to raise tuition to the recommended levels. Fourth, universities would add a surcharge for students taking over 132 credit hours, with individual institutions retaining the ability to make exceptions. Fifth, all institutions would implement a block tuition policy, with the board establishing a model policy from which a university could deviate if another form of block tuition suited its circumstances. Sixth, each Board of Trustees would have the authority to establish tuition and fees for graduate and professional students, nonresident students, and non-degree seeking students. Rates could vary by program, campus, and student level or other characteristic. Finally, the proposal delineated a series of accountability measures required for tuition and fee flexibility. Rates changes require justification in terms of institutional and

statewide strategic goals. Failure to meet the goals would result in greater oversight by the Board of Governors.

A group, Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, filed suit in December 2004 alleging that the Board of Governors, the legislature, and the Governor violated the state constitution by refusing to allow the Board to exercise the authority and responsibilities assigned to it by the voters. Floridians for Constitutional Integrity included members of the Council of 100, several prominent supporters of the Amendment creating the Board of Governors, and a former UF president. Members of the board expressed frustration with the lawsuit, contending that they were only beginning to assert themselves (BoG Minutes, 2005). They argued the lawsuit only complicated their efforts to negotiate a relationship with the legislature. The heads of the Senate and House Higher Education Subcommittees criticized the lawsuit as well, claiming disgruntled University of Florida alumni motivated it.

In January of 2005, the Board of Governors, citing their own authority and faculty resistance, voted to kill a proposed Chiropractic school at FSU. While seemingly unrelated to the issue of tuition authority, the matter sufficiently angered senior members of the legislature. By May, House leaders delivered HB 1001 to Governor Bush. The bill, signed into law, declared that the legislature as the funding agent for the state of Florida, maintained the authority to set tuition and fees for all state universities. They set the level of tuition increase at 5% for the upcoming school year. Representative Dudley Goodlette (R), one of the bills sponsors, said the legislation would “harmonize” the respective powers of the

Board and the legislature (Fineout, 2005). Goodlette said the bill was designed specifically to send the judge in the court case a message. Dexter Douglass, the attorney representing Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, asserted the legislative move highlighted the necessity of the lawsuit. "It just illuminates the fact that they are not following the Constitution." (Ibid) Board Chairwoman Roberts said she welcomed a conversation with the legislature to define their responsibilities, but also indicated her disappointment with some of the specifics of HB1001. She said, "This is a time of transition, and there will be differences of opinion. We are all making a good-faith effort to clarify our responsibilities" (Haber, 2005).

By June of 2005 the initial court case was dismissed on the grounds that Floridians for Constitutional Integrity lacked standing to file the suit because the plaintiffs only had a general interest in the university system. The group refilled in July. In the meantime, the legislature approved just over half of the \$78.2 million dollar budget request for higher education made by the Governor. The 5% tuition increase was also less than the Governor had requested. In the fall, the judge in the case ordered the parties to settle the dispute over Board of Governors authority through mediation. The mediation agreement, reached in February 2006, gives the Board of Governors authority to set tuition and fees and gives it "full control and authority over the State University System" (Stripling, 2006). Republican leaders in the legislature expressed disappointment with the agreement, contending that the legislature's authority over state resources gives them authority over tuition and fees. Roberts responded to these concerns in

what she termed a reassuring letter. She maintained Board of Governors authority over tuition and fees but said the Board would seek approval for adjustments. She wrote, “We understand that if the legislature were displeased with a raise in undergraduate in-state tuition or fees, it could reduce appropriations to offset the increase.” (Ibid)

Understanding Florida Tuition Politics: the IRC, the ACF, and Critical Theory

Recall from Chapter Three, I will explain Florida tuition politics through three theoretical frameworks: institutional rational choice, the advocacy coalition framework, and critical theory. In table 1 of Chapter 3 I outlined eight dimensions along which each framework can be conceptualized and compared. I list them here again. The discussion of each framework will be accompanied by a summary table to facilitate ease of reading.

- Boundaries of Inquiry
- Actors
- Nature of the Actors
- Role of Information
- Collective Action
- Levels of Action
- Policy Stages
- Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility.

Within each framework, the dimensions take on slightly different connotations and occupy different degrees of centrality to the framework’s overall goals. Using these dimensions in a comparative context allows the frameworks to form a kind of prism through which we can more deeply understand the dynamics at work in Florida’s tuition politics and higher education policy arena more generally.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the role of devolution in Florida higher education politics is complex whether talking about governance issues or tuition policy specifically. Each framework offers one explanation of tuition devolution in Florida. Only when the frameworks are arrayed together, however, does the depth of the complexity emerge. Most importantly, by examining the Florida case through each single lens and then in combination we can more fully understand the questions about tuition devolution that the theories can answer and which questions they leave unasked.

Actors

In Florida the key group of actors is larger than in Missouri. There are a handful of legislators directing their attention to higher education. Specifically, the chairs of the higher education subcommittees in both houses directed the course of higher education policy in the state. Florida's legislative institutions, which will be discussed at greater length below, make these two positions the prime movers in postsecondary policy and central figures in debates about tuition setting authority. The Speaker of the House and President of the Senate also played large roles in both the changes in state-level governance and tuition authority. While these positions play an important role in state politics given their structural location in the legislature, the salience of tuition policy to these leaders is less obvious.

Governor Bush's role was interesting and somewhat surprising. I anticipated a more evenly dispersed involvement than I saw reflected in the data. Bush was heavily involved in the debates surrounding the dismantling of the

Board of Regents and vocal in his opposition to Amendment 11, which created the Board of Governors. Once the Board of Governors and the legislature began sparring over control of program approval and tuition rates his overt participation decreased. Bush made very few public statements about the dispute between the Board of Governors and the legislature over tuition policy. But those he did make were illustrative. While he agreed that the legislature had overstepped its bounds in pressing on the Chiropractic school without gaining approval of the Board, he stated his ambivalence about the Board asserting itself too strenuously. Specifically, he argued that the legislature would eventually win any battles over authority because it controls the purse strings.

The Board of Governors seemed dominated by a few key players. Carolyn Roberts, the chairwoman, occupied a structural place of advocacy for the entire state university system. A former member of the Board of Regents, she organized a PAC to mount a vigorous opposition to the Board of Governors. As a member of the State Board of Education she preferred the “super-board” arrangement advocated by Bush and the legislature. Throughout her tenure as chairwoman of the Board of Governors, Roberts repeatedly stressed the need to cooperate with the legislature. She expressed concern over the Board being overly assertive because of the legislature’s authority over appropriations. The two other Board members appointed from the State Board, Jim Horne (who stepped down in 2004) and Phil Handy also stated their concern about appearing aggressive with the legislature. It is difficult to discern from their statements, however, whether their concerns reflected policy beliefs or strategic responses to

an overtly hostile set of lawmakers. Other members of the Board, representatives from individual institutions such as faculty member Howard Rock, tended to favor a more confrontational strategy with the legislature.

The university presidents tended to prefer greater devolution away from the legislature and argued in favor of a general system-wide tuition policy established by the Board of Governors. They also argued in favor of tuition flexibility for individual institutions within parameters established by the Board. Not all of the presidents were equally active, however. The most active presidents were from FU, FAMU, FAU, FSU, and FIU. These presidents were more likely to write letters responding to policy recommendations from the Board of Governors and to be quoted in media reports. The messages from these five institutions were quite consistent. While they opposed the passage of Amendment 11, the presidents appreciated the ability of the Board of Governors, once it was up and running, to articulate a unified voice on behalf of all of the universities. There did, however, seem to be some differences between the perceptions held by individual presidents and those of the State University Presidents Association. In particular, the Board supported the block tuition proposal put forth by the legislature and governor. The president's association, however, came out against the proposal, with different institutions citing slightly different reasons for opposing the initiative.

The Council of 100, the business advisory group, curiously did not make an appearance on the higher education scene until after the creation of the Board of Governors. From the Council's internal reports, media releases, and media

articles the Council did not take an active role in higher education politics until after the formation of the Board of Governors. In 2004, the Council issued a lengthy report on the challenges facing higher education. It included several policy recommendations, which included less legislative interference in higher education and tuition flexibility. Historically an advisory council for the governor, the Council actively supported the lawsuit filed against the Board, Governor, and legislature arguing that the Board was being kept from fulfilling its constitutional mandate. Thus the Council found itself in the awkward position of opposing policies advocated by the governor.

Faculty voiced their support for the creation of Board of Governors through institutional faculty senates and the statewide Advisory Council of Faculty Senates. Expressing concern for university autonomy without a statewide governing agency to act as a buffer between the legislature and the institutions, the faculty groups, contended the legislature was too heavily involved in university affairs. All of the individual faculty senates voted to support Amendment 11. During the later debates about program approval and tuition policy, however, the individual faculty senates were less vocal. An examination of faculty senate meeting minutes from the institutions reveals that the senates did not spend a great deal of time on program approval or tuition policy. The Advisory Council of Faculty Senates did comment on the relationship between the Board of Governors and the legislature. The group argued that the Board should be able to exercise its authority without legislative interference. The group did express concern over the Council of 100 report outlining the challenges

facing higher education. They argued that there was too much emphasis on private rather than public education. Also, they worried about an excessively vocational understanding of the role of higher education.

Stanley Tate represented a classic type of political entrepreneur. A self-made millionaire, Tate marshaled grassroots support from parents to establish the Florida Prepaid College Program in the late 1980s. In the run up to the events covered by this study, Tate was a formidable force in higher education politics. As he put it, he had an “army” of parents and students waiting to be mobilized via an email distribution list. Tate kept his distance from the Amendment 11 campaign, but became vocal once the Council of 100 issued its report calling for steep increases in tuition and limitations to both the Bright futures and Prepaid programs.

Institutional Rational Choice

The IRC helps us understand the politics of devolution in Florida in a number of ways. First, its emphasis on institutional arrangements highlights the most salient aspects of Florida higher education politics during this time frame. Institutional upheaval was in itself a policy goal from the vantage point of the legislature and a political opportunity for those like Graham and York who wanted to fortify higher education against legislative interference. Second, the decision situations occurring in the Florida case span two of the levels of action posited by the framework, namely the constitutional and collective choice levels. Third, the tiers at which various actors played out their political game plans reflected their understandings of the strategies of other actors and information about their

opponents' goals. Fourth, the IRC devotes attention to the unwritten rules and norms governing actor behavior in a decision situation. In the Florida case appears to highlight a situation where longstanding norms may be giving way to new ones. It is still too early to tell, but actors' assumptions about the sway of the preexisting norms impacted strategy and ultimately the outcome, as it exists today. Finally, the IRC asks scholars to pay close attention to the actors involved in the decision situation of a given policy arena, understanding their behavior in terms of their espoused goals and boundedly rational decision-making.

Boundaries of Inquiry

The IRC conceives of policy-making in terms of actor behavior within a set of institutional arrangements defined as structures, rules, and norms. Formal arrangements in Florida profoundly impacted the shape and content of debates over tuition authority for the State University System. First, the legislature held authority to establish tuition rates for all four-year public institutions. Tuition authority was granted through statute. Second, higher education governance structures were also established through statute through 2002. Committee chairs in the legislature wield a great deal of power over their respective policy arenas (Blackwell and Cistone, 1999).

Florida's higher education policy arena has seen a great deal of activity designed to alter the institutional structures over the past two decades. In particular, there seems to be a pattern of attempts by the Board of Regents, prior to its abolition in 2000, to assert control over tuition being met with attempts at abolition by the legislature. With the Republican party completing its take over of

state government with the election of Jeb Bush in 1998, the legislature was able to dismantle the BoR. Working in conjunction with Bush's vision for a unified K-20 system, they created a State Board of Education and gave the individual institutions their own Boards of Trustees. Not only is there a great deal of institutional instability in Florida, but a norm of institutional tinkering as well.

In addition to governance structures, a number of other policy structures impacted debate about tuition authority. Both the Bright Futures program and the Stanley G. Tate prepaid tuition plan rely on stable tuition rates for stability in state expenditures for these programs. Additionally, the ballot initiative that created the Board of Governors also included a provision limiting class size, increasing state funding requirements for the K-12 portion of the state budget by \$27 billion (Kumar, 2002). The devolution of tuition authority to institutions meant tuition rates would increase at most institutions to something closer to the national average, placing greater strain on state coffers to fund financial aid programs.

Finally, the norm of legislative prerogative in matters of higher education policy impacts all of the actors' strategies. Neither the SBE nor the Board of Governors wanted to directly assert itself against the legislature. The Board of Governors only did so when pressed by Graham and his supporters and when the legislature blatantly disregarded Board authority over program approval. Graham took the matter of tuition policy and university governance to a direct vote of the people in order to sidestep the legislature. Members of the legislature relied primarily on threats of budget cuts should efforts to undermine its prerogative prove successful in court.

Nature of the Actors

The IRC characterizes policy actors as boundedly rational, meaning that actors seek to strategically realize the goals they believe offer them the greatest utility. Actors are boundedly rational in that they may misunderstand the goals and strategies of others. Moreover, rules and norms influence the ways in which actors perceive others and the ways in which actors calculate their expected returns from a given set of strategies and behaviors (Ostrom, 1999).

The Florida case is interesting from an IRC perspective because tuition policy occupied a strategic location in the debates about postsecondary governance. While numerous reports, dating back to 1979, called for tuition devolution, neither the State Board of Education nor the Board of Governors pressed the legislature on this point early in their existence. Both fledgling governing institutions tread carefully in their dealings with the legislature. The SBE, for example, never argued that it had the authority to grant individual institutions tuition setting authority. It asked the legislature to consider devolving tuition authority to the newly created Boards of Trustees in 2002, but let the matter drop when the legislature refused. At the Board of Governors' first meeting, on the other hand, the members ceded tuition authority to the legislature by voting to adopt the existing rules from the state board. The delegation of authority occurred without substantive debate, at least no debate recorded in the minutes. Those among the membership, particularly Carolyn Roberts, who argued the new board needed to proceed cautiously with the

legislature succeeded in winning their point adopting the state board's rules (BoG Minutes, 2003).

Throughout study period, all of the institutions argued in favor of having tuition authority set by the Boards of Trustees. Individual institutions continued to argue for tuition authority, the SBE let the matter drop (UF BoT Minutes, 2004; FSU BoT Minutes, 2004). The University of Florida and Florida State boards urged their presidents to work with the legislature to obtain tuition flexibility. Other institutional boards such as Florida Atlantic and North Florida, and Florida A & M wanted to set their own rates so they could avoid the steep increases desired by the larger institutions (FAU BoT Minutes, 2004; BoG Minutes, 2004). They opted, however, to work directly with the legislature rather than through the Board of Governors. The institutions sought direct authority to set tuition rates and did not want to go through the Board of Governors for approval.

Actors external to the institutional boards and the Board of Governors, pressed the matter, however. The Council of 100 Report released its report in early 2004, while Graham and York organized a new political action committee, Floridians for Constitutional Integrity to file a lawsuit asserting the authority of the Board of Governors over tuition rates and other matters such as program approval.

Tensions with the legislature rose, however, in conjunction with debates about the board's authority to approve or disapprove the creation of Chiropractic school at FSU. In early fall of 2004, the board asked for a legal opinion regarding the scope of its authority. The legal opinion confirmed the board's authority to set

tuition rates and approve programs. Armed with this new information, the board asserted its authority over tuition rates in November. The reasons for this move are more complex than the SBE, however. In addition to the substantive reasons cited in both the CEPRI and Council of 100 reports, the board decided, if ambivalently, to assert its authority with the legislature.

The legislature, on the other hand, expressed little concern about tuition per se. First, legislative leaders worried about the impact of tuition increases on the prepaid plan and the Bright Futures scholarship. In particular, several critics charged they worried about the electoral fall out relating to changes to these highly popular programs. Second, tuition authority got wrapped up in the larger battle over governance authority and program approval. House and Senate leaders asserted their control over tuition authority primarily to demonstrate their displeasure over the board's disapproval of the Chiropractic school. Indeed, the House Speaker cited the Chiropractic school specifically when HB1001 went before the governor.

Role of Information

Information, for the IRC, pertains to what actors know, or think they know, about other actors intentions. In Florida, little trust obtained among the various actors. For example, with the higher education community there was distrust between the Board of Governors and the Boards of Trustees. The trustees and their respective institutions expressed concern about the Board of Governors intentions regarding university autonomy over tuition. At the April, 2004 Board of Governors meeting representatives from several institutions expressed their

disagreement with the Board's support of block tuition and excessive hours surcharges over the objections of the universities (BoG Minutes, 2004c). In 2005, Board chairman Handy confirmed the disconnect between the statewide and the institutional governing boards when he said he viewed the trustees as consumers of Board of Governors' policy rather than makers of recommendations (Access Task Force Minutes, 2005).

The legislature preferred to retain overall tuition-setting authority and establish policies it deemed likely to push undergraduates through to degree completion more quickly. Both block tuition and the excessive hours surcharge bills went before the governor in 2005, despite misgivings voiced by the institutions and only tentative support from the Board of Governors. The chairs of the higher education subcommittees argued that both policies created incentives for students to take more courses and for institutions to make adequate numbers of courses available. Specifically, members of the legislature cited economic development concerns as prime motivators for these two tuition policies. Florida, as a state, produced too few baccalaureate degrees to meet employers' needs. By encouraging students through the system faster, greater numbers of students could be served.

Collective Action

Institutional Rational Choice is interested in how different institutional arrangements shape behavior to solve or exacerbate collective action problems. The evolving set of institutional arrangements in Florida complicated efforts to identify and solve collective action problems within the higher education arena.

It's not clear, for example, that the institutions perceive a collective action problem amongst themselves. They argue for institutional control over tuition rates so that they can independently set rates according to their respective missions and strategic initiatives. The legislature on, the other hand, wants to use statewide tuition policy in complicated ways; (1) as a political tool to maintain control over the authority to establish programs, (2) to maintain popular financial aid programs, and (3) to lever tuition policy to improve undergraduate degree production.

Levels of Action

Recall that the IRC conceptualizes three levels of action that can be studied in isolation or in conjunction with one another. The constitutional tier establishes rules about who can participate in policy decisions and under what conditions (Schlager & Blomquist, 1996; Ostrom, 1999). The collective choice level establishes the rules governing interactions at the operational level, while the operational tier indicates the norms and rules occurring in the world of action or practice. In Florida, actors were primarily concerned with waging battles at the constitutional tier during the period of study. But debates took place at the collective action tier as well. Ferreting out which tier most preoccupied individual actors helps us understand which policy goals are most salient to them. Indeed, the selection of levels of action for effecting a similar policy change reflects a strategic choice on the part of an actor in an attempt to insulate their policy preferences from later alteration or subversion by other actors.

Since the creation of the Board of Regents via statute in 1963, the primary mode of effecting policy change occurred through the legislature. In 2000 when the legislature, with gubernatorial support, abolished the Board of Regents, it prompted some actors to address their policy preferences at a different action tier. Throughout the last forty-five years, the legislature has predominately used statute to set higher education policy. From the IRC's perspective this means legislators viewed higher education policy as primarily belonging to the collective choice level of action. By using statute, legislators indicated that they found this strategy adequate for obtaining their policy goals.

Indeed, their only opposition during this time frame was the Board of Regents. They held the regents' very existence in their hands. Once the board was abolished, Graham and his supporters opted for an alternative strategy in order to realize their goal of insulating postsecondary institutions from what they viewed as undue legislative influence. Specifically, Graham and his supporters felt they needed a set of postsecondary governance institutions that did not serve exclusively at the will of either the governor or the legislature. As one of his number indicated in the Tallahassee Democrat, Graham had not initially favored instantiating postsecondary governance in the state constitution, but felt that it would be the only solution to withstand legislative intrusion. As discussed above, Graham also believed that states with constitutionally enshrined higher education structures had demonstrated greater independence and generated higher quality institutions.

Once the Board was created, however, policy debates remained at the constitutional level of action in the form of vigorous discussions regarding the authority of the newly created board to approve new programs and to establish tuition rates and policies. Specifically, the debates about the authority of the Board of Governors revolved around which actors would be permitted to establish policy. Despite the passage of Amendment 11, the legislature tried to marginalize the Board by asserting their preeminence through the authority to appropriate. Ultimately this strategy proved unsuccessful, but not because of a counter-strategy advanced by the Board of Governors itself.

Rather, the same group of actors who sought the creation of the Board of Governors initially resorted to the courts to make the scope of the Board's authority clear to the Board, governor, and the legislature. At the Board's first meeting January, 2003, E. T. York wrote a strongly worded editorial in the *Florida Times Union* indicating he thought there was a long and litigious road ahead before the intent of Amendment 11 could be fully realized. York and others were disturbed by the make-up of the Board. Governor Bush appointed all Board members from the ranks of those who opposed the passage of Amendment 11. While the Board did begin to assert itself in late 2004 and into 2005 by passing a resolution declaring its jurisdiction over tuition policy and killed the Chiropractic school at FSU, it did not act quickly enough or with sufficient vigor for the initiators of Amendment 11. Their suit alleged that none of the above parties acted to fulfill the intent expressed by voters in 2002. This strategy, although not

without its pitfalls, resulted in a mediation agreement affirming the Board's authority over both tuition policy and program approval.

Discussions also took place at the collective choice tier as evidenced by policy discussions centering on differing types of tuition policy such as excessive hours surcharges and block tuition. Discussions about the types of tuition policy under consideration were decidedly more congenial than those centering on who held the primary authority to set policies and rates. While the universities expressed concerns about both block tuition and excessive hours surcharges, they agreed they wanted greater flexibility in establishing tuition rates. Recall that Florida's universities charged nearly identical tuition rates. Institutions such as the University of Florida wanted to raise rates to finance its aims of joining the American Association of Universities. On the other hand, institutions such as Florida A & M wanted the flexibility to keep their rates flat or raise them more slowly so as not to price themselves out of their student market base.

Policy Stages

The study timeframe actually intersects the evolving debate over tuition authority, which began as early as 1979 with the Board of Regents call for tuition devolution and continues into 2007. From an IRC perspective, a policy equilibrium existed until the constitutional changes of 1998 provided an opening for those (Bush and Thrasher) in favor of a K-20 system of education to press their agenda. Senator Graham also saw an opportunity to further shift institutional structures and relationships to insulate higher education in Florida from legislative influence. The K-20 governance structure centered on the State Board

of Education did not exist long enough to produce a new equilibrium among Boards of Trustees, the SBE and the legislature around the issue of tuition authority. Meanwhile, the political action committee, Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, headed by Graham continue to press to ensure the universities and the Board of Governors control tuition rates.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

Florida represents a situation wherein the parties have failed to resolve the collective action problem. Indeed, it's not entirely clear that the actors in Florida higher education arena have identified what exactly the collective action problem is. Certainly the idea that the institutions should be governed largely by local control was thwarted. The debate over who controls tuition was still being made in the courts at the time of this writing. None of the major players involved in the wrangling over tuition policy desires a locally derived solution. The legislature prefers to maintain its historical control over tuition rates, while Graham and his supporters prefer authority to reside with a strong statewide governing body. The institutions themselves have expressed interest in full tuition autonomy but never very vigorously.

Advocacy Coalition Framework

Understanding Florida tuition politics through the Advocacy Coalition Framework highlights a different set of dynamics than those unearthed using the IRC. The ACF explains behavior through action of belief-sharing coalitions. Both theoretical and moral/ethical beliefs shape actor behavior according to the ACF. Like-minded individuals and groups come together to form coalitions who act in

concert to reach policy goals. The ACF typically examines policy change over the space of a decade or more.

Boundaries of Inquiry

Recall hypotheses four and five of the ACF posits two sets of relevant variables to explain policy change. The first variables are exogenous to the subsystem itself. Changes in what Sabatier calls “relatively stable parameters” or “external system events” can alter the terrain upon which coalitions within a subsystem operate. Such changes may shift either coalition resources or beliefs, and in so doing create opportunities for policy change. Specifically, Figure 2 in Chapter 2 indicates eight sets of variables considered exogenous to policy subsystems. Changes occurred in at least two of these areas. First, the elections of 1998 brought more than just the constitutional amendment creating the state board. The voters also brought Jeb Bush to the governor’s office and cemented Republican control throughout state government. Ironically, the shift in governing coalitions served to limit the Republican led legislature’s strategy in fending off attempts to devolve tuition authority away from the legislature out to the institutions. Numerous media quotes from House and Senate leaders indicate that they believed their hold over the appropriations process protected their authority over tuition irrespective of assertions made by the Board of Governors or in the lawsuit filed by Floridians for Constitutional Integrity. Indeed legislative leaders sent HB 1001 to the governor expressly to make a statement about legislative prerogative. For most actors within the subsystem, this assertion was sufficient. Bush and the board chairwoman both acceded to the legislature’s

ability and willingness to use appropriations in a punitive fashion should the board become too assertive.

The legislature's confidence in the security provided by the dominance of their coalition proved their undoing, however. Former House Speaker Jim Thrasher even boldly asserted that Graham was only interested in higher education politics because neither Democrats nor Florida Gators could win in Florida elections. He said of the lawsuit, "it's a conspiracy between the Democrats and the Gators. At one time, they controlled the Board of Regents, which they no longer do. So with Bob Graham, a Gator, they did this constitutional amendment to reassert their power because they can't win in statewide elections any more" (Caputo, 2004). Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, again led by Bob Graham, used the board authority delineated in the state constitution to make a convincing case to the court such that mediation resulted in tuition setting authority being awarded to the Board of Governors.

Second, like most other states in the early part of this decade, Florida experienced a marked drop in state spending due to flat revenues. Increases in state expenditures dropped by 6.8% between FY 2001 and FY 2002 and by another 4.5% from FY 2002 to FY 2003. As a result, the legislature proposed a \$40 million cut in appropriations in FY 2003. In response, CEPRI conducted a study on higher education funding that recommended the institutions be granted the authority to set their own tuition rates, and that tuition rates be permitted to rise to the national average. The report structured its recommendations around the economic crisis gripping state government. The 2004 report by the Council of

100 also noted the declines in state support as justification for both increased tuition rates and increased tuition authority for the universities. State fiscal crisis helped push the issue of tuition authority on to the postsecondary policy agenda.

Hypothesis one describes the nature of advocacy coalitions. From the media and meeting minutes I identify two coalitions dominating discussions about tuition authority. I term the first coalition “legislative prerogative” or, LP. The LP coalition consists primarily of Republican lawmakers, who also comprise the leadership in the statehouse, Governor Bush, and the State Board of Education. While Bush expressed some concern over the way the legislature attempted to create a Chiropractic school at FSU, he continually backed the legislature in asserting its authority over tuition matters based on its power to appropriate. The state board also deferred to the legislature in tuition policy matters during its brief tenure with university oversight and after the Board of Governors began operating. In particular, Commissioner Horne, who also served on the Board of Governors, repeatedly argued that legislative authority over appropriations trumped everything else. Carolyn Roberts the board chairwoman can also be placed in the LP coalition. Throughout her time on the board, Roberts consistently argues against challenging the legislature. While she never actually votes against the board as a whole when it does assert its authority in 2004, hers is the voice of caution and ambivalence. Even once the mediation agreement is reached granting the governors tuition authority, her statement to the media is that the board will continue to work closely with the legislature on the matter. From publicly available records it is difficult to discern whether her ambivalence

is strictly pragmatic or if it reflects a sharing of beliefs about the primacy of the legislature in Florida higher education politics.

The second coalition consists primarily of Sen. Bob Graham, several former regents, high-ranking administrators from the University of Florida and Florida A&M, and members of the Democratic party serving in the legislature. I call this coalition the “traditionalists” for reasons that will be discussed below. The Council of 100 makes its presence felt as a member of this coalition with the release of its report outlining the challenges facing higher education, which calls for tuition devolution. Members of the Council become supporters of Floridians for Constitutional Integrity. This is the group that filed the lawsuit eventually resulting in the recognition of the Board of Governors authority over tuition policy. Several members of the Board of Governors, notably faculty member Howard Rock, physician Zachariah Zachariah, and a few business people also tend to favor tuition devolution, even though they do not expressly align themselves with Graham’s group. All of the faculty senates and the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates are also members of the Traditionalist coalition. Finally, the interest group, Florida Tax Watch supported Graham’s efforts to allow move tuition authority away from the legislature and limit the proliferation of programs.

Several actors do not neatly fit into either coalition during the timeframe of the study, or switch positions at some point between 2000 and 2006. Namely, most of the university presidents aligned themselves with the LP group during the effort to abolish the Board of Regents. They favored the possibility of being able to lobby the legislature directly for appropriations for operating expenses and

start-up money for new programs and professional schools. Initially, tuition policy was not their primary concern. The fiscal crisis beginning in FY 2002 prompted a shift in emphasis. Possessing the authority to set tuition rates, even if that meant the prerogative of not raising rates became increasingly important. BY the time the board asserted its authority over both programs and tuition policy in the fall of 2004, the presidents were largely supportive of the move, except for the board's approval of block tuition.

Finally, Stanley Tate, the founder of the state's Prepaid College Plan was a vocal if somewhat ineffectual political entrepreneur in the tuition policy debates from 2000 to 2006. A powerful political entrepreneur since the late 1980s, Tate's clout as self-described champion of the poor began to decline in the new century. When the state board took up the issue of tuition authority in 2002, Tate testified before the group to argue against any plan resulting in increased tuition and fees. In this instance the popularity of his program prevailed and the legislature declined to act on the state board's recommendations. In 2004, however, when the matter came up again, Tate spoke in front of the Board of Governors, but his comments receive no discussion among the members. He later complained to the Miami Herald that the governors refuse to take his calls. By 2006, Governor Bush asked him to resign as chair of the board of directors of the Prepaid College Plan, and the program is renamed in his honor upon his stepping down. While Tate clearly opposed granting tuition authority to the universities, his opposition has little to do with a belief in legislative prerogative. He resisted any policy change that might lead to higher tuition.

Nature of the Actors

Hypothesis 2 of the ACF argues that actors within coalitions show substantial consensus on issues pertaining to policy core beliefs but less so on secondary aspects of their belief systems. The Legislative Prerogative coalition viewed the pillars of postsecondary authority, tuition authority and program approval, as falling under legislative purview. Both media reports and documentary evidence supports the contention, made by Graham and others, that higher education in Florida provides a means for the dominant political party to engage in pork-barrel politics. For example, when the legislature sent HB 1001 to Bush, bill sponsor, Representative Goodlette, said it was intended to send a message to the court deciding the lawsuit that the legislature controls higher education. Finally, the LP group favored unified governance of all public education in the state, arguing that the economic development needs of the state, in terms of human capital, were best served by having a single system.

The Traditionalists, on the other hand, opposed legislative activism in higher education policy. This group, led by Bob Graham, believed that higher education governance worked best with individual boards of trustees governed by an energetic Board of Governors to coordinate policy to meet statewide needs. Moreover, while this group agreed that higher education needed to meet the economic development needs of the state by providing sufficient numbers of workers with bachelor's degrees, they maintained higher education's distinctiveness from the K-12 system. In order for higher education to accomplish

its goals, they argued, the universities need to govern themselves under the auspices of a strong governing board to coordinate activity among them.

In the Florida case, the primary actors share few beliefs about the control and coordination of postsecondary institutions. These disagreements appear located primarily at the near core or policy belief level. For members of the legislature, calls for tuition devolution strike at the heart of their understanding of the legislature's role in policy-making in Florida. For Graham and his supporters tuition authority goes to the core of institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

Role of Information

Hypotheses seven, eight and nine address the information conditions needed to produce policy-oriented learning in the ACF. Hypothesis seven argues that problems conducive to accepted quantitative data and theory tend to yield greater policy-oriented learning. Hypothesis eight suggests that policy areas involving natural systems are more likely to produce policy-oriented learning because critical variables are not active objects of political strategy and experimentation is easier. Hypothesis nine argues that the presence of a strong professional organization that garners cross coalition participation and to enforce professional norms also promotes policy-oriented learning. The higher education policy subsystem in Florida bears out these contentions.

Between 2000 and 2006 two studies came out arguing in favor of granting the universities greater autonomy in establishing tuition rates. One report came from a state research group, CEPRI, the other from a well-established policy

advisory group, the Council of 100. The two reports made nearly identical arguments. The Council report, however, exerted greater influence than did the CEPRI report. Most of the Council's recommendations find representation in the Board of Governors' document asserting its authority over tuition policy. It's an open question, however, of whether the combined influence of the reports or the impending lawsuit by Floridians for Constitutional Integrity prompted the board to act.

Neither of these groups can be described as strong professional groups able to make connections across coalitions. Little in the Florida data suggests that there is a group active in the state able to garner cross coalition participation and to shape norms. Higher education also does not meet Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's criteria as a problem area in which there are widely accepted quantitative standards for knowledge creation. In particular, the issue of tuition policy is inherently political; there is no "correct" answer to the question of which entity is best suited to establish tuition rates.

Collective Action

Hypotheses three and six of the ACF deal with the ways belief systems impact policy change and policy-oriented learning. Hypothesis three states coalitions give up secondary aspects of their belief systems before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core. Hypothesis six states policy-oriented learning across belief systems is most likely when there is an intermediate level of informed conflict between two coalitions, requiring that (1) each have the technical resources to engage in such a debate; and that (2) the

conflict be between secondary aspects of one belief system and core aspects of the other or, alternatively, between important secondary aspects of the two belief systems” (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994).

Florida’s case tentatively confirms both hypotheses. Assessing the applicability of hypothesis three is interesting in Florida. Neither Graham and his core supporters nor the legislators have demonstrated any interest in compromise. The tuition authority debate seems to strike at policy core beliefs for both coalitions. Governor Bush, however, was willing to compromise on tuition policy in order to gain concessions on his desire to craft a K-20 system of education. While he initially sided with the legislature in opposing the formation of the Board of Governors, he chided the legislature for insisting on maintaining its control over tuition in the face of defeat at the hand of the courts. University presidents also seemed to place tuition policy at the secondary aspects level of their belief system. Rather, they were interested in any structure through which they could gain additional autonomy relative to the legislature *or* a statewide governing board.

Again, it is illustrative that a resolution to the tuition policy debates in Florida has yet to be reached. Moreover, the primary actors found themselves in court rather than crafting a compromise solution to the question of who has the authority to set tuition for the universities. It is ironic that the universities themselves only tentatively associated themselves with Graham’s Traditionalist coalition. Indeed they initially opposed the creation of the Board of Governors because they felt they gained more latitude to operate independently under the

SBE governance system. While Graham and the legislature seemed locked in a battle over near core policy beliefs, the institutions seemed to view the issue of tuition policy more as a secondary aspect that could be negotiated. It was of less importance than having a good working relationship with the legislature. It is possible that the lack of cohesiveness among actors in the Traditionalist coalition prompted Graham and York to argue for a lawsuit over negotiation over postsecondary autonomy.

Levels of Action

The ACF does not directly address policy change in terms of levels of action. Given the framework's focus on belief systems and coalition interactions, the ACF is predominantly interested in change occurring at the collective choice tier. The tactics used by the Traditionalist coalition make sense from an ACF perspective, however. The dispute between the two coalitions occurred at the policy or near core level of the coalitions' belief systems. The Traditionalists change in venue from the collective choice to the constitutional tier allows the Traditionalists to enlist a different set of actors in their fight, in this case voters and members of the judiciary.

Policy Stages

The ACF conceives of the policy process in terms of a policy subsystem, wherein the stages are implied by the relationship among pieces of the subsystem. The most common flash point for policy change stems from disruptions to the subsystem from an outside source. In Florida, tuition policy became part of the policy agenda in the late 1970s as public universities

struggled to accommodate increasing enrollments and stagnant state appropriations. It remained a low level issue until the dominant coalition changed in the 1998 state elections. The ACF explains the long-running debate about tuition policy in Florida as the result of near core disagreements making compromise solutions difficult to achieve. At this writing, Florida had not settled on a resolution to the question of which actors hold primary authority to establish tuition at public universities.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

The ACF does not place much emphasis on the normative consequences of its policy analysis. Rather, policy-making occurs via elite activity filtered through democratic political institutions. The only normative implication explicitly made in the framework lies in its commitment to policy-oriented learning about which it is not sanguine. In Florida, the ACF would not anticipate a great deal of policy-oriented learning to occur. Neither coalition displayed much interest or commitment to integrating, in any kind of deep way, the information put forth by the Council of 100, the Access Task Force, or CEPRI. From an ACF vantage point, policy discussions about the relative merits of various locations for tuition authority in Florida were destined to remain rancorous and difficult to resolve.

Critical Theory

Recall from Chapter 1, Habermas (Habermas, 1975) uses a counterfactual exercise to measure the quality of actual public discourse against what he terms the “ideal speech situation.” Four preconditions must obtain before an ideal speech situation can be realized. First, communicative speech acts

imply mutually comprehensible communication among the actors. Second, representative speech acts are those in which actors say what they mean without fear of coercion. Third, regulative speech acts are those recognizing that values are as relevant as facts. Finally, constative speech acts occur when the actors provide interpretive and explanatory analysis of their perspectives such that their communications are free of distortion. By assessing existing discourse against these ideals, Habermas contends that social conflict can be reconciled and institutional development can be made more democratic. The process is necessarily conflictual and dialectical.

Boundaries of Inquiry

For Critical Theory, the boundary of inquiry involves understanding the distribution of material and linguistic resources among actors in a given policy arena. Power relations initially created through material inequality are maintained and strengthened through discourse. In the Florida case I identified four primary discourses influencing the intractable tenor of the tuition authority debates.

1. Higher education and the new economy

Finally, nearly all actors, Graham included, used corporate sounding language to justify the policy changes they advocated. By corporate language I mean that conversations are structured around the supply and demand of students and programs and that postsecondary education exists primarily to meet the needs of employers and the economy. The language of economic development and human capital development running through the debates about reflect actors' changing perceptions about the role of higher education in Florida.

This expresses the desire for a higher degree of control and predictability over the Florida higher education enterprise. For example, the debates over tuition policy in terms of authority, block tuition, and excessive hours surcharges were all shaped by this discourse.

Commissioner Horne's comments about the need new approach to higher education, an approach that understands the movement of students through the different kinds of education in the state as a pipeline line of state resources, illustrate this point. In using the term pipeline to describe his vision for higher education he created a very corporate style metaphor. Pipelines are used to deliver resources through a delivery system to a point where the resources can be refined and used for commercial purposes. Education, of all types, becomes a process whereby individuals are transformed into students and eventually into employees in needed sectors of the state economy. Moreover, both students and degrees programs were conceived in terms of supply and demand. Both news reports, meeting minutes, and policy reports throughout the timeframe for the study talked about capacity issues within the state university system. The K-12 system failed to provide sufficient numbers of prepared students to postsecondary institutions who failed to turn these students into graduates quickly enough and in needed areas.

Even Graham, who argued explicitly against erasing higher education's uniqueness, said that the state's universities could best fulfill their economic development mission if they were protected from the legislature's pork-barrel approach to program approval. In March 2004 when the universities responded

to Governor Bush's tuition policy proposals, they conceded that students needed to move towards graduation in a more efficient fashion. Although, they tried to subvert the policy's intent by claiming that many exemptions were needed to provide students with needed flexibility in selecting their majors and exploring their interests. The Board of Governors eventually approved the block tuition proposal, surcharges, and tuition flexibility. Tuition flexibility, however, came with performance measures tied to increasing degree production in targeted degree programs. The Access Task Force, commissioned in 2005 by the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education, put the matter this way, "The Task Force believes that state policy can influence institutions to offer and individuals to complete programs in high priority, targeted areas that provide vital services and are critical to the state's success as a competitor in the global economy." (AC TF 01,10, 2006) The *Catching Up with Growth* report stated, "What Florida needs is a new look at Florida's higher education market and a single-minded resolve to apply a new market strategy to higher education for the sake of the state's economy, communities and residents. ...A market driven approach would direct resources to institutions that are the quickest to respond to state needs" (Moore, 2005).

2. Role of Public Higher Education

Graham's concern about the inclusion of higher education under the state board reflected his growing dissatisfaction with the changing role of higher education in Florida. He based part of his argument regarding the need for a statewide board on preserving the traditional role of higher education. In the

Tampa Tribune Cecil Mackey wrote a supportive editorial, "Second, public universities need protection from political intrusion. We expect them to do things that are often controversial. They conduct cutting-edge research and challenge conventional wisdom and accepted beliefs because we need them to do so. ... A critical 'buffering' function, provided by a governing body with constitutional status, helps preserve the integrity of the universities" (Mackey, 2002). He further argued, "Higher education is culturally and historically a very different thing than public education. The values in a university setting are different than any other thing in state government" (James, 2002). The faculty senates shared this concern, worrying about increased intrusion into faculty personnel matters. While Graham conceded that universities have role to play in economic development, he argued that they are best able to accomplish this goal when their distinctiveness from K-12 education was recognized and valued.

Bush contended that their system put student needs ahead of institutional needs. Others maintained that adopting a K-20 system of education improved the ability of the system as a whole to meet the human capital needs of the state. Education Commissioner Jim Horne argued that, "I believe that the system that has worked in the past, where you've got it in pieces, no longer works in Florida. Today, we need a pipeline education system where people can access education when and where they need it" (Bousquet, 2001). Horne also tied the trustee system to a changing role for higher education in terms of increasing access. He said, "Higher education used to be sort of an elite group that probably provided

access for 25% or less of the population. We need to begin to acknowledge that K-12 is not enough” (James, 2002).

A key discourse in Florida higher education politics from 2000-2006, the issue of the changing role of higher education comes to the foreground most in the debates about changing the governance system. Those in the Traditionalist coalition believed that universities fundamentally differed from public education. More importantly, they implied that something very important was lost in framing higher education as a component of a pipeline of individuals seeking greater levels of credential and skill sets. Namely, universities would see their role as knowledge creator and place of free inquiry erode in the face of human capital demands. Bush, and members of the legislature, conversely argued that the needs of students, as future workers, far outweighed the service to society provided by a commitment to a wide variety of research.

3. Devolution

In the devolution discourse issues of governance and tuition policy overlapped, largely due to the fact that tuition policy was considered a key marker of governance authority. In common usage, the term devolution means to moved decision-making authority or alter decision-making structures such that actors closer to the operational level of the organization exert greater control over their work. In Florida, the two primary coalitions understood devolution in very different ways. Bush and Thrasher argued that the trustee system with the State Board of Education coordinating activity, gave the universities greater autonomy. Under this scheme the legislature gained authority over program approval and

retained tuition setting authority. The universities, on the other hand, gained greater authority over personnel matters, including presidential searches. They also gained greater leeway in lobbying the legislature for funding and new programs directly. In the discussions about the demise of the Board of Regents, tuition authority merited little discussion.

Graham's group argued the plan offered by the legislation offered an illusory form of devolution. They argued that without control over program approval and tuition rates, the universities control over important management tools. Legislative control over program approval, in particular, took away the authority universities needed to maintain and focus their missions. Despite removing a layer of bureaucracy, the trustees system really served to centralize power in the legislature. Not only did the legislature gain direct control over programs, the trustees system splintered the lobbying power of the universities by isolating them from each other. While this did not remove any specific authority from the universities' purview, it exposed the state university system to manipulation, according to E.T. York. Graham also maintained that true devolution meant that the universities retained their distinctiveness from K-12 public education. The plan to locate postsecondary coordination under the State Board of Education effectively erased this distinction.

On its face, the meaning of devolution depends on an actor's location within the higher education policy subsystem. From the legislature's perspective devolution meant eliminating a layer of bureaucracy and providing each institution with its own board of trustees. The Bush/Thrasher definition is more

market driven in the sense that each institution gained greater latitude to lobby in its own interests. From Graham's group, devolution meant creating a state university system operating without legislative interference.

4. Alumni Rivalry

Admittedly this discourse appears only in the language of what I earlier called the LP coalition, rivalry between FSU and UF alumni came up frequently enough and with such strong language that I felt compelled to include it. On several occasions, quoted above, senior members of the legislature charged that Graham and his supporters pressed for the creation of the Board of Governors and subsequently sued over its perceived inaction primarily because they were University of Florida graduates. They argued that UF garnered preferential treatment under the regents' system. According to their statements the new governance system corrected a longstanding bias in the higher education policy arena. While members of Graham's group never mention alumni loyalties directly, they cited concern about each university looking out only for itself if the trustee system proceeded without a strong statewide governance presence. Indeed, even the media picked up on the undercurrent, characterizing the lawsuit filed by Graham and others in the following way, "But beyond the ideological turf war is a classic Sunshine State story as old as college football: a Gator-Seminole rivalry" (Caputo, 2004).

Nature of the Actors

Examining the intertextual aspects of the Florida case highlights the ways in which some actors come to the fore of a set of events and how others are

marginalized, excluded, or are co-opted by discourse. In Florida those at the center of debates remained consistent. Graham, York, the board members, the governor, and ranking members of the legislature. Interestingly very few democrats in the legislature made comment about the changes in governance structures or tuition policy. Media reports include only a few short quotes from minority party lawmakers. Faculty are also curiously absent from the majority of the conversations. A review of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates meeting minutes indicates that they favored the formation of the Board of Governors. Yet, their opinions received little notice in media reports, or in the meeting minutes of their views.

Voters and students, however, were used more as props within the discourse of the central actors. Graham argued that statewide governance was too important to be left in the hands of the legislature. The matter was best decided by the voters. He repeatedly referenced voters or popular will in discussing the Amendment 11 campaign. He claimed to speak on behalf of the people of Florida. When Floridians for Constitutional Integrity filed suit against the board, governor, and legislature, he maintained that the defendants thwarted popular will. His opponents, on the other hand, openly doubted that voters cared much about higher education politics. Once the Amendment passed, opponents of the Board of Governors thought that Graham sold the issue on his reputation, not on its merits. Carolyn Roberts said, "It was a difficult issue to understand. Sen. Graham is a powerful and most respected man. ..." (Feller, 2001a).

Students occupied a central place in the debates about tuition policy. During Board of Governors' meetings, however, the student representative did participate in discussions about tuition policy, repeatedly expressing concern about rate increases. In particular, the student representative cautioned the board to consider why it was fixated on bringing tuition to the national average as opposed to some other figure. From the students' perspective they were getting a good education at a good price. By and large, others spoke for students. In opposing changes to tuition policy, Stanley Tate claimed to speak for an "army" of students and parents. Bush and the legislature claimed to be creating a "student-centered" system of public education when they abolished the Board of Regents and installed Boards of Trustees under the State Board of Education. The university presidents articulated their concern for students when they asked for greater flexibility in adopting tuition increases and Bush's proposed block tuition and hours surcharges. They argued that implementing identical policies across the state university system stifled students' ability to explore their interests and harmed the institutions' ability to recruit students. They even worried that the policies might exert an unintended dampening effect on retention and graduation rates.

Role of Information

For Critical Theory, information is never straightforward or transparent. Information is always laden with the ideas and assumptions motivating the actor(s) presenting it. Several concepts from discourse analysis prove useful in explaining how information was used by actors in Florida. First, modality refers to

the relationship established between an actor and his or her representations. Specifically, what commitments do they make to truth and necessity (Halliday, 1994). Second, legitimation refers to strategies designed to justify particular policy proposals, decisions, and implementation (Habermas, 1976).

Legislators in Florida made little claim to truth or necessity in arguing in favor of the status quo for tuition policy. Rather House Speaker Thrasher, for example, relied primarily on assertions of power in urging the Board of Governors and Floridians for Constitutional Integrity to cease pressing for tuition devolution. Members of the legislature felt little need to invoke alternative rationales for their goals. They held material power over appropriations.

Collective Action

Both Habermas and Fairclough contend discourse flow together to produce public policy, establishing the terms on which actors behave in the public sphere. In Florida, collective action is problematic from Critical Theory's vantage point as well. In gaining passage of Amendment 11, Graham and York's group motivated significant public support by creating an image of universities crippled by legislative politics. They were not entirely successful, however, in winning over the universities themselves. While the institutions certainly wanted authority to establish tuition rates, they were leery of legislative power. The institutions were more likely to argue their case based on the language of new capitalism than on the intrinsic merits of higher education.

Levels of Action

Critical theory does not use the language of levels of action, but it does acknowledge the ways in which actors use discourse to shift the terms of debate about public policy. In Florida none of the actors successfully shifted the terms of debate about tuition authority using discourse per se. Rather, Graham and York used more concrete mechanisms, state referenda and the court system to place their vision of postsecondary governance more prominently on the public agenda.

Policy Stages

Although tuition authority had been a simmering issue in higher education politics for nearly two decades at the beginning of this study, the 1998 amendments and subsequent moves by Governor Bush and the legislature to abolish the Board of Regents served to open up discursive space for Graham and York. After the abolition of the Board of Regents, Graham and York were able to argue that legislative meddling finally went too far and threatened to destroy higher education in Florida.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

If we compare the policy debates in Florida to the Habermas' criteria for the ideal speech situation, we are compelled to agree with her. First, the communicative aspects of the Florida policy discussions do not support the "mutually comprehensible" criteria advocated by Habermas. The actors, both within and between the coalitions, held different understandings of devolution and the role of higher education. Second, not all of the relevant actors were able

to speak without fear of coercion (representative speech). The Board of Governors felt this keenly. In nearly every meeting members, including Chairwoman Roberts, expressed concern about upsetting the legislature and subsequently damaging the financial outlook for the universities. Third, the Florida case violated the regulative speech act criterion. While the tuition policy debates in Florida lacked a foundation in data or research, no reflective conversation occurred that tried to distinguish values from facts and use them together in creating policy. Finally, the tenor of the conversation made the realization of the constative speech criterion unlikely. None of the actors provided an interpretation of, either, their own or their opponent's positions free of distortion.

Conclusion

Florida's higher education politics from 2000 to 2006 exhibit a high degree of complexity. Debates about tuition setting authority are inextricably bound up with the very contentious arguments about governance restructuring and legislative prerogative. This section of the chapter evaluates the explanations provided by each of the frameworks discussed above. It follows the evaluation of the individual frameworks with a discussion of if and how using the IRC, ACF and critical theory in concert alters our understanding of Florida tuition politics.

IRC

The IRC offered a fairly comprehensive account of Florida tuition politics over the past six years. By emphasizing actor behavior and strategy, I

reconstructed events that ultimately lead to the legislature losing control over tuition policy to the Board of Governors. Using the IRC demonstrates the degree to which tuition policy in Florida is used strategically by some actors to advance other policy interests. While the legislature certainly thought tuition authority was important on its own merits, legislative leaders tried to use tuition policy to protect their control over program approval as well. For Graham and his supporters, tuition policy was also of secondary importance to the control over programs.

The chief contribution of the IRC in this case, however, derives from its tiered levels of action. Given Florida's history of legislative prerogative in matters of higher education policy, one would have expected the legislature's preferences to prevail in its fight with Graham and his supporters. Yet, the legislature wound up losing both markers of policy authority in higher education: program approval and tuition authority. The IRC notion of levels of action helps explain why it happened. The legislature relied on the strategies it historically deployed in disputes with the state university system. It rattled the saber of appropriations. By trying to keep the decision process at the collective choice tier, they made a crucial mistake. Graham, on the other hand, recognized that the source of the regents undoing had been structural. In chartering the new Board of Governors within the state constitution, Graham shifted the level of action from the collective choice tier to the constitutional tier, bringing the courts into the fray as arbiter. In doing so, Graham made the legislative strategy obsolete.

From the tenor of the news reports in Florida since the mediation agreement awarding the board both program and tuition authority, the debates in

Florida seem far from over. I would expect that the legislature, which was retained by the Republican party in the 2006 elections, would need to adopt a new strategy in making the case for its authority over higher education. They would either need to convince voters to reverse course on Amendment 11, or find some way of casting their authority in a new light.

ACF

The ACF emphasizes the action of coalitions within a policy subsystem. In particular, the ACF examines the role of beliefs in forming the ground on which coalitions converge and the source of conflict between opposing coalitions. Unlike the IRC, the ACF draws our attention to the context in which a policy subsystem operates. In Florida, the exogenous variables posited by the ACF prove important in understanding the series of events leading to the mediation agreement in early 2006. The 1998 elections cemented the Republican hold on state government, the state experienced marked fiscal duress, expectations for higher education shifted as well. All three of these things created a climate ripe for policy change.

The ACF also helps us understand the somewhat surprising constellation of actors. I anticipated the Board of Governors would be more vocal in asserting its authority once it had a constitutional mandate, but the Bush strategy of appointing only those who had opposed the board's creation in the first place created a board profoundly ambivalent about its role. While the board began to assert itself in 2004, it's hard to believe the rumblings from Graham's group of colleagues about an impending lawsuit had no impact, likely prompting it to take

action. Again, given the history of legislative prerogative in this policy arena, the emergence of a political entrepreneur with sufficient stature to bring a relatively obscure issue before voters was needed to successfully block the policy changes initiated by the legislature.

The ACF's stress on the importance of beliefs proved less helpful in explaining policy change in Florida. While the beliefs espoused by the Traditionalist coalition, led by Graham, seem fairly clear cut, the beliefs espoused by the Legislative Prerogative coalition are more convoluted. In particular, the LP coalition's behavior and rhetoric gives primacy to strategic goals concerns about weakening the concentration of state power in the legislature. These beliefs do not deal with the substance of higher education policy, but rather reflect legislators' concerns with electoral outcomes. Save for Governor Bush, the talk about the need for a seamless system of public education seems self-serving rather than substantive in the thoughts expressed by legislators.

Critical Theory

Critical theory emphasizes the role of discourse in structuring power relations among actors in a policy context. While both the IRC and ACF offer more complete explanations of actors' behavior, critical theory helps us understand the assumptions and limitations of the tuition debates in Florida. In one sense the legislature's assertion of prerogative in tuition policy is refreshingly honest. Both the Senate presidents and House Speakers throughout the time period of the study openly admitted that they were less concerned with the impact of their policy choices on the ability of higher education to meet state

needs than they were with the effort to maintain control over key policy mechanisms relative to the Board of Governors. They rather straight-forwardly assumed that they were best positioned to make policy, hence their lack of openness to devolving either program or tuition authority to the universities or the Board of Governors.

The assumptions underlying Graham and his supporters' positions were less transparently stated. While they maintained they simply sought to protect the universities from unwarranted legislative meddling, they did so by assuming that postsecondary education did a good job of meeting their various missions and state needs when left to their own devices and coordinated by a statewide agency. Neither Graham nor his supporters seemed interested in opening up the discussion of how well the institutions served their undergraduate populations or their research and graduate missions. Rather they called forth a conception of higher education echoed by Berdahl and McConnel (1999), who argued that higher education was an almost sacred institution—the only place where an unfettered search for knowledge occurred.

The four discourses shaping the tuition policy debates in Florida: alumni rivalry, devolution, role of higher education, and higher education in the new economy came together and stunted the policy conversation in the state. Legislators got swept up in arguments about who got how much of the higher education spoils—Gators or Seminoles—than with the substantive issue of tuition authority. The two opposing coalitions offered widely divergent definitions about the meaning of the term devolution. From the comments and actions of the

legislators we can infer that their espoused commitment to devolution was disingenuous. As events progressed into 2004 and 2005, legislators stopped talking about devolution almost completely and fought against increased tuition flexibility for the institutions at every turn.

The discourses about the role of higher education and the new economy are commingled. In large measure, the traditionalist coalition defended a model of higher education that has come under increasing scrutiny and criticism over the past twenty-five years. Bush, some of the legislators, the Council of 100, and the Higher Education Funding Task Force argued that higher education reflected archaic goals. They felt it was more important for the universities to serve the economic and human capital development needs of the state. Critical theory makes an important contribution to the study here. The Council of 100 and the Higher Education Funding Task Force both supported greater autonomy for the universities in Florida. Several members of the Council signed on as plaintiffs in the lawsuit filed by Floridians for Constitutional Integrity. They make for odd bedfellows with Graham, however. The Council was able to replace Graham's defense of the traditional role of higher education with a market-based vision by committing to the language and policy agenda of devolution.

I suspect, however, that Wellman (1999), who argued that states steadfastly refuse to talk about substantive matters when it comes to tuition policy, would be dissatisfied with the content of the debates in Florida. If we compare the policy debates in Florida to the Habermas' criteria for the ideal speech situation, we are compelled to agree with her. First, the communicative

aspects of the Florida policy discussions do not support the “mutually comprehensible” criteria advocated by Habermas. The actors, both within and between the coalitions, held different understandings of devolution and the role of higher education. Second, not all of the relevant actors were able to speak without fear of coercion (representative speech). The Board of Governors felt this keenly. In nearly every meeting members, including Chairwoman Roberts, expressed concern about upsetting the legislature and subsequently damaging the financial outlook for the universities. Third, the Florida case violated the regulative speech act criterion. While the tuition policy debates in Florida lacked a foundation in data or research, no reflective conversation occurred that tried to distinguish values from facts and use them together in creating policy. Finally, the tenor of the conversation made the realization of the constative speech criterion unlikely. None of the actors provided an interpretation of, either, their own or their opponent’s positions free of distortion.

Frameworks in Concert

Using the IRC, ACF, and critical theory together offers a different kind of explanation of Florida’s tuition policy debates from the past six years than we would obtain using each framework singly. Admittedly, the analyses from each framework presented above are too brief to serve as good tests of the frameworks in the Florida case. Allowing the analyses to inform each other, however, yields a satisfying explanation of Florida tuition politics. The IRC and ACF have developed an ongoing dialogue over the past decade or so (Sabatier, 1999) resulting in fruitful research supported above. The IRC sharpens the ACF’s

understandings of intracoalition politics and allows an understanding of the interactions of beliefs and strategy. The ACF offers the IRC the insights generated by acknowledging the role played by variables exogenous to the subsystem. The addition of critical theory to this dialogue only deepens the possibilities of the inquiry. While critical theory devotes scant attention to the actors, their preferences, strategies, or institutions. It does add an evaluative dimension to the study of policy change.

In Florida, for example, we can see that the four main discourses helped position the actors relative to one another. Critical theory also improves our understanding of why some actors were more salient than others in the tuition policy debates. Finally, critical theory raises questions about the social possibility made possible through discourse. The ACF and IRC, on the other hand, remain agnostic about the content of policy debates themselves. Acknowledging the limitations established through discourse, however, help us understand why actors select some strategies over others.

Chapter Six

Comparing Micro Level Theories II

Tuition Policy Change in Missouri

Introduction

Missouri's tuition policy debates differed markedly from those in Florida between 2000 and 2006. While Florida's debates centered on the need for higher tuition to improve the quality and capacity of the four-year public institutions and served as political fodder for a turf war between the Board of Governors and the legislature, Missouri's tuition debates arose from a series of dismal fiscal years. Prior to the economic downturn of FY 2002, tuition rates were not a particularly hot topic among higher education policy and law makers. Although tuition policy did not change during the time frame of this study, lawmakers made several attempts to cap tuition at the rate of inflation and to give the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) greater authority to punish institutions increasing tuition rates too quickly. A tuition cap law and greater authority for the coordinating board were signed into law during the 2007 legislative session.

Using data from a multitude of sources, I reconstruct the events over the past seven years in Missouri higher education politics. Specifically, I coded the following: (1) all available meetings minutes over the FY 2000 to FY 2007 time period—28 sets of minutes of CBHE meetings, 14 sets of Missouri Association of Faculty Senate minutes, 70 sets of minutes from institutional board meetings and materials from those board meetings, 15 policy documents from the Midwest

Higher Education Compact (MHEC); (2) 4 reports on higher education costs and affordability written by the Missouri State Auditor's Office or outside think tanks; and (3) 230 news articles from Missouri state newspapers.

This chapter parallels the Florida case study in its structure. First, I discuss the context surrounding higher education in Missouri. Second, I outline the salient events related to tuition setting authority from 1999 – 2006. Third, I analyze those events using the IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory frameworks in turn. I briefly evaluate each framework's ability to explain the politics of tuition policy change in Missouri. The chapter concludes with a comparison of the three frameworks.

Missouri's Higher Education Context

Missouri politics has been characterized by several higher education policy actors as parochial and resistant to change. Jim Moody, former state Budget Director, explained that Missouri historically has not been a policy innovator. In a report released in 2003, in the middle of the budget crisis, Moody (2003) said the state has never been entrepreneurial in seeking solutions to policy and budget problems. In 2006, Pres. Elson Floyd said it took him awhile to understand the "Show Me" attitude pervading state politics. Floyd said, "This is a state that is slow to react to change. It is a state with a very healthy suspicion of new ideas. It's a different approach" (Ganey, 2006). Finally, lawmakers themselves frequently assert their disinterest in comparing Missouri's system of

higher education and its levels of state support with other states (Freyermuth 2002).

A constitutional amendment authorized the creation of Missouri's Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) in 1972. The 1974 Omnibus State Reorganization Act established the board and designated its sphere of authority (MDHE website, accessed Jan. 2007). Chapter 173, section 173.020 describes its responsibilities as conducting studies, identifying higher education needs in the state, promoting effectiveness and economic mission differentiation, and developing coordinated plans for higher education statewide (Missouri Revised Statutes, accessed August, 2007). Other sections of Chapter 173 assign tuition setting authority to each institution's governing board, creating a decentralized system of tuition setting authority in Missouri. CBHE, until 2007 had no statutory authority to intervene in institutional decisions about tuition and fees. Prior to the 1974 Reorganization Act, the State Commission on Higher Education was the primary state entity with the Coordinating board being seen as part of state administration.

Table 1 presents appropriations and tuition data (including required fees) throughout the time frame of this study. As appropriations declined tuition rates climbed rapidly.

Table 6.1: Percent Change in Appropriations and Tuition for MO 4-Year Public Universities¹⁰

Institution	FY00-FY01		FY01-FY02		FY02-FY03		FY03-FY04		FY04-FY05		FY05-FY06		FY06-FY07	
	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change	Approps Change	Tuition Change
Harris Stowe State University	9%	6%	5%	32%	-10%	8%	-5%	5%	2%	9%	0%	6%	2%	4%
Lincoln University	8%	10%	6%	9%	-12%	15%	-5%	9%	2%	-7%	0%	9%	2%	19%
Missouri Southern State University	2%	15%	-1%	36%	-10%	2%	6%	0%	4%	-2%	0%	5%	2%	4%
Missouri State University	2%	5%	2%	14%	-10%	8%	-3%	11%	3%	6%	0%	5%	2%	4%
Missouri Western State University	2%	7%	0%	26%	-10%	10%	2%	7%	3%	0%	0%	8%	2%	3%
Northwest Missouri State University	9%	8%	0%	14%	-10%	18%	1%	10%	2%	4%	0%	3%	2%	12%
Southeast Missouri State University	5%	4%	0%	14%	-10%	13%	-5%	6%	2%	6%	0%	5%	2%	9%
University of Central Missouri	5%	9%	0%	17%	-10%	21%	-5%	7%	2%	4%	0%	5%	2%	7%
University of Missouri	5%		-3%		-11%		-5%		3%		0%			3%
Columbia		3%		14%		18%		8%		4%		5%		4%
Kansas City		6%		11%		21%		7%		4%		2%		4%
Rolla		4%		14%		21%		7%		3%		5%		4%
St. Louis		4%		14%		18%		7%		3%		5%		4%

Table 2 summarizes salient events surrounding tuition policy in Missouri. Appendix A lists the salient actors in Missouri higher education politics over the time period of this study. Higher education finance politics remained fairly stable from the late 1990s into the early 2000s. With the emergence of a fiscal crisis in late 2001, politics between public universities and the state entered a contentious phase. As the institutions raised tuition in response to declining appropriations, the legislature and the governor began pressing for tuition controls.

¹⁰ Source data: MDHE and University of Southern Illinois Grapevine Project

Table 6.2: Missouri Tuition Policy Timeline¹¹

Dates	Tuition Policy	Fiscal Situation	Special Notes
1999	Set by Institutional Boards	Normal	Governor Carnahan appoints Missouri Commission on Affordability In Higher Education. Report issued in December removes initial recommendation that tuition be tied to increases in family income in statute. Final report recommends institutions try to take income into consideration and that the state provide more need-based financial aid.
2000	Set by Institutional Boards	Normal	Quiet year for higher education. Appropriations increased as did tuition. Governor elect Holden reacts to a national report giving MO a D+ for Higher education affordability by saying MO needs to increase its pool of financial aid.
2001	Set by Institutional Boards	Unexpected State Revenue Shortfall	In June, Governor Holden announces withholdings from the state budget, asking all state agencies to prepare for a total \$200m withholding from FY2002 budgets. By December, higher education has had \$95m withheld from its operating budgets and \$175m in capital projects withheld.
2002	Set by Institutional Boards	Fiscal Crisis Continues	Lumina Foundation report calls over half of MO institutions unaffordable for most students. Double digit tuition increases at most four-year publics. Legislators question spending habits of institutions at several hearings. Institutions counter that tuition increases are the only avenue with such high cuts in appropriations. Rep. Phillip Smith (D. Louisiana) introduced HB 1424 to limit institutional ability to increase tuition.
2003	Set by Institutional Boards	Fiscal Crisis Continues	The University of Missouri and then Southwest Missouri State University bicker over the relative shares of state appropriations. In April, Senate cuts \$98m from higher education. Institutions raise tuition again. State Auditor, Clare McCaskill, releases report arguing that institutions have not done enough to reduce costs.
2004	Set by Institutional Boards Several proposed changes to tuition policy to tighten control over institutions.	Fiscal Crisis Eases	Sen. Harold Caskey (D. Buter) introduces legislation to guarantee tuition for 4 years. Gubernatorial candidate, Matt Blunt, proposes truth in tuition law and caps that can only be lifted by the legislature. Neither proposal becomes law. From FY 2001 to FY 2004 MDHE appropriation cut by 43% and its FTE staff cut by 37%.
2005	Set by Institutional Boards; Proposals to limit institutional autonomy on tuition increases	Fiscal Crisis Continues	Another large withholding from higher education budgets. UM President, Elson Floyd, proposed a 4 year tuition guarantee and goes on state tour for feedback. Sen. Jason Crowell (R. Cape Girardeau) reintroduces Caskey's bill from 2004. The measure does not pass. Rep. Carl Bearden (R. St. Charles) introduces new funding model for higher education. None of the measures are adopted.
2006	Set by Institutional Boards Tuition Cap proposed	Fiscal Crisis Eases	Missouri State University announces CAP IT (Choice and Predictability in Tuition) plan allowing students to choose several methods of paying their tuition which will lock in a specific rate. Sen. Gary Nodler (R. Joplin) proposes bill to give Commissioner for Higher Education authority to financially penalize institutions for raising tuition above the CPI. Measure did not pass.
2007	Tuition Cap Enacted	Fiscal Crisis Ends	Sen. Gary Nodler (R. Joplin) introduces bill to give CBHE greater authority over institutions and the Commissioner for Higher Education the authority to punish institutions that raise tuition above the CPI in any given year. Measure becomes law.

Calm before the Storm

The years 1999 and 2000 marked the end of a period of planned tuition increases for most of the four-year public institutions in the state. Institutions had increased rates to pay for a variety of improvements to technology infrastructure, equipment purchases, and faculty salary increases. In April of 1999, Governor

¹¹ Source data: media reports, CBHE and institutional meeting minutes, MO government and external reports

Carnahan appointed the Missouri Commission on Affordability on Higher Education, with the express charge to determine ways to make the 13th and 14th years of education affordable for all Missourians. In December the commission issued a report calling for changes in the way the state allocates financial aid to emphasize need based aid over merit aid. An initial draft of the report also recommended a change in state-wide tuition policy. The draft report recommended that tuition increases be tied to increases in family income. Vigorous lobbying by university presidents succeeded in removing this recommendation from the final report. While the report received considerable play in statewide papers, Governor Carnahan's reaction to the report was telling. He said that while he agreed with the reports findings, he could not support its recommendations. He reminded the Post Dispatch reporter that Missouri is a low tax state and there would be little public support for large increases in funding for higher education through appropriations or financial aid. He refocused attention on the institutions saying to them, "I would urge you to leave no stone unturned when identifying ways of containing costs" (Franck, 1999).

From 2000 to 2001, the four-year public institutions tuition increases varied widely, ranging from 3% at the University of Missouri-Columbia to 15% at Missouri Southern State University (Kinzel, 2008). Missouri received a D+ in affordability in the 2000 edition of the Measuring Up study published by the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education (NCPPE, 2000). Governor Holden made public statements about the state needing to do a better job providing need based financial aid. Strikingly, he did not mention the need to

curb tuition increases. Representative Tim Green (D. St. Louis), however, made a symbolic protest against increasing tuition (among other concerns regarding higher education) by amending an appropriations bill to cut all capital funding for the University of Missouri. Green noted a recent MDHE study contending that Missouri college students increasingly relied on loans to fund their educations, meaning that grant aid failed to keep pace with tuition increases. UM lobbyist, Jim Snider countered that the state lacked sufficient resources to maintain the UM system as a premier research institution without reliance on tuition increases (Flory, 2000). Green's amendment was defeated.

Fiscal Crisis and Political Change

2001 marked the beginning of a deep fiscal crisis in the state. New Governor, Bob Holden, announced a \$200 million withholding from the FY2002 budget spread across all state agencies. Nearly half of that total, \$95 million would come from higher education. In addition, the state withheld \$175 million in FY2002 capital improvement appropriations (Thompson, 2001; Staff Writer, 2001b). K-12 education was the only state function fully funded during the first year of the budget crisis (Koehler, 2002a).

The four-year public institutions reacted with a variety of stop-gap measures. The University of Missouri System absorbed \$20.9 million of the withholdings and elected to defer maintenance, curb research spending, and forgo 125 planned faculty hires (Thompson, 2001). Southeast Missouri State deferred raises and cut back on equipment purchases. Harris-Stowe tapped its reserves and put off planned faculty hiring. Missouri State levied a mid-semester

tuition increase of \$8 per credit hour (Wilson, 2001). Missouri Western, Missouri Southern, and Central Missouri State all added tuition surcharges (Thompson, 2001). At the October Coordinating Board meeting CBHE Associate Commissioner, Joe Martin, noted that 57% of the FY2002 budget shortfall came from higher education (CBHE, 2001). The Board agreed to draft a letter to the Governor and General Assembly expressing its concern (CBHE, 2001). In December Martin and Governor Holden expressed hope that the institutions would exercise restraint in increasing tuition (Staff Writer, 2001a).

As the budget picture worsened in 2002, relations between the state and its four-year public institutions worsened and in-fighting amongst the institutions themselves set in. President Keiser of Southwest Missouri State argued that the state cuts exacerbated an already inequitable funding situation among the four-year publics (Koehler, 2002c). Both Keiser and UM President Pacheco engaged in brinkmanship with the state, with both presidents suggesting that one or more of the state's universities might have to be closed or consolidated with another institution if conditions didn't improve (Koehler, 2002c; Koehler, 2002b). Keiser said, "There needs to be a policy decision about where higher education sits as a priority. ... But that decision won't take place because there hasn't been any bloodshed, yet. It's going to take shutting down a college or depriving an existing institution of major portions of what they do. We're getting awfully close to that" (Koehler, 2002c).

Members of the Coordinating Board, university presidents, and lawmakers indicated their shock at the severity of the crisis. Governor Holden remarked that

he only had bad choices to make given the state's budget situation; he committed to saving K-12 funding as the most important goal (Koehler, 2002a). CBHE member Dudley Grove likened the crisis to a death in the family. Board member Carmichael, on the other hand, insisted on the need for higher education to deal with the crisis. He said, "The fact is there is very little money. There must be a willingness to present to the public a plan for making better use of the resources and a willingness to restructure and streamline in ways to save funds" (Koehler, 2002b).

By January 2003, Missouri already anticipated a \$1 billion shortfall in state revenues. Governor Holden recommended against further cuts to higher education (Carlisle, 2003). Some members of the state legislature acknowledged that higher education bore the brunt of the budget cuts. Rep. Mark Wright (R. Springfield) said, "Higher education has taken beyond its fair share of cuts. The legislature thinks enough is enough. We've done all we can to higher education. Any more hits and it will do irreparable harm" (Koehler, 2003). Incoming chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Carl Bearden, (R. St. Charles) took a different track, "We have to get to where people don't just say, 'This is important.' They have to ask, 'But is it more important than this program or that program.'" He said that higher education would not be exempt from additional cuts and that institutions needed to look for avenues other than tuition to offset state cuts (Wagar, 2003). Bearden said later in the year, "You have to look at all the sources of income and how they spend the money they do receive. While I think

they are beginning to look at efficiencies, I'm not convinced they have done all they can to cut costs. More money is not always the answer" (Murphy, 2003).

In April 2003 Governor Holden organized the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, headed by Kansas City businessman, Crosby Kemper III. Holden urged businesses in the state to lobby more effectively on behalf of higher education. Crosby said he hoped the Commission would focus on higher education governance structures (Flory, 2003).

State Auditor, Clair McCaskill, released an audit of the four-year public colleges and universities around this same time. The report chided MDHE for failing to exercise sufficient oversight over institutional program efficiencies and cost-effectiveness. The report found that Missouri's tuition rates increased automatically when appropriations declined more often and more sharply than in other states (McCaskill, 2003). Specifically, McCaskill argued that institutions had raised tuition reactively in response to state budget cuts, rather than looking for ways to contain tuition rates. McCaskill's findings echoed those of national think tanks. Joni Finney, Vice President of the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, argued that colleges and universities take the wrong approach to tuition increases by raising rates in response to economic crises when students are least able to afford them (Koehler, 2002a).

Coordinating Board Chair Kauffman said that the presidents were effective in laying out a common message about the importance of higher education early in the session. The board passed a unanimous resolution opposing additional cuts in higher education (CBHE, 2003). At the June 5th meeting Joe Martin

(legislative liaison) said he thought higher education was viewed more positively than in the past. He thought the cuts would have been higher without the coordinated efforts of the board, the presidents and DHE in presenting a common message “that extols the virtues of economic development and the relationship between economic development and the institutions in contributing to a better educated society and workforce. Higher education effectively delivered those messages to the General Assembly and, because of the large reductions previously received, benefited in an overall budget impact-more a K-16 approach than a K-12 approach” (CBHE, 2003).

Pressure for Tuition Policy Change Gains Momentum

With the state increasing appropriations to higher education 2% for FY2005, the talk of fiscal crisis abated. Late in the 2005 legislative session Rep. Bearden (R. St. Charles) introduced a bill to replace the state’s incremental budgeting process for higher education with a funding model allocating money on a per student basis [Missouri House of Representatives, 2005]. Briefly, the plan would allocate new money on a per FTE student basis once base appropriations reached FY2002 appropriations levels. Allocations for lower division students would be funded at the tuition rate charged by the least expensive community college, while upper division students would be funded at the tuition rate charged by the least expensive four-year institution. In addition, each student would receive a \$1000 grant to use at any Missouri institution public or private (Missouri House of Representatives, 2005). While most of the institutions vigorously opposed the legislation, arguing that it ignored institutional missions and shifted

state dollars to private institutions, Missouri State President Keiser told his Board of Governors to support the bill because it restore funding to FY2002 levels and included a per student funding element (MSU Board of Governors, 2005). The bill did not pass (Missouri State House of Representatives, 2005).

In June 2005, UM President, Elson Floyd, asked his Board of Curators to consider adopting a guaranteed tuition plan in principle. Higher education Commissioner, Gregory Fitch, urged UM to consider the impact on state financial aid coffers when developing the plan. Student leaders at the University of Missouri in Columbia expressed concern that guaranteed tuition disproportionately impacted freshmen (Staff Writer, 2005b). By the end of September, Floyd visited over a dozen Missouri communities of various sizes hosting town meetings to get public feedback on the idea of guaranteed tuition. Lawmakers and the Governor's Office expressed support for the idea (Adamson, 2005). Parents liked the stability a guaranteed tuition model offered. Students and business leaders throughout the state expressed concerns about the idea (Staff Writer, 2005a). Students worried about the burden of tuition increases being placed on freshmen and about the idea of students paying different rates for the same course. Business leaders expressed skepticism about institutions' ability to accurately forecast costs and revenue needs four to five years into the future (Ibid). Citing overall opposition to guaranteed tuition, Floyd recommended a different plan to his Curators in November. The plan, adopted by the Board, agreed to limit tuition increases to the rate of inflation if appropriations increased at the same rate (Ganey, 2005).

With potential revenue problems looming once again with the release of projections for the coming year, the state asked institutions to plan for a 10-12% cut in appropriations. Truman State President and leader of the state Council of Presidents in Higher Education, Barbara Dixon, said that cuts of that magnitude would likely require double digit tuition increases. Commissioner Fitch argued that Illinois and Kansas experienced similar fiscal difficulties but managed to continue their investment in higher education, unlike Missouri (Koehler, 2005). New Central Missouri State President, Podelefsky, said tuition could decrease if the state reinvested in higher education (Williams, 2005). The state avoided a cut for FY2006 and maintained flat funding levels for higher education.

In January 2006, Missouri State University announced the creation of a guaranteed tuition plan with three options from which students could choose. The CAP-IT (Choice and Predictability in Time) plan would allow students to pay year-to-year, prepay tuition for four years at the current rate, or lock tuition at a higher rate for two years. MSU President Mike Nietzel said the plan relied on stable state appropriations (Koehler, 2006).

In April, the House passed HB1865 capping single year tuition increases at the rate of inflation with a vote of 84 to 71 (Missouri House of Representatives, 2006). In addition, HB1865 placed appropriations caps for higher education, funding institutions through \$1,000 scholarships paid to students. The bill co-sponsor, Rep. Scott Muschany (R. St. Louis County), argued that institutions made little effort over the past few years to address budget cuts through more efficient operation. Bill sponsor, Rep. Bearden agreed, "We have out of control

institutions raising tuition without any real justification for doing so” (Blank, 2006). House Democrats opposed the measure, arguing that the legislature should not be setting tuition rates—that authority properly resided with the institutions (ibid). University presidents were united in their opposition to the bill. Each signed a letter sent to the legislature arguing that Bearden and Jetton’s bill would undermine public higher education.

Senators were skeptical about legislative intervention in institutional autonomy. They were particularly disturbed, however, by the heavy handed tactics applied by the two House leaders (Franck, 2006). In committee, Senators gutted the bill’s key provisions, leaving only the scholarship for students intact (Missouri House of Representatives, 2006). In retaliation, both Bearden and Jetton vowed to block the sale of the state-owned student loan authority, MOHELA (Franck, 2006). HB1865 and the MOHELA sale died at the end of the 2006 legislative session (Missouri House of Representatives).

During the summer, the MSU and UM presidents toured the state separately advocating greater investment in higher education and touting its impact on the state economy (Kumar, 2006; Staff Writer, 2006). They appeared together in Springfield to demonstrate their common commitment to convincing Missouri that they were “focused on efficient operation and demonstrating that higher education is worthy of investment by the state” (Staff Writer, 2006). Throughout the fall, the presidents used the momentum gained from their successful blocking of the Bearden and Jetton’s bill to work with legislators building consensus around a coordinated plan to stabilize tuition, increase state

appropriations, and push through the MOHELA sale. UM President, Elson Floyd and MSU President, Michael Nietzel, made appearances with presidents from the smaller institutions arguing for increased funding for these “under funded” universities (Ostmeyer, 2006; Myers, 2006). In September alone, newspapers in Hannibal, Joplin, St. Joseph, St. Louis, and Springfield published editorials in favor of increased state support for higher education.

Legislators, even those historically critical of higher education, indicated their support. Sen. Gary Nodler (R. Joplin) said he was impressed with the institutions’ efforts. This was the first time in state history that all public four-year institutions agreed to a funding formula. He said they were increasingly concerned about costs borne by students (Staff Writer, 2006). In mid-December the presidents met with Governor Blunt to obtain his support for their plan. They sought his support for a 12.6% increase in state appropriations. In return, the institutions agreed to develop tuition controls and agreed to the creation of performance measures. Blunt expressed noncommittal support, expressing the need for institutional accountability (Ganey, 2006).

Understanding Missouri Tuition Politics: the IRC, the ACF, and Critical Theory

I explain Missouri tuition policy debates through Institutional Rational Choice, the Advocacy Coalition Framework, and Critical Theory. The eight dimensions outlined in Table 1 in Chapter 3 form the backbone of the following chapter sections. Each framework’s explanation of Missouri tuition politics is

structured according to these dimensions, enabling a parsimonious and clear comparison of the frameworks in the conclusion. I list each of the dimensions again below:

- Boundaries of Inquiry
- Actors
- Nature of the Actors
- Role of Information
- Collective Action
- Levels of Action
- Policy Stages
- Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

Because the dimensions differ in their importance in each of the frameworks, they take on slightly different connotations within each explanation. Using these dimensions in a comparative context allows the frameworks to form a kind of prism through which we can more deeply understand the dynamics at work in Missouri's tuition politics.

Actors

This dimension is the same across the three theories; therefore it is discussed only once. In Missouri the number of actors is fairly large but not from a wide diversity of organizations. I compiled the list of actors from coding media reports, meeting minutes, policy reports and General Assembly records from 1999 through early 2007. The obvious players are the university presidents and a few high ranking administrators from their staffs. Just over 20 legislators made public comments or introduced legislation pertaining to tuition setting authority. Ten MDHE staffers and CBHE members were active participants in conversations about tuition rates and affordability. Interestingly, 12 policy analysts from national think tanks and universities provided information used in

both media reports about tuition in Missouri and or made presentations to MDHE conferences and legislative committees. While several business leaders served on governor appointed commissions, the involvement of business organizations was noticeably absent. Missouri business associations devote most of their education policy energy to the K-12 arena (CBHE, 2003).

The key actors in the Missouri higher education context changed throughout the time period. With each new actor the politics shifted as will be discussed in greater detail below. Three different men occupied the Governor's Office. Mel Carnahan, a Democrat, oversaw a period of relative affluence for higher education. During the FY 1996 to FY 2001 period, appropriations increased by 33%¹². Total tuition revenue in MO increased by 46%¹³. Central Missouri State University, Lincoln University, the University of Missouri and Southeast Missouri State University raised rates above the rate of inflation as part of planned increases designed to improve academic programs and technology. Bob Holden, also a Democrat, had the misfortune to preside over massive shortfalls in state revenue. In June of 2002, Holden told all state agencies to brace for a \$200 million withholding from their appropriations (Flory, 2001; CBHE, 2002a). Higher education was told to prepare for 10%-18% withholding, the actual withholding wound up at 10% (Koehler, 2002a). Matt Blunt, a Republican, elected in 2004 witnessed the end of the fiscal crisis. Unlike the aftermaths of past economic downturns, however, the Governor did not recommend large increases in state appropriations for higher education. From

¹² Author calculations from Grapevine data

¹³ Author calculations from SHEEO data

FY 2005 through FY 2007 appropriations increases never exceeded 2% (author's calculation using Grapevine data).

Republicans gained control of both chambers of the General Assembly in 2002 for the first time in over forty years. The change in party control of the General Assembly allowed the Republicans to implement a shift in policy emphasis for higher education. In particular, the change in control brought Rep. Carl Bearden (R. St. Charles) to the chairmanship of the House Appropriations committee. Bearden came to dominate discussions of higher education finance from 2004 until his resignation of his seat in 2007.

Key university posts changed hands as well. Manuel Pacheco, President of the University of Missouri system stepped down in 2002, replaced by Elson Floyd, who stepped down in 2006. Southwest Missouri State President John Keiser retired in 2005. Finally, MDHE went through four Commissioners and a loss of 46% of its operating appropriations and 37% of its FTE between FY 2001 and FY 2004.

Institutional Rational Choice

The IRC conceives public policy as social dilemmas around which cooperative solutions may be sought. Ostrom (1998) characterizes a social dilemma as a situation in which "immediate pay-offs to participants from choosing an opportunistic action in a transaction are sufficiently great that at least some (or all) participants choose opportunistically, thereby yielding an equilibrium where feasible, higher joint pay-offs are not achieved" (114). In common-pool resource contexts, In particular, Ostrom is most interested in the institutional conditions

most likely to solve collective action problems in ways that result in higher returns for the actors involved.

Table 6.3: IRC Summary of Key Features

Dimension	MO Characteristics
Boundary of Inquiry	(1) Tuition set by institutional boards; (2) Hancock Amendment I and II; (3) Federal system of postsecondary governance
Nature of the Actors	(1) Institutions engaged in brinkmanship early, changing strategy with leadership turnover; (2) House leaders aggressively attacked higher education
Role of Information	(1) Institutions unsure about each other's intentions; (2) UM and MSU leaders provided information to public across the state
Collective Action	(1) Trust among institutions an issue; (2) University leaders only able to coordinate after 2005
Level of Action	(1) Several unsuccessful collective choice tier attempts to limit institutional authority over tuition; (2) SB 389 passed with both collective choice and operational tier components; (3) Institutions changed tuition policies to stabilize rates
Policy Stages	(1) Fiscal crisis placed tuition on the agenda; (2) Contentious period of bargaining prior to passage of SB 389; (3) Implementation is in progress
Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility	(1) University presidents did not believe they had control over tuition rates, increase was inevitable given budget cuts and withholdings in state appropriations; (2) In 2007, institutions and the MDHE are working together to propose a new funding model for higher education.

Boundaries of Inquiry

Recall from Table 3.1 that the IRC analyzes policy behavior within the context of institutional arrangements. Formal arrangements of statewide postsecondary governance in Missouri delegate tuition setting authority to the

governing boards of individual institutions and the University of Missouri system. The delegation of tuition authority is made in Chapter 173 of the Missouri Revised Statutes. The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education exercises loose oversight over the institutions, charged with identifying educational needs and promoting effective and efficient practices.

Throughout the fiscal crisis the formal rules governing tuition setting allowed institutions to increase tuition rates in the manner they deemed necessary to offset cuts in state appropriations. Tuition rates simmered as policy issue from the release of the Commission on the Affordability of Higher Education report in 1999 (Olson, 1999) through the 2007 legislative session. From 2002 into 2007, legislators introduced 4 bills to limit institutions' ability to raise tuition rates (MO General Assembly bill tracker). Between 1995 and 2002 no bills dealing with tuition setting authority were introduced (Ibid). Until the 2007 session, the institutions successfully sidestepped calls for limits on tuition increases and no legislation was introduced to remove tuition setting authority from institutional purview entirely.

Article X of the Missouri Constitution, known as the Hancock Amendment, limits the state's flexibility in addressing its policy goals through expenditure and tax increase limitations. The initial Hancock amendment was adopted by voters in 1980 as a tax expenditure limitation law ([Http://Truman.Missouri](http://Truman.Missouri) 2004). As Jim Moody (2003) points out, however, Hancock is more properly understood as revenue limitation measure. The amendment limits total state revenues based on base-year ratio between state revenues and personal income for individuals and

corporate entities. If state revenues exceed the limitation established by the ratio, the excess must be refunded to taxpayers. In 1996, Governor Carnahan and the Farm Bureau jointly sponsored an amendment that became known as Hancock II. Hancock II prevented the legislature and governor from raising taxes without voter approval. According to Moody (2003) Missouri enacted these changes during a period of relative affluence, coming to rely primarily on income, sales, and capital gains taxes. When the economy slowed in the early 2000s, Missouri masked its growing structural deficits by deploying one time or short-term revenue, such as Tobacco Settlement dollars, to fund ongoing and growing expenses. As these one-time funds ran out, fiscal crisis ensued. As will be discussed below, actors' divergent interpretations of the causes and solutions to Missouri's structural deficits figure prominently in their strategies around higher education tuition policy.

Finally, Missouri state government is fragmented (Kropf, 2005). This is important structurally because it compounds collective action problems from the institutions' perspective. Robertson (2004) argues that Missouri makes a good bellwether state for national elections precisely because its internal politics mirror the political divides nationwide. Robertson highlights the geographic tensions running through Missouri politics. The two key metropolitan areas differ markedly from one another. While he characterizes St. Louis as an eastern and "decidedly rust-belt town" with a strong labor presence, Kansas City is the nation's eastern most western city (pp1). Robertson notes that outstate Missouri voters behave like those in North Carolina.

Several informal norms are also salient for understanding Missouri tuition politics from an IRC perspective. First, Missouri is a low tax state. Governor Carnahan's lukewarm response to the "Towards an Affordable Future" report in 1999 was explicit. The report recommended an increase in support for need-based financial aid (Olson, 1999). Carnahan responded that Missouri was, historically, a low tax state. He urged institutions to "leave no stone unturned when identifying ways to contain costs" (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 1999). While several policy papers and editorials called for the repeal of the Hancock Amendment (Harms, 2004), no attempts were made to start a repeal effort.

From an IRC perspective at least three dynamics merit explanation. First, what were the rules governing the relationships among the CBHE, the General Assembly, and the institutions up to the tipping point in 2004? Second, what precipitated the backlash against the institutions? Third, how did the actors manipulate or change the institutional rules such that a restriction in tuition setting authority was enacted during the 2007 legislative session? I address these questions in the following sections.

Nature of the Actors

The IRC characterizes policy actors as boundedly rational. This means that actors seek to realize the goals they believe offer them the greatest utility and that they exercise strategic behavior in pursuing their goals. However they may misapprehend the strategies and goals of others. Moreover, the IRC posits that institutional rules and norms shape the ways in which actors perceive other

actors and calculate their expected payoffs from particular strategies and behaviors (Ostrom, 1999; Ostrom, 1998).

As new actors entered the policy arena, or changed institutional position, politics shifted as they pursued their policy goals and engaged in strategic behavior based on their understanding of the rules and norms of higher education politics Missouri. Two examples illustrate this point. First, at the height of the fiscal crisis, Presidents Keiser (Missouri State) and Pacheco (University of Missouri) engaged in brinkmanship with the legislature and each other. In 2003 and 2004, Keiser asserted that the budget cuts pressed the institutions to the brink (Koehler, 2003; MSU Board of Governors, 2004). He argued that additional cuts might require institutions to fundamentally alter their missions. Moreover, he argued that some institutions received more than their share of state resources. He said the University of Missouri operated as a “regulated monopoly with more than half of higher education budget” (Ibid). Programs would have to be cut and, potentially, institutions closed or merged. UM President Pacheco said much the same thing, indicating that he thought the state needed to prioritize what they expected of higher education. He suggested that one of the smaller state institutions be closed and indicated that additional cuts might necessitate the closure of one of the UM campuses (Koehler, 2002b). Their strategy backfired, however, when additional cuts came and went without significant revisions in institutional management. Indeed, their threats energized lawmakers demanding increased appropriations only served to rankle legislators further.

Role of Information

Information, for the IRC, pertains to what actors know, or think they know, about other actors intentions. In the Missouri context, this aspect of the higher education policy arena proved crucially important. As the fiscal crisis dragged on, fissures among the university presidents burst open into public bickering about each other's intentions. Other institutions, Southwest Missouri State, Missouri Southern, and Missouri Western in particular, viewed the University suspiciously and vice versa. The presidents interpreted statements by UM President Pacheco as suggesting that other institutions should be closed in order to provide more funds for the "flagship."

Information about Missouri's college costs relative to national and athletic conference averages also shaped the contours of tuition policy debate. Data from national think tanks found its way into media reports about Missouri tuition rates on a regular basis. Unlike Florida, Missouri's tuition rates are higher than the national average and the rates of increase were also higher during the fiscal crisis. Missouri consistently received low marks for affordability. Legislative leaders used this information to argue that the state's four-year universities were profligate and that their tuition increases were unjustified.

University presidents shifted their use of information towards the end of the study period. Both CBHE and MDHE repeatedly urged the president to use information more productively in their engagement with the legislature. With the change in UM and MSU presidents, the universities began making presentations showing state support for universities much in the same fashion that legislators

used tuition data. The presidents added information about their contributions to their local communities and statewide in presentations throughout the state. The presidents used information to expand the scope of conflict, albeit with very different tactics than those used in Florida.

Collective Action

Collective action forms the key point of interest for the IRC. In particular, the IRC is interested in how different institutional arrangements shape behavior to solve or exacerbate collective action problems. Missouri higher education can best be described as a loose confederation of institutions (Gates, 2007; Jones, 2005). The Coordinating Board for Higher Education, supported by the Missouri Department for Higher Education, exercises only light coordinating authority over the institutions in the state.

Exercising coordinated collective action proved a difficult task for the four-year public institutions in the state. The three southern most institutions, Missouri State University, Missouri Southern State University, and Missouri Western State University all argued that they had been under funded for decades (CBHE, 2002a). Moreover, the Missouri Southern and Missouri State both reacted angrily to University of Missouri suggestions that the state consider restructuring its higher education system to consolidate or eliminate campuses (CBHE, 2003; Koehler, 2003; Staff Writer, 2003). Even within the University of Missouri system, tensions prevented concerted action on the policy front. The University of Missouri-St. Louis went directly to the legislature to address what it perceived to

be biased funding practices of state appropriations by the system (CBHE, 2002b).

Ostrom and Ostrom (1997) and Ostrom et al. (1992) repeatedly point out the importance of trust among actors for the resolution of collective action problems. In the case of Missouri, levels of trust among higher education actors rose and fell with the vagaries of the state economy. Changes in leadership at the University of Missouri and Missouri State University also altered the political dynamics among the institutions.

Levels of Action

The IRC conceives of the policy making across three levels of action, the constitutional, the collective choice, and the practical levels. In Missouri the debate over tuition rates and the funding of public institutions consisted of policy maneuvers and changes at both the collective choice and practical levels. Lawmakers attempted to make a moderate change by introducing tuition cap legislation that would apply statewide. Some of the institutions, on the other hand, took it upon themselves to enact or examine the possibility of changes to their individual tuition setting policies.

At the collective choice level, four bills were introduced between 2002 and 2007 to institute tuition increase caps in one form or another. Most of these bills tied tuition increases to the rate of inflation or required legislative approval to increase tuition beyond that point. SB 780, Sen. Harold Caskey's (D. Butler) created a guaranteed tuition plan (Thompson, 2004; Franey, 2004). The measure was defeated. All but one of these measures, Bearden's HB742 were stand

alone bills. Bearden's bill tied the tuition cap to caps on higher education appropriations as well. These bills all moved tuition rate decision making towards the legislature. The four-year public institutions were united in their opposition to these initiatives and were joined by statewide faculty groups (MAFS, 2004; MOAAUP, 2005).

At the practical level, Missouri State University implemented a modified guaranteed tuition plan, wherein students could choose from three different options for locking in specific tuition rates. While the plan did not cap tuition increases from year to year, it did offer students a measure of stability in their tuition and fees from year to year. The University of Missouri took a more cautious approach. Rather proceeding with a guaranteed tuition plan, President Elson Floyd toured the state holding a series of town hall style meetings to discuss guaranteed tuition with citizens and to get their feedback on the viability of such a plan. After holding meetings in more than a dozen communities, Floyd concluded that a guaranteed tuition plan provided insufficient benefit to University of Missouri students. He said that parents generally favored the stability offered by such a plan, students disliked the idea because incoming students bore the brunt of increasing fees each year, business leaders were skeptical about the feasibility of accurate planning and forecasting to ensure sufficient operating revenue.

Ultimately, however, a version of a statewide cap on tuition increases passed at the collective choice level of action. A question from an IRC perspective is why policy change occurred predominately at this level rather than

at the constitutional or practical levels of action. Among the General Assembly, Coordinating Board, and university presidents, none broached the topic of altering state-institution relationships through constitutional amendment. During Coordinating Board and the Presidential Advisory Committee meetings, both board members and presidents suggested that Missouri higher education needed to present the public with a plan to demonstrate the need for higher state support, the relationship between tuition and state support, and the value of higher education to the state.

SB389 represented an interesting compromise between higher education and the General Assembly. Prior versions of the tuition cap moved authority over the size of tuition increases to the legislature, limiting institutions' ability to raise revenue. The institutions viewed revenue limitations as impinging on their autonomy for a variety of reasons. First, without the authority to raise tuition, public institutions lack the ability to offset decreases in state appropriations with increased prices. Second, colleges and universities use tuition increases to improve infrastructure, provide for faculty and staff raises, and to improve their programs. Legislative limits on tuition increases effectively curtail institutional autonomy to pursue internal initiatives. For each bill except Bearden's HB 1865, which also included funding mechanism reform for higher education, university presidents and the Coordinating Board kept the bills from getting out of committee.

Table 6.4: Senate Bill 389 Key Provisions

Summary of Senate Bill 389, passed in 2007

Allows Commissioner of Higher Education to penalize 5% of a university's appropriation when tuition increases outpace the rate of inflation

The Commissioner of Higher Education and MDHE are directed to develop policies outlining conditions for exempting institutions from the tuition cap

Authorizes sale of MOHELA assets and distribution of the proceeds to institutions to fund capital projects

SB389, on the other hand, used a collective choice level decision to establish the parameters of tuition policy much closer to the practical level. University presidents supported this incarnation of the tuition cap because the General Assembly stayed out of the establishment of rates. The Coordinating Board and Commissioner for Higher Education held authority to grant waivers of the cap. Equally important, the General Assembly granted the Coordinating Board and DHE authority to establish the conditions under which waivers would be granted, ensuring that the institutions would have substantial input into the creation of these policies. In addition, the institutions stood to benefit materially from the passage of the Omnibus Higher Education Act (SB389) because they also gained funds earmarked for capital improvements from the sale of the state's student loan authority, known as MOHELA.

Policy Stages

For the IRC, which most commonly addresses common pool resource policy issues, policy change can be initiated at the practical level. Groups of local people can identify a problem in need of a collective solution and devise a set of policies that they enact amongst themselves. Policy development proceeds through iterative interactions among actors during which time they build trust in each other and devise alternative solutions to the problem at hand. Once a policy is implemented the process essentially begins again and solutions can be devised at any one or across the levels of action.

In Missouri, it took a fiscal crisis to precipitate the emergence of tuition rates and stability as a policy issue. It did not, however, emerge as an issue of local concern to the four-year public institutions. Rather, the press for policy change came from the central state government in the guise of the legislature. While the final version of the tuition cap was devised largely by the institutions in coordination with the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, SB 389, the Omnibus Higher Education Act, represented a compromise between the legislature and the institutions. Thus the policy development stage was several years in the making, as the central actors haggled over the level of action at which the policy change would occur. Since the bill was passed in the 2007 legislative session it is too soon to analyze the bill's implementation and eventual feedback into the political system. Although, CBHE has devised the rules governing tuition increases and two statewide committees spent the better part of 2007 developing potential funding models for the four-year public institutions.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

The IRC has a deep faith in the ability of individual citizens and local organizations to devise policy solutions to their collective action problems (Ostrom, 1996; Ostrom, 1998). In the Missouri case, however, the local agents, in this instance, university presidents, did not perceive a problem over which they had control. They argued that appropriations drove tuition levels and not institutional level policy decisions. In one sense, tuition controls were imposed on them through the political pressure exerted by powerful members of the legislature, Carl Bearden in particular. On the other hand, the tuition cap's final form was of institutional design and provided the institutions with significant input into its implementation.

Advocacy Coalition Framework

Concerned about policy change over long periods of time within a subsystem, the ACF explains policy change as a function of changes in dominant coalition, external shocks to the subsystem, and policy-oriented learning. Recall that coalitions are groups of actors, individual or collective, exhibiting a non-trivial amount of coordinated activity over time (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993). The primary characteristic of a coalition is their shared beliefs.

Table 6.5: ACF Summary of Key Characteristics

Dimension	MO Characteristics
Boundary of Inquiry	(1) Higher education is low profile policy arena; (2) Regional politics in MO are key; (3) MO is historically a low tax, moderate tuition state.
Nature of the Actors	(1) Two coalitions: (a) Higher education and (b) Low Tax; (2) Dominant coalition changed in 2002; (3) Carl Bearden was key political entrepreneur
Role of Information	(1) Research on higher education finance did not play a large role in debates
Collective Action	(1) Higher education coalition regained cohesiveness by 2005; (2) SB 389 was accepted because it did not challenge either coalition's deep or near core policy beliefs
Level of Action	(1) The ACF emphasizes the collective choice action tier
Policy Stages	(1) State fiscal crisis and change in dominant coalition placed tuition policy of public agenda; (2) SB 389 passed once the budget crisis was over, only moderately altered policy
Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility	(1) Missouri case conforms to ACF expectation of elite decision-making

Boundaries of Inquiry

For the ACF, the boundaries of inquiry are drawn by describing the parameters of a policy subsystem. Composed of coalitions and policy brokers, subsystems are built around the relations among coalitions and government actors. Legislatures and governors make decisions, which influence the resources (material and political) and general policy orientation of agencies. Policy outputs and socioeconomic and political impacts result to which coalitions

then react in their attempts to influence policy (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999). See, figure 1.2 for a visual depiction of the ACF policy subsystem.

Missouri's postsecondary political landscape is somewhat more amorphous than Florida's, possibly due to the fact that tuition policy was not the same kind of galvanizing issue in Missouri. Indeed, higher education appears to be a lower profile policy arena in Missouri than in Florida. Gubernatorial candidate Claire McCaskill noted this in an interview in 2003 (Franck, 2003). She suggested that higher education would be a bigger issue in the campaign if more students voted than senior citizens.

The primary coalitional fault line in Missouri higher education politics appears to be regional. Indeed, this political tension divides institutions, making the formation of a higher education coalition tenuous. Several commentators have remarked on this feature of Missouri politics as distinctive (Moody, 2003). The political interactions of actors during the 2000 to 2007 time period bear this out. Politicians from "outstate" Missouri tended to introduce bills limiting institutional ability to raise tuition autonomously, while lawmakers from the I-70 belt tended to oppose such measures (Missouri Senate, 2003; Missouri House, 2002; Missouri House, 2004). Out-state is a term colloquially used to refer to any community not Columbia, Kansas City, or St. Louis. Ironically, Springfield, a larger city than Columbia, considers itself aligned with outstate politics. The fact that the outstate politicians introducing tuition increase limits came from both parties attests to the strength of this defining feature in Missouri politics.

A second important coalition in Missouri extends beyond the relatively narrow realm of higher education policy. Most Missouri lawmakers, regardless of party, fall in line with the state's longstanding tradition of strongly favoring low taxes. Indeed this sentiment is so pervasive in Missouri's approach to policy that a number of commentators attributed the state's fiscal crisis to the structural deficits caused by the state's strict adherence to a low tax stance (Moody, 2003; Harms, 2004). Among Democratic members of the General Assembly, however, there seems to be a geographic component to their support of low taxes regardless of its impact on state services. Democrats representing districts in Kansas City, Columbia, and St. Louis tended to be more open to revisions in the state tax codes. Democrats from rural areas of the state, on the other hand, tend to oppose measures that might increase taxes.

I characterize this group as the "low tax" coalition because that seems to be the overarching feature of this group of actors. Actors in this coalition consistently favored policies designed to reduce the footprint of Missouri policy, at least from the revenue side of the equation. As Moody's (2003) report points out, Missouri's programmatic commitments outpaced its ability to pay for them given the state's tax structures. The most prominent members of the coalition, however, concurred with Moody's assessment of the state's structural deficits and worked to synchronize programmatic commitments with tax structures. Rep. Carl Bearden (R. St. Charles), for example, vigorously argued that state appropriations for higher education should return to the FY 2002 appropriated levels and only increase with inflation. Further, public institutions needed to trim

their operations to fit within their means such that tuition increases could be tied to inflation. In 2002, Rep. Catherine Hanaway (R. St. Louis Cty) led a successful opposition to Governor Holden's attempt to close corporate tax loopholes to raise revenue.

Nature of the Actors

Hypothesis 2 of the ACF maintains that actors within an advocacy coalition will show substantial consensus on issues pertaining to the policy core but less so on secondary aspects (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994, 184). Within the context of this hypothesis, the ACF provides another lens through which to understand the internal bickering and eventual reconciliation within the higher education coalition.

Hypothesis 4 states that the policy core attributes of a governmental program are unlikely to be significantly revised as long as the system advocacy coalition which instituted the program remains in power (Ibid). During the time frame of this study, the dominant coalition in Missouri began to shift with the 2002 mid-term election when Republicans took over the General Assembly. They followed this victory by seizing the Governor's office with the election of Matt Blunt in 2004. The low tax coalition was further energized by the activity of political entrepreneur and Republican leader in the House, Charles Bearden.

Role of Information

Hypothesis 6 states policy-oriented learning across belief systems is most likely when there is an indeterminate level of informed conflict between two coalitions, requiring that (1) each have the technical resources to engage in such

a debate, and that (2) the conflict be between secondary aspects of the two belief systems (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994, 184). Deep and near core beliefs are highly resistant to change. Near core beliefs are usually only overturned in the face of overwhelming disconfirming evidence compiled over a period of time. Because of the limited nature of learning in policy arenas, subsystems in which improved technical knowledge can be gained are more amenable to policy-oriented learning than other subsystems.

The Missouri case provides some support for both components of this hypothesis. First, the technical information about the impact of various higher education finance and tuition policies does not carry the same stature as research about the impact of environmental policy, for instance. While the factors contributing to affordability are well understood, there are not well accepted models measuring the impact of finance policy on institutional quality. Yet, in 2005 and 2006 the university presidents successfully used both quantitative and qualitative data to quiet legislative criticism. While SB 389 contained a tuition cap, it was a more moderate limitation of institutional autonomy than had been proposed in previous years.

Moreover, the tenor of the debate between the higher education and legislative coalitions declined in intensity between 2004 and 2005, resulting largely from easing financial conditions and changes in university leadership at key institutions. Hypothesis three states that actors and coalitions give up secondary aspects of beliefs systems before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core. Missouri's case illustrates this hypothesis clearly. Both legislators

and university presidents compromised on the issue of tuition policy in order to protect more deeply held beliefs. The presidents held two beliefs more deeply than their attachment to absolute control over tuition rates. First, the capital funds tied to SB 389 would allow institutions to pursue increased research and or student programs depending on their respective missions. Second, acceptance of the tuition policy compromise removed Bearden's per student funding plan from consideration and marginalized him in the higher education subsystem. The Omnibus bill gave the universities input into the implementation of tuition cap and the development of a new funding formula for the four-year publics.

Collective Action

During preliminary data coding, it seemed as though the passage of SB389, the Omnibus Higher Education Act, must be a defeat for the four-year public institutions. But further data collection and analysis revealed a more complex picture. First, SB 389 contained a different version of tuition cap than previous bills. Second, the bill provided CBHE with slightly increased authority to enforce policy and interactions among public institutions in the state. Finally, the bill contained the authorizing legislation for the sale of MOHELA, the state owned student loan authority, and the disbursement of the proceeds from that sale. These funds were allocated to universities for capital improvement and maintenance purposes.

While previous incarnations of the tuition cap tied tuition increases to the Consumer Price Index, the version of the cap presented in SB 389 did not strictly tie tuition increases to inflation. Rather, the bill allowed CBHE to fine institutions

up to 1% of their general operating allocation if they increased tuition rates faster than the rate of inflation. Institutions could apply for waivers of the cap under circumstances to be determined by the Coordinating Board. So the tuition cap in SB 389 represented a much less stringent measure than the prior three attempts to pass caps.

When considered as a total package, it makes sense from the ACF's understanding of collective action that the institutions eventually came to support SB 389's passage. Consider the three levels of beliefs posited by the ACF and their respective susceptibility to modification. Deep core beliefs, those reflecting an actor's or coalition's view about the way the world works are not likely to be modified. The near or policy core beliefs reflecting an actor or coalition's general orientation to public policy are firm but can be modified through the accretion of knowledge or through some transformative event. Finally, the outer ring of beliefs reflects the operational level of policy making. These beliefs are much more susceptible to change through the introduction of new knowledge and through compromise with other actors or coalitions.

SB 389 makes policy changes that occur primarily at this outer and changeable level of belief. Furthermore, the changes in tuition policy and authority of the Coordinating Board were accompanied by a significant incentive in the form of millions of dollars from the MOHELA sale. Institutions helped craft the structure of the tuition policy component of the bill and as a result could deal directly with CBHE when seeking waivers for the tuition cap, thereby removing direct legislative control over tuition rates.

It seems too that the legislative crisis combined with the Moody report seemed to energize Republican and rural Democratic members of the General Assembly. By highlighting the impact of the state's tax structure combined with its spending commitments, Moody recommended that the state make deep cuts to its programs—a 15% cut across the board. While the cuts were not evenly dispersed, legislators seemed to take his recommendation to heart and sought to dramatically decrease the scope and size of state government. While Governor Holden, the universities, CBHE, and many news editorial staffs argued that Missouri should work to raise revenue by closing corporate tax loop holes and perhaps altering other tax structures, Republicans and rural Democrats seized the opportunity to decry the size and inefficiency of state government. The loudest and most influential member of this group was chair of the House appropriations committee Carl Bearden (R. St. Charles.) For the low tax coalition, the Moody report served as increased technical evidence that encouraged them to become more aggressive in their approach to budgeting and with postsecondary education specifically.

Hypothesis 3 maintains that an actor or coalition will give up secondary aspects of their belief systems before acknowledging weaknesses in the policy core. Conditions in Missouri certainly lend credence to Hypothesis 3. From 2000 into early 2006, university presidents expressed opposition to legislated tuition controls. Arguing that tuition rates directly depended on state appropriations, the presidents successfully blocked at least four attempts to implement tuition caps. While the fiscal crisis prompted a fair amount of public bickering over the relative

shares of state resources and name changes, the issue of tuition controls seemed to strike at the heart of university autonomy. Specifically, institutions believed that policies designed to limit their ability to raise sufficient revenue threatened the viability of institutional missions.

Two leaders also made significant efforts to maintain the coalition in the wake of Bearden's attempts to reform the mechanism for funding higher education. President's Floyd and Neitzel, both newcomers to the Missouri higher education subsystem, reached out to one another and to the comprehensive and baccalaureate institutions to develop a consensus solution to legislative discontent. Both presidents worked to reassure the Missouri Western and Missouri Southern in particular that they were sensitive to their beliefs that they had been systematically under funded for decades. Despite their interest in obtaining higher levels of state support to support faculty salary increases and increased research activity, the UM and MSU presidents acceded to the concerns of the smaller institutions. From an ACF perspective, this move makes sense because the disagreement about relative shares of state resources dealt with secondary aspects of the institutional belief systems rather than with the deep or policy core. Indeed by agreeing to work together in developing an "equitable" funding mechanism for higher education the presidents of the larger institutions maintained the coalition and guaranteed they would have significant input in any new method's development.

Levels of Action

The ACF does not directly address policy change in terms of levels of action. Given its emphasis on belief systems and coalition interactions, the ACF is aimed at explaining policy change at the collective action level. The passage of the Higher Education Omnibus Act, SB 389, makes sense from an ACF perspective as a collective action level policy change because the bill did not require the institutions to act contrary to their deep or near core policy beliefs. Rather, Missouri's tuition policy debates were profoundly altered by the serendipitous changes in leadership at the University of Missouri and Missouri State. Presidents Floyd and Nietzel brought a more pragmatic orientation to negotiating state politics than the strategies pursued by their predecessors would indicate. While it would seem as though the near core beliefs of the coalitions changed between 2000 and 2006, in reality the leadership change resulted in shifting the location of beliefs about the importance of absolute tuition setting authority from the near core to the secondary aspects of the higher education coalition's belief system. Hence the policymaking process in Missouri was less combative than in Florida.

Policy Stages

The ACF represents the stages of the policy process through its depiction of policy subsystems. The stages are implied by the relationship among the components of the subsystem. Policy change most often results from perturbations in the subsystem. Socioeconomic or changes in the dominant regime prompt shifts in the relative power of the coalitions within a subsystem.

Both of these conditions obtained in the Missouri case. Despite these shocks to the higher education subsystem, however, the four-year public institutions walked away with a policy change that subtly shifted authority to the Coordinating Board but in ways largely of their crafting. In this instance, the higher education coalition worked to develop a policy that conformed to their most important policy beliefs. While there is insufficient evidence to draw a firm conclusion, one is tempted to argue that with the conclusion of the fiscal crisis and the compromise by the higher education coalition, that lawmakers were content to let the matter proceed despite the weaker control on tuition increases than had been previously envisioned. In addition, the key instigators of the more stringent tuition cap proposals engaged in political strategies with which other members of their coalition were uncomfortable, as in the instance of Carl Bearden and Ro Jetton's handling of HB 742 in early 2006. Higher education does not hold a central place in Missouri politics and eventual form of SB 389 allowed higher education to return to its "normal" place in the larger scheme of state politics.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

The ACF conceives of policy making in terms of elites making decisions through a representative democracy set of institutional arrangements. In light of its interest in explaining policy change over relatively long periods of time and on the stability of coalitions over time, this stance makes sense. Hypotheses seven through nine outline the conditions under which policy-oriented learning might occur. As with Florida, no professional entity exists to bridge coalitions or to enforce professional norms of knowledge and cooperation. While higher

education policy does not lend itself to the kinds of scientific inquiry found in environmental policy, for example, university presidents were able marshal comparative appropriations and economic impact data in making their case to legislators and citizens. While the effort was not entirely successful it did shift the debate about tuition policy to a degree.

Critical Theory

Recall from Chapter 1, Habermas (1975) uses a counterfactual exercise to measure the quality of actual public discourse against what he terms the “ideal speech situation.” Four preconditions must obtain before an ideal speech situation can be realized. First, communicative speech acts imply mutually comprehensible communication among the actors. Second, representative speech acts are those in which actors say what they mean without fear of coercion. Third, regulative speech acts are those recognizing that values are as relevant as facts. Finally, constative speech acts occur when the actors provide interpretive and explanatory analysis of their perspectives such that their communications are free of distortion. By assessing existing discourse against these ideals, Habermas contends that social conflict can be reconciled and institutional development can be made more democratic. The process is necessarily conflictual and dialectical.

This section of the chapter uses Fairclough’s discourse analysis to describe the discourses apparent in the media and documentary evidence available in Missouri according to the dimensions used for the other two frameworks. As argued by Hawkesworth (1988), the goal of critical analysis is to

discover the boundaries of social possibility created by the discourses shaping a policy debate.

Table 6.6: Critical Theory Summary of Key Characteristics

Dimension	MO Characteristics
Boundary of Inquiry	(1) Weak coordinating institutions; (2) UM and MSU most powerful postsecondary actors; (3) Competing visions of the role of higher education as primary discourse
Nature of the Actors	(1) Institutions initially play role of passive victim; (2) Legislators depict universities as "out of control."; (3) Students as objects
Role of Information	(1) Universities argued for the necessity of tuition increases; (2) Universities used economic impact reports and presentations across the state to demonstrate their value
Collective Action	(1) UM and MSU led efforts to counter legislative claims with evidence of economic impact; (2) UM and MSU also visited smaller institutions to indicate their support for increased appropriations; (3) Legislators use promotional form to convey their message
Level of Action	(1) Universities initially argued tuition
Policy Stages	Difficult to fit within Critical Theory framework
Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility	(1) MO case illustrates the foreclosure of discourse

Boundaries of Inquiry

For Critical Theory, the boundary of inquiring involves understanding the distribution of material resources among actors in a given policy arena. In addition, Critical Theory contends that power relations initially based on material conditions are maintained and strengthened through discourse. While material conditions are important, Critical Theory tends to focus its analytical energy on

understanding both the substance and form of discourses that maintain unequal material conditions. For critical theorists, changing the content and practice of discourse holds the key for making power relations and inequities visible and open to public critique.

In Missouri understanding the distribution of material and symbolic resources is a complex affair. While it's tempting to directly ask who the rich and the poor actors are, the answer depends on one's vantage point within the higher education arena. Material resources encompass financial, human, and political capital. According to Harms (2004), Kropf (2005), Moody (2003) rural areas hold disproportionate influence over state politics relative to the size of outstate's population and economic development.

Among the institutions Missouri State University and the University of Missouri, while frequently at odds politically, exercise the greatest political power over higher education policy. This becomes particularly important when we consider that the Coordinating Board held only mild authority over statewide policy. CBHE typically garnered support for its policy initiatives by exercising a broker role among the institutions, building consensus and engaging in compromise. For example, the University of Missouri was able to opt out of a statewide agreement among the four and two year public institutions to adopt a common set of general education requirements to facilitate transfer of credit among institutions. While this move brought a great deal of ill will towards the institution, CBHE was unable to force the university to comply with the agreed upon policy, absent action by the state legislature. Interestingly, UM and MSU

appear to have exercised different kind of power. UM, with its four campuses, large sphere of activity, and economic resources, held the most financial, human capital, and political power. MSU, on the other hand, seemed to rely mostly on discursive power.

While MSU and UM were the most powerful actors, other institutions were able to impact higher education politics in ways that shaped the form and passage of the 2007 Omnibus Higher Education Act. First, Missouri Southern joined forces with MSU to argue that MSU and Missouri Western were underfunded by the state due to the disproportionate funds going to the University of Missouri. Northwest Missouri State engaged in a significant restructuring project aimed at streamlining their administration and enhancing academic quality, after winning the Missouri Quality Award for administrative excellence in 1996.. CBHE repeatedly stressed its desire for the institutions to adopt quality management standards and reassured the legislature that it was doing the same, despite the cuts in its operating budget (CBHE, 2005; CBHE, 2004).

In Missouri, neither students nor faculty wielded much power in the debates about tuition rates and levels of state support for higher education. When quoted in media reports, students typically agreed with university arguments about the negative relationship between state appropriations and tuition. While they expressed concern and disapproval of increasing tuition, they blamed the legislature for not providing sufficient support for higher education either in the form of direct appropriations or through increased financial aid. A

review of individual institution's faculty council minutes provided insufficient information about faculty involvement in debates about tuition rates or levels of state support. Analysis of the Missouri Association of Faculty Senates and the Missouri Chapter of the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) revealed that statewide organizations were concerned about levels of state support for higher education, but they said little about tuition policy (MOAAUP, 2005; MAFS, 2004).

CBHE seemed to view the faculty as a lobbying tool, exhorting the MAFS to visit with as many legislators as possible to forestall additional cuts to state appropriations. But analysis of the meeting notes and publications of the two active statewide faculty groups in Missouri revealed no discussion about any of the tuition cap legislation proposed between 2002 and 2007.

The business community in Missouri is also notable in its relative absence from debates about higher education policy between 2000 and 2007. While many business leaders served on the myriad commissions created during the time frame of the study, there was no overt involvement of any particular businessman or business organization in higher education policy let alone debates about state support or tuition policy. Governor Holden in 2003 urged the institutions to do a better job of recruiting business support for higher education. He also urged the business community to get more involved in higher education policy. It's important to note that the business community in the state possesses a great deal of financial and political power, but by its absence in the higher education arena sends a message of its own.

A number of discourses are important for understanding Missouri tuition policy debates. First, actors in the higher education policy arena relied on competing visions of the role of higher education in the state. Interestingly, lawmakers and the institutions understood higher education in terms of its economic impact on the state, but the conclusions they drew about its implications for public policy were quite different. The presidents and CBHE argued that higher education contributed to the state's economic development as a predominant driver statewide. Therefore, they argued, the state held an interest in providing for sufficient state support for higher education through direct operating appropriations and increased need-based financial aid. Lawmakers, on the other hand, understood the economic benefits of higher education in terms of their accrual to individual students. A second discourse pertains broadly to the quality of higher education. Institutions discussed quality in terms of fulfilling their missions—teaching, research, and service, while lawmakers tended to discuss quality in terms of undergraduate education, efficiency, and cost effectiveness. The third discourse functioned more as an undercurrent, but is important as well. A discourse about students and learning runs through all of the debates about tuition policy and state support for higher education. It ties the economic development and quality discourses together. The fourth discourse centers on the relationship between state support for higher education and tuition. Finally, discourse about the role of state government also shaped the debates about tuition policy and state support. The discourses will be discussed greater detail below.

Nature of the Actors

Discursive practices make it difficult for marginal individuals and groups to alter the course of discourse to their betterment. In discourse analysis, Fairclough argued that the ways in which actors are represented in discourse influences how events unfold. Which actors are included or excluded in the representation of events, are they represented passively? Halliday (1994) contended that consistently representing a group as passive, only referenced as being acted upon by others, implies member of the group are incapable of agency.

From 2001 to 2004, regarding the impact of the fiscal crisis on higher education generally and tuition increases specifically, the four-year public institutions framed the legislature as the active and aggressive party. The institutions and others cast themselves as passive victims. For instance, the institutions insisted that decreases in appropriations necessitated an automatic increase in tuition. As the budget crisis wore on, this assertion grew more strident and the institutions began adding detail to their explanation. Specifically, they contended that even appropriations increases that matched the rate of inflation failed to adequately support higher education given the magnitude of cost increases in healthcare, pensions and technology specifically. In the fall of 2005, the Governor's office asked the institutions to prepare for a potential 10-12% budget cut. The presidents responded vigorously, indicating that a cut of that magnitude would result in double digit tuition increases at all institutions. The message was evenly delivered by the president of the Council of Presidents,

Barbara Dixon (president at Truman State). This marked the first time that the institutions spoke as one voice through their state-wide association on the matter of decreasing appropriations.

The discursive practice of casting themselves as incapable of agency allowed the institutions to shift the responsibility for tuition increases onto the legislature. It was an interesting and somewhat risky move. First, it communicated that the institutions, namely their presidents, believe using a language of victimhood in reference to themselves would be politically effective. Conversely, it communicated that the institutions cannot imagine ways to address appropriations cuts without recourse to tuition increases. In other words, the institutions could only imagine alternative solutions to their revenue problems that lead to fundamental and catastrophic changes in what they do.

In describing the events related to tuition policy between 2000 and early 2007, I noted that discussion of tuition policy change accelerated in 2004. This shift occurred at the same time as a shift in the way institutions were represented in lawmakers talk also occurred. Prior to 2004 a few members of the Coordinating Board suggested that higher education in the state take a more active stance in addressing the fiscal crisis, but were drowned out by other voices (Koehler, 2002b; CBHE, 2002b). Claire McCaskill, the State Auditor from 1999 to 2004, published a report critical of the Coordinating Board, DHE, and the four-year public institutions for failing to address fiscal problems through means other than tuition increases (McCaskill, 2003). Her rhetoric softened during her

gubernatorial campaign, where she contended that the state needed to adequately support its public universities.

The emergence of Carl Bearden as a leader in the House pushed the matter as well. Bearden made several efforts between 2004 and 2006 to reform higher education's budget process and place limits on institutions' ability to levy tuition increases. He sponsored or co-sponsored at least 3 bills to that end, with HB1865 getting through a full house vote in 2006. While the measure died in the Senate, Bearden's language regarding the four-year public institutions was scathing. He said, "We have out of control institutions raising tuition without any justification for doing so" (Blank, 2006). McCaskill and Bearden also cast the institutions as passive throughout the fiscal crisis. Passivity for McCaskill and Bearden meant something rather different than victimhood, however. They saw passiveness stemming from either a lack of imagination, from McCaskill's perspective, or lack of proper incentive from Bearden's point of view.

Nearly all actors cast students as passive objects of tuition, state funding, and financial aid policies and practices. Members of the Coordinating Board and university presidents contended the state's budgetary and financial aid policies diminished the affordability and quality of higher education. One member of the Coordinating Board admonished the General Assembly to remember that the budget was balanced on the backs of students. Students depicted themselves as powerless in the face of tuition increases. They placed responsibility for increasing college prices at legislature's door rather than with their institutions. Lawmakers, on the other hand, argued that institutions were passing the costs of

their inefficiencies onto students. Representative Bearden used the passive representation of students in an attempt to gather support for his funding model for higher education. He argued that his model restored students' agency by making funding dollars follow students rather than flowing in lump sum to institutions.

Role of Information

Information is both troublesome and troubling for Critical Theory. It is troublesome because information is never straightforward. As a framework with a constructivist epistemology, facts and explanations of events or phenomena are not independent of the person(s) producing them. Information is troubling because the meaning or relevance of a fact or explanation is negotiated among actors who do not necessarily possess equal ability or power to influence the outcome. Several concepts from discourse analysis prove useful in explaining how information was used by actors to produce the tuition change enacted by SB 389. First, modality refers to the relationship established between an actor and his or her representations. Specifically, what commitments do they make to truth and necessity (Halliday, 1994). Second, legitimation refers to strategies designed to justify particular policy proposals, decisions, and implementation (Habermas, 1975).

Bearden, for example, presented himself as an authority on the shortcomings of public universities in Missouri. He justified his proposals to limit university authority over tuition and alter the state funding model by arguing that the universities lacked sufficient self-discipline to provide Missourians with quality

postsecondary education at a reasonable cost. Presidents Floyd and Nietzel, on the other hand, used more measured tones in their public responses to legislative criticism.

Collective Action

Hegemony, new capitalism, governance—changes in governance depend upon changes in genres or genre chains. According to both Fairclough and Habermas, discourses flow together to produce public policy. Discourse establishes the terms on which actors conduct themselves in the public sphere. From about 2004 onward, the institutions, particularly the University of Missouri and Missouri State shifted discursive tactics from one of passive victimhood, to what Fairclough and Slaughter and Leslie (1997) term new capitalism. Rather than continuing to paint themselves as victims of poor state policies, the institutions took the offensive in making the case that higher education is the engine that drives Missouri economic development. To that end, both UM and MSU produced presentations and reports indicating their respective contributions to the state economy in the form of undergraduate and graduate degrees, professional education, research and technology transfer and employment. They vigorously argued that all of the four-year public institutions made significant contributions to the state's economic vitality and development. As such, it was worthy of at least adequate state support. Moreover, the presidents argued that they would be happy to make tuition increases more stable if the General Assembly would make an equal commitment to stability in appropriations.

Bearden and his supporters continued to depict institutions as inefficient and financially unaccountable. His vision of the role of higher education lay in the production of undergraduate degrees as his funding formula for higher education attests—resting purely upon per FTE undergraduate student based funding. But his mode of presentation was largely promotional. He did not present data or travel the state making presentations to a wide variety of communities. Rather he simply asserted the institutions were “out of control.” His discursive strategy backfired.

Levels of Action

While Critical Theory doesn't use the language of levels of action, the concept is important. Actors use discourse to shift the terms of debate about a given policy issue from one venue to another. For instance, at the behest of the Coordinating Board, the institutions adopted a new strategy for dealing with legislative criticism over tuition increases during the fiscal crisis. Early in the crisis, the presidents used a simple logic to counter calls for tuition restraint. Essentially they argued that the tuition-appropriations relationship was a quid pro quo. When appropriations dropped, tuition had to go up. They presented it as a simple calculus. When various members of the legislature responded by introducing legislation to curb institutional authority to set tuition rates, MDHE and members of the Coordinating Board argued that the institutions had to do something to establish the value of higher education.

Hence by 2004, the institutions adopted the language of new capitalism as a way to make the case of their value to the state. While not a shift in the level of

action as conceptualized by the IRC, this change in discourse and the grammar used to support it reflects a change in the discursive level of action. The institutions moved the debate about tuition policy and higher education finance in general away from a narrow and localized policy debate between the institutions and the General Assembly to a matter of importance to the future of Missouri. Without strong public universities, the presidents and CBHE argued, Missouri would languish as an economic backwater.

Policy Stages

Critical Theory does not conceive of the policy process in terms of stages, or even as a process really. Indeed, as a theoretical framework it directs a scholar's interest towards the discourses that according to Chouliarki and Fairclough [Chouliarki and Fairclough, 1999], flow together to produce a policy outcome.

Conception of Sociopolitical Possibility

Habermas describes the ideal speech situation as a counterfactual tool to analyze an actual set of events and outcomes against an idealized version of the same policy conversation (Habermas, 1975). At a minimum, an ideal speech situation entails actors being allowed to say what they mean and be understood without distortion. In the Missouri case, this condition is not satisfied largely because a number of actors' voices are not heard, or at least not understood by other participants. More precisely, the terms under which students, parents, and faculty speak and are understood results in distortions of meaning. This is important because it allows the presidents and policy makers, both legislative

and agency-based to craft a policy solution that fails to address the core issue of appropriate relative shares for the costs of running institutions.

From a Critical Theory perspective, the Missouri illustrates the foreclosure of discourse. Individual institutional responses to the budget cuts are telling. In addition to raising tuition, institutions spent their reserves, instituted hiring freezes, deferred maintenance on buildings, and forewent salary increases for faculty and staff. Southeast Missouri State University spent its entire reserve fund. The University of Missouri offered early retirement to over 400 faculty and staff. National policy think tanks admonished institutions and states that they should be more proactive in dealing economic downturns, increasing tuition during prosperous times banking the excess for lean years.

Conclusion

All three of the theoretical frameworks used in the analysis of tuition politics in Missouri from 2000 through 2006 offer satisfying explanations of the eventual passage and implementation of SB 389. Precipitated by a deep statewide financial crisis, Missouri's tuition politics revolved around the relationship between tuition and state appropriations. This section of the chapter evaluates the explanations provided by each of the frameworks discussed above. It follows the evaluation of the individual frameworks with a discussion of if and how using the IRC, ACF and critical theory in concert alters our understanding of Missouri tuition politics.

IRC

Of the three frameworks applied in this chapter, the IRC, when taken in isolation, offered the most complete explanation of Missouri tuition politics over the past six years. By emphasizing actor behavior and strategy, the IRC allows the reconstruction of the events that ultimately lead to the passage of a compromise policy change in the form of SB 389. Using the IRC helps analysts understand why the eventual policy change took its final form and was able to gain passage. For example, university presidents employed brinkmanship strategies with each other and the legislature throughout the 2001 to 2006 time frame. Threats by University of Missouri (UM) President Pacheco and Missouri State University (MSU) President Keiser about the potential need to close institutions or entire departments due to state budget cuts added fuel to legislative discontent and mistrust of the four-year universities, especially when the threats proved empty in the face of new budget cuts and withholdings. The arrival of new presidents on these campuses, the two largest in the state, came with a notable shift in tactics. Both President Floyd (UM) and President Nietzel (MSU) made conciliatory gestures towards the legislature, discussed below, and traveled the state rebuilding relationships with smaller institutions by speaking about the need to remedy historical funding inequities for some of those schools. Moreover, the prospect of significant capital improvement funds from the sale of the state student loan authority (MOHELA) made the four-year presidents more willing to negotiate a modest change in tuition policy.

As with the Florida case, the chief contribution of the IRC in Missouri derives from its tiered levels of action. In Missouri the ways in which actors used levels of action was more subtle than in Florida, but no less important. In Missouri, the four-year presidents successfully fended off several legislative attempts to institute tuition caps or guaranteed pricing regimes. By 2006, however, the two most prominent institutions in the state had taken operational level steps to convey their concern about rising college prices. Missouri State University implemented a weak version of a guaranteed tuition plan, while the President of the University of Missouri vetted a similar idea in a series of town hall style meetings held across the state. Citing lack of public support, the University of Missouri scuttled the guaranteed tuition plan in favor of tying tuition increases to inflation so long as state appropriations also matched inflation. These moves garnered trust with key legislators in the Senate enabling the compromise that eventually became SB 389. The legislature enacted a tuition cap, a collective choice level policy, but delegated the implementation to the Coordinating Board and the Commissioner for Higher Education knowing the institutions would play a large role in crafting the rules governing exemptions. These latter aspects of the policy change occurred at the operational level.

ACF

The ACF emphasizes the action of coalitions within a policy subsystem. In particular, the ACF examines the role of beliefs in forming the ground on which coalitions converge and the source of conflict between opposing coalitions. Unlike the IRC, the ACF draws our attention to the context in which a policy

subsystem operates. In Missouri, the exogenous variables posited by the ACF prove important in understanding the emergence of tuition policy as a salient policy issue. The fiscal crisis, combined with the change from Democratic to Republic control of the governor's office and General Assembly provided the conditions ripe for policy change. The passage of SB 389, however, did not reflect the preferences of the newly dominant coalition. Indeed, the higher education coalition managed to fend off several bills that would have more severely diminished the institutions' tuition setting authority. SB 389, however, not only left the implementation of the revised tuition policy in the higher education coalition's hands, it included a large infusion of capital funds in the form of the MOHELA sale. The higher education coalition managed this successful defense despite cracks in its own solidarity and despite the presence of a powerful political entrepreneur in the form of Carl Bearden working for restricted institutional autonomy in financial matters. In this sense the ACF does not provide a sufficiently satisfactory explanation for the content and passage of SB 389.

The ACF's stress on the importance of beliefs proved somewhat more helpful in Missouri than in Florida. That the institutions finally bought into a legislated change in tuition policy makes sense once we understand that SB 389 did not require the institutions to compromise their near or deep core policy beliefs. When looking at the low tax coalition it seems like the passage of SB 389 must be considered a puzzling failure from the ACF's perspective. Yet, it's plausible that Bearden expressed the coalition's beliefs in a more extreme

fashion than the less viable core of the coalition felt comfortable. Bearden's key defeat came at the hands of his own party, albeit in the Senate, whose leadership grew wary of his aggressive handling of HB1685. It is difficult to say for certain, but Bearden's tactics may have threatened beliefs deemed more important than higher education funding mechanisms.

Critical Theory

Critical theory emphasizes the role of discourse in structuring power relations among actors in a policy context. While both the IRC and ACF offer more complete explanations of actors' behavior, critical theory helps us understand the assumptions and limitations of the tuition debates in Missouri. The discourse of new capitalism allowed the institutions to win the public opinion battle with the legislature over tuition policy. It was able to win out over the more promotional grammar deployed by Bearden and his supporters.

Throughout the fiscal crisis, the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) pressed the four-year presidents to make the contributions of their respective institutions clear to the General Assembly and the public. While the shift was not immediate, by 2004 the presidents began talking about their contributions to Missouri in terms of economic development. Most institutions developed economic impact statements and developed presentations highlighting their contributions to their particular region and statewide. Presidents Floyd and Nietzel took their economic development materials and made presentations on behalf of their respective institutions across the state. The shift in language about the purpose and value of

higher education in the state marked an overt entry into the language of new capitalism as described by Slaughter and Leslie (1997), Metcalfe (2006), and Milam (2006). The change in discourse was effective with legislators in that key senators helped kill Bearden's 2006 legislation containing a much more stringent form of tuition cap than the one eventually passed in SB 389.

Differing conceptions of quality in higher education formed a second key discourse shaping policy debates over tuition authority and university revenues in Missouri. The presidents conceived of quality in terms of fulfilling their missions—teaching, research, and public service. Members of the General Assembly, however, couched their understanding of postsecondary quality in terms of undergraduate education, efficiency and cost effectiveness.

While the passage of SB 389 in 2007 seems to mark the beginning of what IRC scholars call equilibrium, the compromise solution embodied in the Omnibus Higher Education Act represents a foreclosure of discourse from a critical theory perspective. It allowed both the General Assembly and the institutions to avoid making transparent policy decisions about the appropriate relative shares for postsecondary educational costs. By avoiding more direct conversations about the relationship between tuition and state appropriations, the policy subsystem as a whole displaced discourse about the overall structure and purpose of higher education in Missouri and uncritically gave primacy to the discourse of economic development and new capitalism.

Frameworks in Concert

Using the IRC, ACF, and critical theory together offers a different kind of explanation of Missouri's tuition policy debates from the past six years than we would obtain using each framework singly. Each framework on its own provides a provocative and plausible explanation of Missouri tuition politics from 2000 through 2006. Allowing the analyses to inform each other, however, yields a more satisfying explanation of Missouri tuition politics. The IRC and ACF have developed an ongoing dialogue over the past decade or so (Sabatier, 1999) resulting in fruitful research supported above. The IRC sharpens the ACF's understandings of intracoalition politics and allows an understanding of the interactions of beliefs and strategy. The ACF offers the IRC the insights generated by acknowledging the role played by variables exogenous to the subsystem. The addition of critical theory to this dialogue only deepens the possibilities of the inquiry. While critical theory devotes scant attention to the actors, their preferences, strategies, or institutions. It does add an evaluative dimension to the study of policy change.

In Missouri, for example, we can see that the shift to the new capitalism discourse by the institutions helped the institutions displace calls for more fundamental policy change. Critical theory also improves our understanding of why some actors were more salient than others in the tuition policy debates. Finally, critical theory raises questions about the social possibility made possible through discourse. The ACF and IRC, on the other hand, remain agnostic about the content of policy debates themselves. Acknowledging the limitations

established through discourse, however, help us understand why actors select some strategies over others.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

The opening chapters of this dissertation posed a series of questions. One set of questions addressed theoretical issues implicit in comparing theories of the policy process. First, what does comparative analysis add to our understanding of policy frameworks? Second, how successful was the analytical process deployed in this study? Specifically, is the rubric derived from Schlager & Blomquist and de Haven Smith's research useful for comparing theories of the policy process and for generating meaningful policy analysis? Third, how does it contribute to theory building both for individual theories and at a meta-theoretical level? Four, is the benefit derived from comparative analysis the result of the additive effects of triangulation or do the results of the foregoing analyses form a different kind of explanation altogether? Finally, does comparative analysis help scholars make connections between macro and micro level policy processes across the states?

In this chapter, I ascertain the degree to which this study has successfully answered these questions. First, I briefly summarize the key findings from chapters four through six. Second, I answer the theoretical questions. Limitations and questions for future research comprise the third and fourth sections.

Tuition Policy Change in the States

Higher education policy analysts commonly believe that fiscal exigency drives changes in tuition policy. Specifically, they argue that states are likely to relax tuition controls when state coffers are low, permitting tuition increases to offset declining state appropriations. While declining appropriations have long been associated with increasing tuition rates, both macro and micro level analysis declines in state revenues alone do not lead to decentralizing tuition policy.

Macro Level Analysis

Chapter 4 used the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert (DSH) framework to explain tuition policy change across the American states. The DSH framework, essentially a systems approach, commonly applies statistical methods to understand the impact of political, economic, and socio-cultural variables on public policy. I used both binary and multinomial logistic regression to analyze the impact of these types of variables on decisions by state legislatures to enact policies changing tuition setting authority. The general model tested took the following form:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tuition policy change} = & \alpha + b_1\text{RevChg} + b_2\text{YrTuition} + b_3\text{ChildPov} + b_4\text{LegPar} + b_5\text{TEL} + \\ & b_6\text{ExCent} + b_7\text{AppFTE} + b_8\text{LegProf} + b_9\text{Lob/Leg} + b_{11}\text{HEStruc} + b_{12}\text{99AUT} + b_{13}\text{Stu/Cap} \\ & + b_{14}\% \text{PubEnr} + b_{15}\text{HSGrad}, \end{aligned}$$

where the dependent variable took the values of “change” or “no change” in the binary models; and “centralize,” “decentralize,” or “no change” in the multinomial models.

I tested five hypotheses developed from my reading of research using a DSH approach and from research in higher education pertaining to state appropriations, tuition rates, and affordability. Hypothesis one asserting that socioeconomic variables outweigh other kinds of variables in predicting state tuition policy change garnered mixed support. While decreases in state revenue were associated with policy change in all of the models, the size of the impact was small relative to other significant variables. Two political variables, the presence of a federal style postsecondary governance system and a tax expenditure limitation (TEL) law were also significant across all models. Federal systems were more likely to change tuition policy and to do so in a decentralizing direction. Ironically, states with TELs were more likely to centralize tuition policy, despite their limited ability to expend state revenues.

Hypotheses two and three are related. Hypothesis two associated fiscal duress, measured by change in state revenues, with states acting to decentralize tuition authority. Tentatively, there is some support for the argument that states experiencing fiscal stress will, at minimum, refrain from enacting laws limiting institutional ability to increase tuition rates. The results for this hypothesis were difficult to interpret given the limitations of the data set. Hypothesis three contends increasing college prices leads to tighter controls over tuition setting authority. None of the models tested showed tuition rates to be significant.

Hypothesis four argued that states with more centralized postsecondary government structures were less likely to alter existing tuition authority arrangements. In states with federal governance, the most decentralized type,

arrangements were more likely to decentralize tuition policy. This finding provides some indirect support for hypothesis four. Perhaps states with more centralized governance structures have more stable tuition politics.

Finally, hypothesis five gauged the impact of demand for higher education on tuition policy. Specifically, I hypothesized that states with increasing numbers of students in the higher education pipeline would be more likely to decentralize tuition authority, allowing greater latitude in pricing such that institutional revenues could rise to meet costs associated with additional students, lessening the need for substantially increased state appropriations. Neither the number of enrolled college students per capita, nor the percent change in high school graduates found significance.

The analysis presented in chapter four highlights the complexity of tuition politics across the states. While traditional political variables such as political party, legislative professionalism, and executive centralization were not significant on their own, institutional arrangements clearly matter in creating conditions ripe for changes in tuition setting authority. It may well be that higher education is not a high salience issue in most states and that this obscures the relationships among potentially important variables. The key economic variable impacting state decisions to alter tuition authority arrangements, revenue change, showed only tentative results, offering little support to the common wisdom that states with less money to spend will allow colleges and universities the flexibility to increase tuition to offset decreasing state support.

The results of the DSH analysis prompt questions about micro-level processes within states. First, what are the relationships between institutions and tuition politics? In particular, how do the relationships among statewide agencies, public colleges and universities, and state legislatures shape debates about tuition authority? Second, what role does state budget policy and capacity play in these debates? Finally, do state case studies highlight the importance of variables not shown to be significant in the models? I address these questions below.

Case Studies

I conducted case studies using two states, Florida and Missouri using Institutional Rational Choice, Advocacy Coalition Framework, and Critical Theory to create three separate explanations of tuition policy in the two states. Each chapter concludes with a synthesis of the key findings of each of the individual frameworks and assesses the utility of comparative theory analysis for explaining tuition politics at the micro-level.

Florida

Tuition setting authority came to the forefront as a policy issue for the legislature through different means in Florida and Missouri. In Florida, a state where the legislature set tuition rates for all four year public institutions, tuition authority simmered as an issue within the higher education community for twenty years prior to the start of the study. Tuition authority became wrapped up in larger policy debates about the relationship between higher education and the legislature and between higher education and K-12 education. Specifically,

Governor Jeb Bush's efforts to create a "seamless" system of K-20 education in Florida led to the dissolution of the Board of Regents and its replacement with a Board of Education governing both K-12 and the postsecondary sectors. In response, Senator and former Governor Bob Graham launched an ultimately successful effort to amend the state constitution, creating a much more powerful Board of Governors to provide independent governance for higher education. The proposed Board of Governors would count among its powers the authority to set tuition for all 13 four-year public institutions. Yet, the adoption of the amendment creating the Board of Governors in 2002 only sparked further acrimony. Florida higher education politics has been beset by legislative posturing and laws declaring legislative prerogative over tuition rates, proclamations by the Board of Governors, asserting its authority, and a series of court cases filed on behalf of the Board of Governors by a political action committee formed by Bob Graham.

1. Institutions

The IRC offered a fairly comprehensive account of Florida tuition politics over the past six years. By emphasizing actor behavior and strategy, I reconstructed the events that ultimately lead to the legislature losing control over tuition policy to the Board of Governors. Using the IRC enables improved understanding of the degree to which tuition policy in Florida is used strategically by some actors to advance other policy interests. While the legislature certainly thought tuition authority was important on its own merits, legislative leaders tried to use tuition policy to protect their control over program approval as well. For

Graham and his supporters, tuition policy was also of secondary importance to the control over programs.

The chief contribution of the IRC in this case, however, derives from its tiered levels of action. Given Florida's history of legislative prerogative in matters of higher education policy, one would have expected the legislature's preferences to prevail in its fight with Graham and his supporters. Yet, the legislature wound up losing both markers of policy authority in higher education: program approval and tuition authority. The IRC notion of levels of action helps explain why it happened. The legislature relied on the strategies it historically deployed in disputes with the state university system. It rattled the saber of appropriations. By trying to keep the decision process at the collective choice tier, they made a crucial mistake. Graham, on the other hand, recognized that the source of the regents undoing had been structural. In chartering the new Board of Governors within the state constitution, Graham shifted the level of action from the collective choice tier to the constitutional tier, bringing the courts into the fray as arbiter. In doing so, Graham made the legislative strategy obsolete.

From the tenor of the news reports in Florida since the mediation agreement awarding the board both program and tuition authority, the debates in Florida seem far from over. I would expect that the legislature, which was retained by the Republican party in the 2006 elections, would need to adopt a new strategy in making the case for its authority over higher education. They would either need to convince voters to reverse course on Amendment 11, or find some way of casting their authority in a new light.

2. Subsystems, Coalitions and Beliefs

The ACF emphasizes the action of coalitions within a policy subsystem. In particular, the ACF examines the role of beliefs in forming the ground on which coalitions converge and the source of conflict between opposing coalitions. Unlike the IRC, the ACF draws our attention to the context in which a policy subsystem operates. In Florida, the exogenous variables posited by the ACF prove important in understanding the series of events leading to the mediation agreement in early 2006. The 1998 elections cemented the Republican hold on state government, the state experienced marked fiscal duress, expectations for higher education shifted as well. All three of these things created a climate ripe for policy change.

The ACF also helps us understand the somewhat surprising constellation of actors. I anticipated the Board of Governors would be more vocal in asserting its authority once it had a constitutional mandate, but the Bush strategy of appointing only those who had opposed the board's creation in the first place created a board profoundly ambivalent about its role. While the board began to assert itself in 2004, it's hard to believe the rumblings from Graham's group of colleagues about an impending lawsuit had no impact, likely prompting it to take action. Again, given the history of legislative prerogative in this policy arena, the emergence of a political entrepreneur with sufficient stature to bring a relatively obscure issue before voters was needed to successfully block the policy changes initiated by the legislature.

The ACF's stress on the importance of beliefs proved less helpful in explaining policy change in Florida. While the beliefs espoused by the Traditionalist coalition, led by Graham, seem fairly clear cut, the beliefs espoused by the Legislative Prerogative coalition are more convoluted. In particular, the LP coalition's behavior and rhetoric gives primacy to strategic goals concerns about weakening the concentration of state power in the legislature. These beliefs do not deal with the substance of higher education policy, but rather reflect legislators' concerns with electoral outcomes. Save for Governor Bush, the talk about the need for a seamless system of public education seems self-serving rather than substantive in the thoughts expressed by legislators.

3. Discourse

Critical theory emphasizes the role of discourse in structuring power relations among actors in a policy context. While both the IRC and ACF offer more complete explanations of actors' behavior, critical theory helps us understand the assumptions and limitations of the tuition debates in Florida. In one sense the legislature's assertion of prerogative in tuition policy is refreshingly honest. Both the Senate presidents and House Speakers throughout the time period of the study openly admitted that they were less concerned with the impact of their policy choices on the ability of higher education to meet state needs than they were with the effort to maintain control over key policy mechanisms relative to the Board of Governors. They rather straight-forwardly assumed that they were best positioned to make policy, hence their lack of

openness to devolving either program or tuition authority to the universities or the Board of Governors.

The assumptions underlying Graham and his supporters' positions were less transparently stated. While they maintained they simply sought to protect the universities from unwarranted legislative meddling, they did so by assuming that postsecondary education did a good job of meeting their various missions and state needs when left to their own devices and coordinated by a statewide agency. Neither Graham nor his supporters seemed interested in opening up the discussion of how well the institutions served their undergraduate populations or their research and graduate missions. Rather they called forth a conception of higher education echoed by Berdahl (Berdahl & McConnell, 1999), who argued that higher education was an almost sacred institution—the only place where an unfettered search for knowledge occurred.

The four discourses shaping the tuition policy debates in Florida: alumni rivalry, devolution, role of higher education, and corporate language came together and stunted the policy conversation in the state. Legislators were more concerned with who got how much of the higher education spoils—Gators or Seminoles—than with the overall quality of their postsecondary institutions. The two opposing coalitions offered widely divergent definitions about the meaning of the term devolution. From the comments and actions of the legislators we can infer that their espoused commitment to devolution was disingenuous. As events progressed into 2004 and 2005, legislators stopped talking about devolution

almost completely and fought against increased tuition flexibility for the institutions at every turn.

The discourses about the role of higher education and corporate language are commingled. In large measure, the traditionalist coalition defended a model of higher education that has come under increasing scrutiny and criticism over the past twenty-five years. Bush, some of the legislators, the Council of 100, and the Higher Education Funding Task Force argued that higher education reflected archaic goals. They felt it was more important for the universities to serve the economic and human capital development needs of the state. Critical theory makes an important contribution to the study here. The Council of 100 and the Higher Education Funding Task Force both supported greater autonomy for the universities in Florida. Several members of the Council signed on as plaintiffs in the lawsuit filed by Floridians for Constitutional Integrity. They make for odd bed-fellows with Graham, however. The Council was able to replace Graham's defense of the traditional role of higher education with a more corporate vision by committing to the language and policy agenda of devolution.

I suspect, however, that Wellman (Wellman, 1999), who argued that states steadfastly refuse to talk about substantive matters when it comes to tuition policy, would be dissatisfied with the content of the debates in Florida. If we compare the policy debates in Florida to the Habermas' criteria for the ideal speech situation, we are compelled to agree with Wellman's argument. First, the communicative aspects of the Florida policy discussions do not support the "mutually comprehensible" criteria advocated by Habermas. The actors, both

within and between the coalitions, spoke with differing conceptions of devolution and the role of higher education. Second, not all of the relevant actors were able to speak without fear of coercion (representative speech). The Board of Governors felt this keenly. In nearly every meeting members, including Chairwoman Roberts, expressed concern about upsetting the legislature and subsequently damaging the financial outlook for the universities. Third, the Florida case violated the regulative speech act criterion. While the tuition policy debates in Florida lacked a foundation in data or research, no reflective conversation occurred that tried to distinguish values from facts and use them together in creating policy. Finally, the tenor of the conversation made the realization of the constative speech criterion unlikely. None of the actors provided an interpretation of their own or their opponent's positions free of distortion.

4. Frameworks in Concert

Using the IRC, ACF, and critical theory together offers a different kind of explanation of Florida's tuition policy debates from the past six years than we would obtain using each framework singly. Admittedly, the analyses from each framework presented above are too brief to serve as good tests of the frameworks in the Florida case. Allowing the analyses to inform each other, however, yields a satisfying explanation of Florida tuition politics. The IRC and ACF have developed an ongoing dialogue over the past decade or so (Sabatier, 1999) resulting in fruitful research supported above. The IRC sharpens the ACF's understandings of intracoalition politics and allows an understanding of the interactions of beliefs and strategy. The ACF offers the IRC the insights

generated by acknowledging the role played by variables exogenous to the subsystem. The addition of critical theory to this dialogue only deepens the possibilities of the inquiry. While critical theory devotes scant attention to the actors, their preferences, strategies, or institutions. It does add an evaluative dimension to the study of policy change.

In Florida, for example, we can see that the four main discourses helped position the actors relative to one another. Critical theory also improves our understanding of why some actors were more salient than others in the tuition policy debates. Finally, critical theory raises questions about the social possibility made possible through discourse. The ACF and IRC, on the other hand, remain agnostic about the content of policy debates themselves. Acknowledging the limitations established through discourse, however, help us understand why actors select some strategies over others.

Missouri

In Missouri, tuition authority reared its head in the context of a steep decline in state revenues and subsequent budget cuts and withholdings. In Missouri tuition politics played out as an offshoot of a larger debate about state support for higher education. By contrast, higher education officials and presidents in Florida never couched the need for tuition authority as necessary because the state refused to adequately support its universities. Rather, members of the Florida higher education community did not ask the state for additional funds in lieu of the authority to establish tuition. Both higher education

and business leaders argued that the state's public institutions should be charging at least the national average in tuition.

1. Institutions

Of the three frameworks applied in this chapter, the IRC, when taken in isolation, offered the most complete explanation of Missouri tuition politics over the past six years. By emphasizing actor behavior and strategy, the IRC allows the reconstruction of the events that ultimately lead to the passage of a compromise policy change in the form of SB 389. Using the IRC helps analysts understand why the eventual policy change took its final form and was able to gain passage. For example, university presidents employed brinkmanship strategies with each other and the legislature throughout the 2001 to 2006 time frame. Threats by University of Missouri (UM) President Pacheco and Missouri State University (MSU) President Keiser about the potential need to close institutions or entire departments due to state budget cuts added fuel to legislative discontent and mistrust of the four-year universities, especially when the threats proved empty in the face of new budget cuts and withholdings. The arrival of new presidents on these campuses, the two largest in the state, came with a notable shift in tactics. Both President Floyd (UM) and President Nietzel (MSU) made conciliatory gestures towards the legislature, discussed below, and traveled the state rebuilding relationships with smaller institutions by speaking about the need to remedy historical funding inequities for some of those schools. Moreover, the prospect of significant capital improvement funds from the sale of

the state student loan authority (MOHELA) made the four-year presidents more willing to negotiate a modest change in tuition policy.

As with the Florida case, the chief contribution of the IRC in Missouri derives from its tiered levels of action. In Missouri, the four-year presidents successfully fended off several legislative attempts to institute tuition caps or guaranteed pricing regimes. By 2006, however, the two most prominent institutions in the state had taken operational level steps to convey their concern about rising college prices. Missouri State University implemented a weak version of a guaranteed tuition plan, while the President of the University of Missouri vetted a similar idea in a series of town hall style meetings held across the state. Citing lack of public support, the University of Missouri scuttled the guaranteed tuition plan in favor of tying tuition increases to inflation so long as state appropriations also matched inflation. These moves garnered trust with key legislators in the Senate enabling the compromise that eventually became SB 389. The legislature enacted a tuition cap, a collective choice level policy, but delegated the implementation to the Coordinating Board and the Commissioner for Higher Education knowing the institutions would play a large role in crafting the rules governing exemptions. These latter aspects of the policy change occurred at the operational level.

2. Subsystems, Coalitions and Beliefs

The ACF emphasizes the action of coalitions within a policy subsystem. In particular, the ACF examines the role of beliefs in forming the ground on which coalitions converge and the source of conflict between opposing coalitions.

Unlike the IRC, the ACF draws our attention to the context in which a policy subsystem operates. In Missouri, the exogenous variables posited by the ACF prove important in understanding the emergence of tuition policy as a salient policy issue. The fiscal crisis, combined with the change from Democratic to Republic control of the governor's office and General Assembly provided the conditions ripe for policy change. The passage of SB 389, however, did not reflect the preferences of the newly dominant coalition. Indeed, the higher education coalition managed to fend off several bills that would have more severely diminished the institutions' tuition setting authority. SB 389, however, not only left the implementation of the revised tuition policy in the higher education coalition's hands, it included a large infusion of capital funds in the form of the MOHELA sale. The higher education coalition managed this successful defense despite cracks in its own solidarity and despite the presence of a powerful political entrepreneur in the form of Carl Bearden working for restricted institutional autonomy in financial matters. In this sense the ACF does not provide a sufficiently satisfactory explanation for the content and passage of SB 389.

The ACF's stress on the importance of beliefs proved somewhat more helpful in Missouri than in Florida. That the institutions finally bought into a legislated change in tuition policy makes sense once we understand that SB 389 did not require the institutions to compromise their near or deep core policy beliefs. When looking at the low tax coalition it seems like the passage of SB 389 must be considered a puzzling failure from the ACF's perspective. Yet, it's

plausible that Bearden expressed the coalition's beliefs in a more extreme fashion than the less viable core of the coalition felt comfortable. Bearden's key defeat came at the hands of his own party, albeit in the Senate, whose leadership grew wary of his aggressive handling of HB1685. It is difficult to say for certain, but Bearden's tactics may have threatened beliefs deemed more important than higher education funding mechanisms.

3. Discourse

Critical theory emphasizes the role of discourse in structuring power relations among actors in a policy context. While both the IRC and ACF offer more complete explanations of actors' behavior, critical theory helps us understand the assumptions and limitations of the tuition debates in Missouri. The discourse of new capitalism allowed the institutions to win the public opinion battle with the legislature over tuition policy. It was able to win out over the more promotional grammar deployed by Bearden and his supporters.

Throughout the fiscal crisis, the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) pressed the four-year presidents to make the contributions of their respective institutions clear to the General Assembly and the public. While the shift was not immediate, by 2004 the presidents began talking about their contributions to Missouri in terms of economic development. Most institutions developed economic impact statements and developed presentations highlighting their contributions to their particular region and statewide. Presidents Floyd and Nietzel took their economic development materials and made presentations on behalf of their respective

institutions across the state. The shift in language about the purpose and value of higher education in the state marked an overt entry into the language of new capitalism as described by Slaughter and Leslie (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997), Metcalfe, and Milam (Metcalfe, 2006) (Milam, 2006). The change in discourse was effective with legislators in that key senators helped kill Bearden's 2006 legislation containing a much more stringent form of tuition cap than the one eventually passed in SB 389.

Differing conceptions of quality in higher education formed a second key discourse shaping policy debates over tuition authority and university revenues in Missouri. The presidents conceived of quality in terms of fulfilling their missions—teaching, research, and public service. Members of the General Assembly, however, couched their understanding of postsecondary quality in terms of undergraduate education, efficiency and cost effectiveness.

While the passage of SB 389 in 2007 seems to mark the beginning of what IRC scholars call equilibrium, the compromise solution embodied in the Omnibus Higher Education Act represents a foreclosure of discourse from a critical theory perspective. It allowed both the General Assembly and the institutions to avoid making transparent policy decisions about the appropriate relative shares for postsecondary educational costs. By avoiding more direct conversations about the relationship between tuition and state appropriations, the policy subsystem as a whole displaced discourse about the overall structure and purpose of higher education in Missouri and uncritically gave primacy to the discourse of economic development and new capitalism.

4. Frameworks in Concert

Using the IRC, ACF, and critical theory together offers a different kind of explanation of Missouri's tuition policy debates from the past six years than we would obtain using each framework singly. Each framework on its own provides a provocative and plausible explanation of Missouri tuition politics from 2000 through 2006. Allowing the analyses to inform each other, however, yields a more satisfying explanation of Missouri tuition politics. The IRC and ACF have developed an ongoing dialogue over the fifteen years, resulting in fruitful research (Schlager, 1995) (Sabatier, 1999). The IRC sharpens the ACF's understandings of intracoalition politics and allows an understanding of the interactions of beliefs and strategy. The ACF offers the IRC the insights generated by acknowledging the role played by variables exogenous to the subsystem. The addition of critical theory to this dialogue only deepens the possibilities of the inquiry. While critical theory devotes scant attention to the actors, their preferences, strategies, or institutions. It does add an evaluative dimension to the study of policy change.

In Missouri, for example, we can see that the shift to the new capitalism discourse by the institutions helped the institutions displace calls for more fundamental policy change. Critical theory also improves our understanding of why some actors were more salient than others in the tuition policy debates. Finally, critical theory raises questions about the social possibility made possible through discourse. The ACF and IRC, on the other hand, remain agnostic about the content of policy debates themselves. Acknowledging the limitations

established through discourse, however, help us understand why actors select some strategies over others.

Comparative Theory Analysis

Each framework applied in this study helped improve our understanding by contributing its unique perspective to explaining tuition policy change. The macro level analysis in chapter 4 provided tentative findings indicating the importance of statewide postsecondary governance, tax expenditure limitation laws, and changes in state revenue on legislative decisions to alter tuition setting authority. The case studies provided in depth explanations as to why these variables were important in the Florida and Missouri debates surrounding tuition authority.

Statewide governing agencies clearly play a key role in tuition policy. In Florida, the Board of Governors began operating during the time frame of this study. As a newly formed entity it operated cautiously with a legislature with a long history of direct involvement in higher education affairs in asserting its constitutional authority to set tuition rates for the university system. In Missouri, CBHE and MDHE played more of a broker role between the universities and the General Assembly. While urging the legislature to provide additional support for higher education, the CBHE and MDHE exhorted the institutions to demonstrate their value to members of the General Assembly and to take care in increasing tuition rates dramatically. By the end of the study period both statewide governing agencies emerged with enhanced authority over tuition authority.

The structure of state budgetary practices proved salient as well. While both Florida and Missouri have TELs, only in Missouri did the presence of the TEL form part of the debate about how public colleges and universities should be funded. The existence of a generous merit based financial aid plan and guaranteed college savings plan in Florida complicated university, business and activists efforts to dislodge tuition setting authority from the legislature's purview. Thus different constellations of budgetary requirements impact the possibility and likelihood of tuition policy change.

The ACF's emphasis on policy change in the context of a policy subsystem highlights the importance of the sociopolitical environment for creating the necessary conditions for policy change. In Missouri, the combined action of fiscal crisis and change in the dominant party from Democrat to Republican sufficiently disrupted the status quo to put tuition policy on the public agenda. In Florida, the external "shock" to the system was the passage of the constitutional amendment reorganizing the Cabinet, tying it more closely to the Governor. By strengthening the executive branch and making it less likely that members of the cabinet would work independently with the legislature, the 1998 amendment indirectly weakened legislative influence and set the stage for a raucous fight over tuition authority specifically and higher education governance in general. In an institutional environment in which legislative influence was formally weakened tuition policy became a higher salience issue.

Moreover, the ACF's hypotheses about the role of beliefs highlights the kinds of policy change coalitions will find acceptable and helps us understand the

level of conflict exhibited in the Florida and Missouri cases. In Florida the debate over tuition-setting authority reached a crescendo because the debate and the resulting voter approval of a constitutional amendment supporting increased autonomy for the Board of Governors served as a referendum on legislative prerogative. Despite the passage of Amendment IX, creating the Board of Governors in 2001, the legislature insisted it retained tuition setting authority. After losing a court battle, the legislature insisted it retained tuition setting authority. Indeed, court fights continued through 2007. The prospect of losing the ability to establish tuition rates seemed to strike at a near core belief held by key legislators about the role of the legislature in state politics.

I initially thought that the IRC's chief contribution to the study would be in its emphasis on structures, rules, and norms, not in its notion of levels of action. Given my focus on legislated policy change, I believed the collective choice tier would predominate and be less important to my analysis of tuition policy change in Florida and Missouri. Contrary to my early hypothesis, Ostrom's (Ostrom, 1990) (Ostrom, 1999) concept of levels of action proved one of the most powerful concepts for understanding the unfolding of tuition policy change in both states. The three levels of action constitute far more than the location at which policy change occurs, but form levers actors can strategically use to realize policy goals.

Theories in Concert

While each of the frameworks used to explain tuition policy change in Florida and Missouri can stand alone. The kaleidoscope effect described below deserves further consideration. In Florida, Governor Bush and House Speaker Thrasher sought dissolution of the Board of Regents in order to subsume postsecondary governance under a K-20 umbrella. Thrasher wanted to preserve the legislative prerogative coalition's control over tuition authority by altering higher education structures to weaken the traditionalist coalition to which the universities were only loosely tied. He and Governor Bush successfully used the discourse of devolution to convince the university presidents that they would have greater autonomy under the K-20 system, which would also create individual Boards of Trustees for the institutions. University president eventually voted to endorse the K-20 plan, saying they just wanted the turmoil over governance to subside.

The abolition of the Board of Regents and subsequent creation of the K-20 system, prompted the traditionalist coalition to expand the scope of conflict and move debate about tuition policy from the collective choice tier to the constitutional level of action. Debate about tuition authority cut at the near core beliefs of both coalitions. The Florida case lends support to the ACF hypothesis asserting that near core policy beliefs are not susceptible to change. Hence, coalitions in Florida resorted to manipulating institutional structures to achieve their policy goals.

The Missouri case benefits by giving Critical Theory and the ACF primacy and complementing those analyses with the IRC. In Missouri, from the onset of budget cuts and withholdings in 2001, the low tax coalition used discourse to cast the higher education coalition as inefficient and out of touch with the needs of Missourians. The higher education coalition, on the other hand, initially deployed a discourse of victimhood. This discourse coincided with the higher education coalition's belief that tuition authority was inextricably linked to institutional autonomy. The combination of discourse and coalitional beliefs led the university presidents to bicker publicly about the distribution of state resources and to argue that decreasing state appropriations inevitably led to tuition increases to offset revenue shortfalls.

Leadership changes at the University of Missouri and Missouri State brought changes in both discourse and beliefs to the higher education coalition. The discourse shifted from passive victimhood to a more proactive assertion of the importance of universities to the state economy. By deploying a discourse of new capitalism, the universities also expanded the scope of conflict by visiting a wide variety of communities across the state to hold town meetings. The change in leadership created circumstances in which a compromise change in tuition policy could be reached between the two coalitions in the form of a modified tuition cap.

Assessing Comparative Theory Analysis

The central question motivating this study is whether using theories in concert improves our understanding of policy change over the explanations offered by applying a theoretical framework in isolation. I contend that comparative theory analysis offers promise as a process for both theory building and for empirical analyses. As an approach, however, there is much room for improvement and refinement. Schlager and Blomquist (1996) and de Haven-Smith (1988) served as the primary conceptual inspiration for this study. While they engaged in very different kinds of comparisons, a synthesis of the two approaches to comparing theories of public policy-making made for an intriguing and stimulating investigation into the dynamics underlying state level changes in tuition authority.

What are the benefits and weaknesses of comparative theory analysis?

Comparative theory analysis places the strengths and weaknesses of the individual theories into relief. On purely an individual basis, each of the frameworks contributed something to understanding tuition policy change at the state level. As demonstrated above, the theories used in this study form largely complementary explanations of tuition policy change.

More importantly, the study raises many more questions than it answers. From my perspective this is a good thing. Not only do the explanations of tuition policy change offer fertile ground for additional study using any one framework for a more focused inquiry, the analytical process does not wrap up an

explanation of tuition policy change into a well contained package. The result of this dissertation is decidedly not a single comprehensive theory of policy change or the larger policy process. Rather the accounts offered by the four frameworks function much more like a prism or kaleidoscope, wherein shifting ones perspective from one framework to another brings different phenomena and relationships into view. The result is somewhat messy, but stimulating nonetheless.

Depending on your point of view the lack of a precise and predictive explanation of tuition policy change marks a major weakness in the approach. The breadth of the study gives it its holistic quality and incites conversation and debate about tuition policy specifically and state level policy-making in general. The comparative approach applied in this study also provides contributions to the individual theories.

For example, an initial reading of the Missouri case suggests that the near core beliefs of the higher education coalition changed in response to pressure from the low tax coalition. Early in the debates about tuition in Missouri, higher education presidents took a hard stance against legislative attempts to place limits on their ability to increase tuition rates. The idea of tuition caps or similar legislation threatened their near core policy beliefs about the centrality of tuition authority to institutional autonomy and mission. Between 2004 and 2006, however, the tenor and content of the conversation changed dramatically. The result was a modified form of tuition cap passed in SB 389 during the 2007 legislative session. How did this happen? How did tuition authority become

decoupled from institutional autonomy? Did coalition near core beliefs change, a situation the ACF contends is unlikely to occur?

The short answer is no, near core beliefs of the higher education coalition did not change. Rather, the presidents at the two most powerful institutions in the state changed. Leadership change at key organizations within the coalition brought new beliefs and a willingness to engage in fundamentally different discourse and discursive strategy than did their predecessors. The idea that leadership replacement can alter coalitional belief systems contributes to the ACF's conceptualization of the ways in which belief systems change and impact the policy process.

How successful was the analytical process deployed in this study?

In general, the process used to compare theories in this study proved useful in that it offers common terms: nature of actors, boundary of inquiry, role of information, and conception of sociopolitical possibility etc. ..., through which the frameworks' explanations of tuition policy change could be compared. I believe the rubric used to frame the discussions in the case study chapters comprises the most useful aspect of the study in that it produces the kaleidoscope effect discussed above. When used only to analyze frameworks at the meta-theoretical level as in Schlager and Blomquist's piece, the combination of theoretical comparison within an empirical study of a single policy arena brings the frameworks into relationship with each other.

The broad and shifting perspective offered by comparative theoretical analysis contributes to meaningful policy analysis by generating an explanation of, in this case, tuition policy change. The dynamics shaping tuition policy in the states is decidedly more complex than is commonly believed. The rubric provides a set of common dimensions through which each framework can be applied to the same policy arena. Having these common dimensions illuminated intersections between the frameworks wherein insights from one framework can inform those of another.

First, the macro-level analysis in Chapter 4 highlights the importance of institutional arrangements in shaping state decisions to alter tuition setting authority across the states. Conversely, the complex interplay of political variables sheds some light on the lack of significance for some of the traditional DSH political variables in the regression model, the macro-level analysis in Chapter 4 highlights the importance of institutional arrangements in shaping state decisions to alter tuition setting authority across the states. Conversely, the complex interplay of political variables sheds some light on the lack of significance for some of the traditional DSH political variables in the logistic regression models. It would have been better to include a variable of party change rather than simply testing dominant party. Changes in the party holding the governor's office and the legislature influenced tuition politics in both states.

Second, Critical Theory's emphasis on discourse clarifies the use of information as conceptualized by both the IRC and the ACF.

Third, the ACF's conception of belief systems can be used to deepen our understanding of why neither Florida was unable to allow universities to adopt more localized policy solutions for tuition authority. Concomitantly, Missouri's universities were able to play a larger role in shaping tuition limitations and their implementation.

Does the benefit derived from comparative theory analysis stem from triangulation or from the additive effects of comparing theories?

The strength of comparative theory analysis stems from the shifting perspectives it provides for a given policy arena. When applied as suggested by Yin (2003) and Patton (1990) triangulation functions to confirm findings and facilitate a unified set of findings. Theory triangulation used in the context of comparing the theories themselves provided additional depth to the analysis beyond just an additive effect. Using the DSH, IRC, ACF, and Critical Theory frameworks in concert developed a series of interrelated explanations of tuition policy change, which produced a coherent picture of the political and economic dynamics shaping tuition policy change.

For example, in Florida the tuition policy debate make the most sense when the IRC is given primacy with the ACF and Critical Theory providing essential support. Tuition authority in Florida has a decades long history of coalition attempts to manipulate institutional structures to either gain or maintain control over tuition authority. The story of structural change in Florida, can best be understood in light of the ACF and Critical Theory. Key actors such as Bob Graham and Governor Bush sought changes in institutional structures in order to shift power among coalitions clashing over near core policy beliefs.

While it is not possible to generalize from the two case study states, it seems reasonable to argue the configuration of frameworks that best explains tuition policy change will vary from state to state. In Florida, where structural tinkering is common at both the collective choice and constitutional tiers, the IRC is likely to predominate, with the ACF and Critical Theory playing important but support roles. In other states, a different configuration is likely to emerge as more important. The relative power of coalitions in a given higher education subsystem also seems important, states with coalitions contesting policy debates at the near core level of beliefs and in which one has greater material resources, may be more likely to engage in structural manipulations to shake up the balance of power. In other contexts, discourse may prove more decisive and be the primary mechanism coalitions use to expand the scope of conflict.

Does comparative analysis help scholars make connections between macro and micro level policy processes?

Each of the micro-level frameworks provides satisfactory explanations for the tuition policy changes in Florida and Missouri. While data limitations make a robust assessment of the Dye, Sharkansky, Hofferbert framework difficult, the framework offered some interesting insights into the macro-level factors influencing policy change. More importantly, the analysis raised key questions about how macro-level variables such as economic and political indicators play out in the practice of politics at the state level.

Limitations

There are two significant limitations to my study. First, the data collected for the statistical analysis conducted in chapter 4 severely limit the inferences that can be made from the proposed models. Not only is additional data needed to enable a time series approach to studying tuition policy change across the states, additional economic variables should be included in future versions of the model. Once the data issues have been resolved greater statistical sophistication will be possible, perhaps using path analysis. Moreover, it is likely that changes in tuition setting authority will remain relatively rare events requiring the use of statistical methods for addressing such data that were beyond the scope of the present study.

Second, the structure of the study presents some logistical and analytical challenges. The volume and variety of data that must be collected is significant for one researcher to manage. As the study itself, the data are multi-level and must be managed in such a way as to allow the conceptual tools of each framework to work. Moreover, I had to strike a tenuous balance between presenting each framework in too isolated a fashion and forcing greater consistency on the frameworks than actually exists.

Future Research

This study of tuition policy change will serve as a springboard for further research. My main interest lies in understanding higher education policy-making at the state level. First, the statistical analysis presented in chapter four merits

extension. Additional data must be collected to determine if there are cycles or trends in tuition policy-making over a longer time frame. I would also like to replicate John Walker's (1969) study of policy-making activity to gauge state policy interest in higher education, describing and explaining policy trends over time. Second, more micro-level work on tuition policy needs to be done at the state level to understand the conditions placing the issue on the agenda and understanding the factors leading to policy change. Third, to what degree are changes in tuition policy related to other issues in higher education and the discourses of new capitalism, postsecondary governance, and accountability.

Another area ripe for further theoretical development more directly contributes to ongoing debates about the role of theory in political science. First, the analytical process initiated in this study needs refinement. The rubric should be applied to additional theories in comparative context to tighten the definition and operationalization of the categories. Second, the comparative theory analysis of tuition policy change here revives the debate about the role of political theory in policy research. Specifically, debates from the 1980s about the role of traditional political theory in policy analysis, should be brought into conversation with more recent conversations between economists and public choice scholars within political science.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Tuition Policy Change: State Detail

Change in Authority (ECS, 2006)	STATE	LOBLEG	EXCENTRL	LEGPROF2	BELOWPOV	% Change (Undergrad)	% Change			
							(Average Tuition)	Change in Philosophy	Direction (State Exp)	
Centralized	Arizona	8.89	0.668454	0.09	15.4%	23.0%	74.2%	No	Down	
	Florida	20.98	-0.08452	0.22	13.1%	13.9%	33.6%	Yes	Down	
	Idaho	3.06	-0.36878	0.01	13.8%	7.2%	50.9%	No	Down	
	Illinois	10.46	0.020941	0.02	11.3%	2.3%	52.9%	Unknown	Down	
	Indiana	4.67	-0.37667	0.06	10.6%	15.6%	61.4%	Yes	Down	
	N. Carolina	3.22	-1.189618	0.04	14.0%	14.9%	71.6%	No	up	
	New Jersey	4.81	2.263792	0.26	8.4%	5.7%	60.8%	Yes	Flat	
	Ohio	16.42	0.350953	0.12	12.1%	6.5%	64.6%	Yes	Down	
	Oregon	5.34	0.428314	0.11	13.9%	13.2%	34.0%	Yes	up	
	S. Carolina	2.04	-0.859817	0.08	14.1%	11.1%	77.7%	Unknown	up	
	Tennessee	4.11	1.767481	0.06	13.8%	3.6%	76.1%	Yes	Down	
	Utah	4.71	0.445893	0.04	10.6%	12.5%	38.4%	Yes	up	
	Average		7.39	0.25553525	0.09	12.6%	10.8%	58.0%		
Decentralized	Colorado	4.85	0.177879	0.07	9.8%	6.9%	31.8%	Yes	up	
	Connecticut	3.89	-0.033106	0.12	8.1%	10.0%	35.1%	Yes	up	
	Kansas	3.56	-0.007948	0.04	10.8%	3.7%	59.4%	Yes	Down	
	Louisiana	3.68	-0.866346	(blank)	20.3%	5.3%	40.0%	No	Down	
	Michigan	8.30	-0.21419	0.32	11.4%	6.3%	45.1%	Unknown	Down	
	Mississippi	1.94	-1.558073	0.04	19.9%	5.8%	46.1%	Yes	Down	
	Oklahoma	2.83	-0.215695	0.06	16.1%	7.9%	55.6%	Yes	Down	
	Texas	9.24	-1.184072	0.16	16.3%	11.9%	58.0%	Yes	up	
	Virginia	6.31	1.178662	0.09	9.0%	7.6%	25.2%	Yes	up	
	Washington	5.86	-0.996759	0.16	11.0%	2.0%	52.4%	Yes	up	
	West Virginia	2.66	0.522995	0.05	18.5%	5.4%	46.4%	Yes	Down	
Average		4.83	-0.29060482	0.11	13.7%	6.6%	45.0%			
None	Alabama	4.29	-1.008877	0.06	17.1%	6.6%	59.9%	Yes	Down	
	Alaska	3.57	1.142573	0.32	9.7%	-1.3%	31.2%	Yes	Flat	
	Arkansas	3.37	0.19657	0.04	16.0%	8.9%	64.8%	Yes	Down	
	California	9.81	-1.29651	1	13.4%	23.2%	40.0%	Yes	Up	
	Delaware	3.74	0.389066	0.03	8.7%	4.7%	43.1%	Yes	up	
	Georgia	5.93	-0.860789	0.04	13.4%	26.8%	36.8%	Yes	up	
	Hawaii	3.30	1.285127	0.14	10.9%	-0.2%	16.3%	Unknown	up	
	Iowa	7.66	-0.27658	0.05	10.1%	8.4%	80.8%	Yes	up	
	Kentucky	9.08	-0.88609	0.08	17.4%	23.0%	66.3%	Unknown	up	
	Maine	1.74	1.856874	0.04	10.5%	6.9%	29.4%	Yes	Down	
	Maryland	3.85	1.255245	0.06	8.2%	9.4%	50.9%	No	up	
	Massachusetts	3.29	0.114692	0.17	9.4%	2.7%	53.5%	Yes	Down	
	Minnesota	6.22	0.312999	0.11	7.8%	13.0%	51.9%	Yes	Down	
	Missouri	5.22	0.13482	0.07	11.7%	8.8%	58.9%	No	Down	
	Montana	6.07	-0.057237	0.03	14.2%	1.1%	59.4%	No	Down	
	Nebraska	6.92	-0.607145	(blank)	10.8%	0.9%	75.8%	No	Down	
	Nevada	13.37	-0.566715	0.06	11.5%	23.0%	44.6%	Yes	up	
	New Hampshire	1.31	1.465837	0.09	7.7%	2.7%	47.0%	Yes	up	
	New Mexico	6.47	-1.058905	0.04	18.6%	4.2%	52.5%	Yes	Down	
	New York	17.05	-0.08813	0.49	13.5%	2.5%	27.2%	No	Down	
	N. Dakota	3.99	-1.846777	0.01	11.7%	9.4%	50.9%	Yes	up	
	Pennsylvania	4.08	0.086245	0.27	10.9%	6.9%	46.9%	Yes	Down	
	Rhode Island	3.64	-0.056988	0.04	11.3%	7.0%	33.9%	Yes	up	
	S. Dakota	5.04	-0.794303	0.01	11.1%	11.4%	53.9%	Yes	up	
	Vermont	(blank)	0.128365	0.01	9.7%	-0.8%	27.6%	No	up	
	Wisconsin	5.62	0.652781	0.13	10.5%	5.9%	57.9%	Yes	Flat	
	Wyoming	4.82	0.511127	0.01	9.7%	-0.4%	32.8%	Unknown	n/a	
	Average		5.75	0.004713889	0.13	11.7%	7.9%	47.9%		

Appendix B: State Rankings for Tuition (4-Yr Publics)

FY 2000			FY 2002			FY 2004			FY 2006		
Rank	State	Tuition	Rank	State	Tuition	Rank	State	Tuition	Rank	State	Tuition
1	Vermont	\$6,479	1	Vermont	\$7,134	1	Vermont	\$8,264	1	Vermont	\$9,239
2	New Hampshire	\$5,197	2	New Hampshire	\$6,455	2	New Hampshire	\$7,640	2	Pennsylvania	\$8,729
3	Pennsylvania	\$5,194	3	Pennsylvania	\$5,918	3	Pennsylvania	\$7,631	3	New Jersey	\$8,664
4	New Jersey	\$4,567	4	New Jersey	\$5,607	4	New Jersey	\$7,345	4	New Hampshire	\$8,499
5	Delaware	\$4,317	5	Delaware	\$4,797	5	Ohio	\$6,609	5	Ohio	\$8,489
6	Connecticut	\$4,270	6	Maryland	\$4,778	6	Maryland	\$6,242	6	S. Carolina	\$7,350
7	Maryland	\$4,137	7	Ohio	\$4,740	7	Delaware	\$6,177	7	Massachusetts	\$7,307
8	Michigan	\$4,134	8	S. Carolina	\$4,684	8	Massachusetts	\$6,089	8	Illinois	\$7,166
9	Virginia	\$4,052	9	Michigan	\$4,626	9	S. Carolina	\$6,065	9	Delaware	\$7,101
10	Rhode Island	\$4,029	10	Connecticut	\$4,543	10	Michigan	\$5,997	10	Maryland	\$7,058
11	Ohio	\$4,014	11	Rhode Island	\$4,512	11	Connecticut	\$5,767	11	Michigan	\$6,943
12	Massachusetts	\$3,968	12	Maine	\$4,259	12	Minnesota	\$5,738	12	Minnesota	\$6,921
13	Maine	\$3,878	13	Illinois	\$4,177	13	Illinois	\$5,662	13	Connecticut	\$6,710
14	New York	\$3,845	14	New York	\$4,062	14	Rhode Island	\$5,396	14	Rhode Island	\$6,343
15	Minnesota	\$3,777	15	Minnesota	\$4,024	15	Indiana	\$5,394	15	Maine	\$6,030
16	Illinois	\$3,702	16	Massachusetts	\$4,003	16	Missouri	\$5,386	16	Virginia	\$5,930
17	Oregon	\$3,493	17	Missouri	\$3,878	17	Virginia	\$5,073	17	Indiana	\$5,911
18	S. Carolina	\$3,414	18	Indiana	\$3,785	18	Maine	\$5,019	18	Missouri	\$5,835
19	Missouri	\$3,389	19	Virginia	\$3,723	19	Iowa	\$4,991	19	Wisconsin	\$5,665
20	Indiana	\$3,342	20	Oregon	\$3,650	20	New York	\$4,892	20	Iowa	\$5,619
21	US	\$3,104	21	Washington	\$3,604	21	Oregon	\$4,680	21	Oregon	\$5,345
22	Washington	\$3,037	22	S. Dakota	\$3,486	22	Wisconsin	\$4,675	22	US	5286
23	Wisconsin	\$2,960	22	US	\$3,416	23	Washington	\$4,629	22	Washington	\$5,254
24	S. Dakota	\$2,888	23	Wisconsin	\$3,414	24	S. Dakota	\$4,446	23	Kentucky	\$5,132
25	Hawaii	\$2,788	24	Iowa	\$3,158	24	US	\$4,336	24	N. Dakota	\$5,047
26	Iowa	\$2,761	25	Nebraska	\$3,097	25	Nebraska	\$4,241	25	New York	\$4,995
27	California	\$2,712	26	Montana	\$3,076	26	Montana	\$4,155	26	Montana	\$4,951
28	Colorado	\$2,620	27	Arkansas	\$3,006	27	Tennessee	\$4,043	27	S. Dakota	\$4,900
29	Alaska	\$2,611	28	Alabama	\$2,987	28	Arkansas	\$4,041	28	Nebraska	\$4,875
30	Montana	\$2,607	29	Colorado	\$2,980	29	Alabama	\$3,978	29	Tennessee	\$4,763
31	Mississippi	\$2,571	30	Hawaii	\$2,974	30	Kentucky	\$3,869	30	Texas	\$4,694
32	N. Dakota	\$2,543	31	Mississippi	\$2,967	31	N. Dakota	\$3,838	31	Arkansas	\$4,637
33	Alabama	\$2,488	32	Tennessee	\$2,950	32	California	\$3,797	32	Alabama	\$4,586
34	Arkansas	\$2,452	33	N. Dakota	\$2,938	33	Mississippi	\$3,755	33	Kansas	\$4,571
35	Nebraska	\$2,413	34	Alaska	\$2,936	34	Kansas	\$3,688	34	Colorado	\$4,468
36	Georgia	\$2,356	35	Kentucky	\$2,898	35	Texas	\$3,596	35	California	\$4,447
37	Kentucky	\$2,327	36	Texas	\$2,803	36	Arizona	\$3,586	36	Arizona	\$4,428
38	Wyoming	\$2,326	37	Louisiana	\$2,773	37	Colorado	\$3,453	37	Mississippi	\$4,177
39	Kansas	\$2,314	38	Georgia	\$2,698	38	Alaska	\$3,425	38	Alaska	\$4,056
40	Tennessee	\$2,296	39	Kansas	\$2,637	39	Idaho	\$3,323	39	Idaho	\$3,920
41	Louisiana	\$2,278	40	Idaho	\$2,627	40	N. Carolina	\$3,251	40	Oklahoma	\$3,814
42	Texas	\$2,276	41	New Mexico	\$2,626	41	Hawaii	\$3,242	41	W. Virginia	\$3,807
43	Idaho	\$2,202	42	Wyoming	\$2,575	42	Georgia	\$3,223	42	New Mexico	\$3,710
44	W. Virginia	\$2,170	43	California	\$2,561	43	Oklahoma	\$3,204	43	Louisiana	\$3,684
45	Utah	\$2,100	44	W. Virginia	\$2,548	44	Louisiana	\$3,190	44	Georgia	\$3,652
46	New Mexico	\$2,073	45	Florida	\$2,365	45	W. Virginia	\$3,176	45	N. Carolina	\$3,645
47	Oklahoma	\$2,059	46	Nevada	\$2,349	46	New Mexico	\$3,162	46	Utah	\$3,442
48	Arizona	\$2,058	47	Arizona	\$2,346	47	Wyoming	\$3,090	47	Hawaii	\$3,235
49	Florida	\$1,911	48	N. Carolina	\$2,299	48	Utah	\$2,906	48	Florida	\$2,935
50	N. Carolina	\$1,895	49	Oklahoma	\$2,257	49	Nevada	\$2,728	49	Wyoming	\$2,874
50	Nevada	\$1,887	50	Utah	\$2,244	50	Florida	\$2,553	50	Nevada	\$2,718

Appendix C: State Rankings for Appropriations per Student FTE

FY 2000			FY 2002			FY 2004			FY 2006		
Rank	State	\$App/ FTE	Rank	State	\$App/ FTE	Rank	State	\$App/ FTE	Rank	State	\$App/ FTE
1	Alaska	\$12,118	1	Alaska	\$12,329	1	Wyoming	\$12,109	1	Wyoming	\$13,425
2	Georgia	\$11,563	2	Wyoming	\$11,436	2	Alaska	\$11,126	2	Alaska	\$12,097
3	Connecticut	\$11,543	3	Connecticut	\$11,123	3	Hawaii	\$9,888	3	Hawaii	\$10,893
4	Wyoming	\$11,058	4	New Jersey	\$9,941	4	Connecticut	\$9,487	4	Connecticut	\$9,503
5	Hawaii	\$10,567	5	Hawaii	\$9,339	5	Nevada	\$8,833	5	New Mexico	\$9,299
6	Massachusetts	\$10,028	6	Massachusetts	\$9,034	6	New Jersey	\$8,583	6	Nevada	\$8,919
7	New Jersey	\$9,999	7	Illinois	\$8,719	7	New Mexico	\$8,029	7	Massachusetts	\$8,372
8	New Mexico	\$9,994	8	Georgia	\$8,557	8	Massachusetts	\$7,470	8	New Jersey	\$8,145
9	North Carolina	\$8,807	9	Maryland	\$8,336	9	Georgia	\$7,412	9	Georgia	\$7,824
10	Illinois	\$8,450	10	New York	\$8,054	10	Maryland	\$7,230	10	New York	\$7,784
11	Minnesota	\$8,415	11	North Carolina	\$8,019	11	New York	\$7,178	11	North Carolina	\$7,522
12	Kentucky	\$8,246	12	Kentucky	\$7,923	12	North Carolina	\$7,128	12	Idaho	\$7,303
13	New York	\$8,137	13	New Mexico	\$7,875	13	Illinois	\$7,101	13	Nebraska	\$6,999
14	Iowa	\$8,020	14	Minnesota	\$7,780	14	Idaho	\$7,092	14	Kentucky	\$6,753
15	Missouri	\$7,935	15	Idaho	\$7,697	15	Kentucky	\$6,767	15	Illinois	\$6,689
16	Michigan	\$7,840	16	California	\$7,585	16	Rhode Island	\$6,612	16	Delaware	\$6,632
17	Maine	\$7,774	17	Michigan	\$7,575	17	Delaware	\$6,575	17	California	\$6,586
18	Idaho	\$7,701	18	Maine	\$7,574	18	Wisconsin	\$6,528	18	Washington	\$6,437
19	Mississippi	\$7,627	19	Delaware	\$7,548	19	California	\$6,477	19	Maryland	\$6,427
20	Wisconsin	\$7,522	20	Nevada	\$7,537	20	Kansas	\$6,320	20	Rhode Island	\$6,413
21	Kansas	\$7,498	21	Rhode Island	\$7,415	21	Maine	\$6,278	21	US	\$6,325
22	Pennsylvania	\$7,366	22	Kansas	\$7,322	22	Missouri	\$6,140	21	Arizona	\$6,316
23	US	\$7,343	23	Wisconsin	\$7,309	23	Michigan	\$6,115	22	Texas	\$6,276
23	Rhode Island	\$7,327	24	US	\$7,100	24	US	\$6,105	23	Tennessee	\$6,275
24	Nevada	\$7,315	24	Pennsylvania	\$6,927	24	Arizona	\$6,010	24	Wisconsin	\$6,226
25	California	\$7,103	25	Texas	\$6,778	25	Minnesota	\$5,920	25	Maine	\$6,096
26	Delaware	\$7,050	26	Virginia	\$6,721	26	Washington	\$5,862	26	Utah	\$5,941
27	Oklahoma	\$6,948	27	Iowa	\$6,690	27	Nebraska	\$5,826	27	Minnesota	\$5,907
28	Arizona	\$6,947	28	Nebraska	\$6,523	28	Arkansas	\$5,728	28	Arkansas	\$5,899
29	Florida	\$6,873	29	Washington	\$6,479	29	Texas	\$5,718	29	Missouri	\$5,846
30	Washington	\$6,756	30	Missouri	\$6,462	30	Pennsylvania	\$5,698	30	South Carolina	\$5,822
31	Virginia	\$6,696	31	Arizona	\$6,456	31	Iowa	\$5,589	31	Iowa	\$5,809
32	Ohio	\$6,660	32	Oklahoma	\$6,153	32	Indiana	\$5,430	32	Michigan	\$5,799
33	Indiana	\$6,655	33	Utah	\$6,101	33	Tennessee	\$5,376	33	Kansas	\$5,792
34	Arkansas	\$6,622	34	Florida	\$6,061	34	Louisiana	\$5,373	34	Pennsylvania	\$5,660
35	Texas	\$6,592	35	Tennessee	\$6,018	35	Utah	\$5,371	35	Florida	\$5,641
36	Utah	\$6,555	36	Louisiana	\$5,896	36	Mississippi	\$5,296	36	Oklahoma	\$5,638
37	Maryland	\$6,377	37	Ohio	\$5,892	37	Oklahoma	\$5,184	37	Alabama	\$5,617
38	Nebraska	\$6,303	38	Mississippi	\$5,877	38	Alabama	\$4,988	38	Louisiana	\$5,583
39	Oregon	\$6,226	39	Arkansas	\$5,757	39	Ohio	\$4,984	39	Indiana	\$5,390
40	Alabama	\$5,958	40	North Dakota	\$5,438	40	Virginia	\$4,824	40	Virginia	\$5,223
41	Tennessee	\$5,914	41	Indiana	\$5,414	41	Florida	\$4,721	41	Mississippi	\$5,053
42	North Dakota	\$5,859	42	West Virginia	\$5,396	42	Oregon	\$4,671	42	Ohio	\$4,690
43	South Carolina	\$5,700	43	Alabama	\$5,346	43	South Dakota	\$4,664	43	North Dakota	\$4,683
44	Louisiana	\$5,648	44	South Dakota	\$5,189	44	North Dakota	\$4,623	44	South Dakota	\$4,499
45	South Dakota	\$5,223	45	Oregon	\$5,161	45	South Carolina	\$4,497	45	Oregon	\$4,466
46	Colorado	\$5,180	46	South Carolina	\$5,045	46	West Virginia	\$4,323	46	Montana	\$4,409
47	West Virginia	\$5,162	47	Colorado	\$4,936	47	Montana	\$4,030	47	West Virginia	\$4,181
48	Montana	\$4,597	48	Montana	\$4,521	48	New Hampshire	\$3,495	48	Colorado	\$3,364
49	New Hampshire	\$4,083	49	New Hampshire	\$3,769	49	Colorado	\$3,407	49	New Hampshire	\$3,193
50	Vermont	\$3,369	50	Vermont	\$3,414	50	Vermont	\$3,170	50	Vermont	\$3,030

Appendix D: State Detail

State	Percent Change			1999 Tuition Authority	Higher Education Governance Structure	Tuition Policy Change 2000 to 2006	Tuition Policy Formalization
	Change in Tuition 2000 to 2006	in Appropriations per FTE Student 2000 to 2006	Revenue Change in FY 2002				
Alabama	84.3%	-5.2%	2%	Decentralized	Unified	No	Other Rule
Alaska	55.3%	-3.9%	.	Highly	Federal	No	Not Formalized
Arizona	115.2%	-11.3%	0%	Decentralized	Cabinet	No	Other Rule
Arkansas	89.1%	-11.5%	-1%	Slightly	Segmented	Yes	Constitution
California	64.0%	-10.9%	1%	Not	Federal	No	Not Formalized
Colorado	70.5%	-37.4%	-13%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	Other Rule
Connecticut	57.1%	-20.4%	-10%	Highly	Federal	Yes	Other Rule
Delaware	64.5%	-5.3%	4%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Not Formalized
Florida	53.6%	-18.7%	1%	Not	Unified	Yes	Constitution
Georgia	55.0%	-30.7%	-4%	Decentralized	Unified	No	Other Rule
Hawaii	16.0%	-3.4%	0%	Slightly	Unified	No	Other Rule
Idaho	78.0%	-5.0%	-14%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	No response
Illinois	93.6%	-21.3%	-3%	Highly	Federal	Yes	Not Formalized
Indiana	76.9%	-17.2%	-4%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Other Rule
Iowa	103.5%	-26.3%	4%	Slightly	Unified	Yes	Other Rule
Kansas	97.5%	-22.6%	-7%	Decentralized	Unified	Yes	Not Formalized
Kentucky	120.5%	-16.4%	-1%	Highly	Federal	No	Other Rule
Louisiana	61.7%	-2.7%	-1%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	Varies
Maine	55.5%	-22.2%	-2%	Decentralized	Unified	No	Not Formalized
Maryland	70.6%	3.3%	-5%	Highly	Federal	No	Not Formalized
Massachusetts	84.1%	-18.5%	-15%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Not Formalized
Michigan	67.9%	-25.4%	-6%	Highly	Segmented	Yes	No response
Minnesota	83.2%	-29.9%	4%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Statute
Mississippi	62.5%	-33.7%	-1%	Highly	Cabinet	No	Statute
Missouri	72.2%	-27.0%	-4%	Decentralized	Segmented	Yes	Other Rule
Montana	89.9%	-5.2%	0%	Slightly	Unified	No	Other Rule
Nebraska	102.0%	12.1%	-4%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Not Formalized
Nevada	44.0%	15.9%	1%	Decentralized	Segmented	Yes	Constitution
New Hampshire	63.5%	-20.7%	7%	Highly	Federal	Yes	Statute
New Jersey	89.7%	-19.2%	-2%	Decentralized	Federal	No	Other Rule
New Mexico	79.0%	-8.1%	-1%	Decentralized	Federal	No	Not Formalized
New York	29.9%	-5.7%	4%	Slightly	Unified	No	Other Rule
North Carolina	92.3%	-13.9%	0%	Decentralized	Federal	No	Not Formalized
North Dakota	98.5%	-21.4%	-4%	Slightly	Unified	No	Other Rule
Ohio	111.5%	-28.6%	-2%	Highly	Federal	Yes	No response
Oklahoma	85.2%	-18.4%	-6%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	Other Rule
Oregon	53.0%	-31.8%	-17%	Not	Cabinet	Yes	Other Rule
Pennsylvania	68.1%	-23.8%	-2%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Other Rule
Rhode Island	57.4%	-14.6%	1%	Decentralized	Unified	No	Other Rule
South Carolina	115.3%	2.9%	-3%	Highly	Federal	Yes	Not Formalized
South Dakota	69.7%	-15.4%	5%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Other Rule
Tennessee	107.4%	6.4%	-3%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	Not Formalized
Texas	106.2%	-3.2%	-3%	Not	Federal	Yes	Statute
Utah	63.9%	-12.2%	-5%	Decentralized	Unified	Yes	Other Rule
Vermont	42.6%	-11.7%	-3%	Highly	Federal	Yes	Statute
Virginia	46.3%	-22.3%	-4%	Decentralized	Segmented	No	Not Formalized
Washington	73.0%	-8.9%	-3%	Not	Federal	Yes	Not Formalized
West Virginia	75.4%	-19.7%	4%	Decentralized	Unified	No	Not Formalized
Wisconsin	91.4%	-18.0%	0%	Decentralized	Federal	Yes	Other Rule
Wyoming	23.6%	18.3%	-2%	Highly	Segmented	No	Constitution

VITA

Tara Warne earned her undergraduate degree in Political Science from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK. She did all of her graduate work at the University of Missouri in Political Science and Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. Warne has presented her research at both regional and national conferences on topics of political theory, organizational learning and knowledge use, and higher education policy. Her professional experience includes work as an academic advisor and most recently four years as a research analyst for the University of Missouri System and Washington University in St. Louis.