

A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF CULTURE  
AND FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT  
TESTING IN A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY  
IN THAILAND

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Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate College of the  
Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for  
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May, 2002

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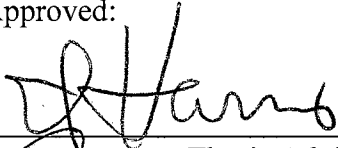
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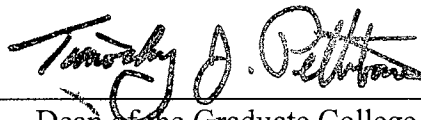
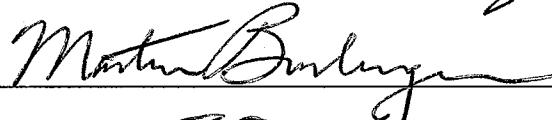
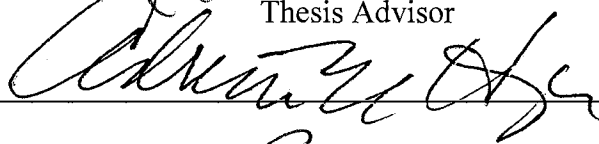
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Thesis Approved:



Thesis Advisor



Dean of the Graduate College

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I am also dedicating this dissertation to my mother, Thongbai; my wife, Pornpimol; my son, Don; and my deceased father, Lert. They have never been tolerant of my perseverant pursuit in the field of education and the fulfillment of my ambition to further my studies abroad.

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This dissertation has been processing during the time of the crisis that has occurred after the New York World Trade Center and Washington, D.C.- Pentagon attacks, on September 11, 2001. I felt terribly sad because of that ‘human error’ event and kept it in mind while learning and teaching in order to make my students and all concerned, better understand other ethnic groups more deeply with empathy and sympathy. Because of that unbelievable human-made doom, I give my dedication to the unsung heroes who would make this world a better place.

As a non-mother-tongue speaker of English, I realize that there may be places where my English writing is not as clear as it can be or as I wish. I appreciate the editorial assistance various individuals have kindly provided, including Dr. Kamol Sudprasert, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sunthorn Kohtbantau, and Dr. Sharon Solloway, to name just a few. However, I will take full responsibility for any and all mistakes in this work.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

There has been an enormous amount of energy devoted to assessment in US colleges and universities in the last twenty years. Much of this assessment has focused on the outcomes of student learning and has been motivated by the needs of stakeholders. State departments of higher education, regional and disciplinary accrediting agencies have asked institutions to provide credible evidence of their graduates' level of development. These external demands for results will almost certainly continue to grow in the years ahead (Gardiner, 1996).

This emphasis on improved assessment has made its way from the US to other countries as well, including Thailand; many of those strategies, including multiple-choice and essay tests, are being practiced in Thailand to some extent. Due to an era of increased accountability for Thai higher education and pressure to produce quality graduates, Thailand's focus has been to improve testing standards. Also, because of Thailand's National Education Act of 1999 (National Education Act, 1999) and other reform efforts, student assessment will be a debated issue in this century. At this time, the education community in Thailand needs more experiments employing combinations of assessment approaches to arrive at appropriate testing forms.

Society is asking higher education to educate all of its students to a much higher level than ever before. Institutions are often expected to achieve these results with fewer resources and with a growing level of dissatisfaction on the part of their stakeholders with the quality of graduates' knowledge, skills, and values. As the limited learning of many graduates of colleges and universities becomes increasingly apparent, institutions are seeking ways in which they can significantly raise their standards for their graduates and improve their effectiveness in producing high-quality, student learning (Gardiner, 1996).

Even though there is a move in Thailand to replace traditional testing with more progressive practices, traditional testing still dominates higher education institutions. There are isolated cases of new approaches. This study explores two environments where various forms of student assessment is utilized.

### Statement of the Problem

Student assessment is a highly controversial issue in education (Phelps, 1999). In today's educational settings new methods and strategies of student assessment have replaced traditional methods of paper and pencil tests. Historically, teacher-generated, multiple-choice or essay examinations were the primary tools used to evaluate student achievement. However, many now claim that these traditional measures fail to assess significant learning outcomes; undermine curriculum, instruction, and policy decisions; are extremely biased; and rely on outmoded theories of learning and instruction (Dietel, 1991). But in Thailand, the traditional methods are still popular (Tiengarntase, 1997).

In many modern educational environments, portfolios, long-term class projects and various other student assessment strategies are increasingly being utilized in addition to, or in place of, traditional testing methods. These new strategies are designed to represent the most objective, valid, and reliable information for individual measurement. They aim to assess increasing degrees of academic progress and performance, support day-to-day instructional decisions, and benefit all students, regardless of their capabilities (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2000).

However, while these new assessment strategies have been embraced and successfully implemented in some settings, they have been met with resistance and failure in others (Johnson, & Christensen, 2000). Some have resisted these new methods and levied some of the same arguments that have plagued traditional testing, such as unfairness and teacher bias. Others have claimed these new methods are only effective for specific types of learning objectives and ineffective for others (Diamond, 1998; Dietel, 1991). In Thailand, for example, some have resisted the essay test, claiming they are subject to biases, cannot measure a large amount of content or objectives, and require an extensive amount of instructor time to read and grade (Tiengarntase, 1997). Researchers do not agree on what to test and how to best measure cognitive and affective factors (Hancock, 1987).

So, while new methods and strategies of student assessment are replacing traditional practices in some educational contexts, these same strategies are met with antagonism in others (Viboolsri, 1997; Srisaard, 2000; Charnchalaw, 1999). One reason for this dilemma may be found in cultural theory. According to Douglas's (1982) Typology of Grid and Group, for example, the cultural make up and inherent biases of an

organization's culture will strongly influence the educational practices in that setting, which would include student assessment (Harris, 1995). That is, the culture of an organization will explain why certain types of teaching, learning, and assessment practices are used and administered in that specific educational context (Douglas, 1982; Harris, 1995; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996). Diamond (1998) concurs that the culture of assessment requires continual nurturing and support, and there is a need for further research in student assessment and its relationship with culture. In Thailand virtually no research has been done in this area. It is, thus, important for this researcher to explain the relationship of organizational culture and specific student assessment practices in selected educational settings in Thailand. Douglas's Typology of Grid and Group will be the primary lens through which culture and assessment are viewed and explained.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explain student assessment practices in two undergraduate faculties within a large private university in Thailand. The study will explain the types of assessment strategies used in each faculty; the individual instructor's preferences toward such assessments; and the relationship of grid and group to these preferences and practices.

### Research Objectives/Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What is the "Grid and Group" make-up of the two faculties studied?

2. How does this "Grid and Group" composition affect assessment practices and preferences of these faculties?
3. What research-findings do not fit in the Grid and Group Typology?
4. How useful is Douglas in understanding student assessment?

### Conceptual Framework

When considering the question of why some faculty members prefer to use one type of student assessment over another, there are many factors to consider. A common tendency is to limit the focus of testing preferences and practices to psychological or educational issues, but these viewpoints omit the important aspects of social and cultural measures (Pacey, 1983). If we merely consider the functional application of testing without considering cultural and organizational aspects, we will continue to experience an inability to explain fully the dichotomy between faculty members who prefer and use certain types of testing and faculty members who prefer and use others.

Douglas's Grid and Group Analysis (1982) provides a framework for understanding underlying processes of social change (Gross & Rayner, 1985; Schwarz & Thompson, 1990). Gross and Rayner (1985) explain that grid and group is "for anyone desirous of checking out the pressures of constraint and opportunity which are presumed to shape individual response to the social environment" (p. xxii). Douglas uses the terms "grid" and "group" to describe the two factors which contribute to social constraints in complex interactions between individuals within organizations and the organization's environment. Grid is the dimension of individuation of members of the organization, and group is the dimension of social incorporation of members in the organization. These two

dimensions serve as a screen through which the culture of an organization allows options to be perceived (Douglas, 1982). Assessing the relative strength of these dimensions is a valuable tool in understanding the values and belief dimensions among the members of a specific context.

Grid represents the degree to which an individual's choices are constrained within a social system by imposed formal prescriptions such as role differentiation, rules, codes of conduct and expectations (Douglas, 1982). A high/low continuum can show grid strength. High grid refers to a social context in which an explicit set of institutional classifications regulate individual interactions and restrain their autonomy, or, in other words, role and rule dominate social interactions (Douglas, 1982). Moving down the continuum, roles become more achieved than ascribed, and individuals are increasingly expected to negotiate their own relationships and life choices. At the low end of the grid continuum, there are few distinctions among members; individuals are esteemed more for their behavior or character than their role status. Four criteria - insulation, autonomy, control, and competition - are used by Douglas (1982) to determine grid.

Gross and Rayner (1985) suggest that group represents the degree to which people value collective relationships and are committed to a social unit larger than the individual. Evaluation of group involves recognition of the holistic aspect of social incorporation and the extent to which people's lives are absorbed and sustained by corporate membership (Harris, 1995). A low/high continuum shows group level. On the high end of the continuum, there are specific membership criteria and explicit pressures to consider group relationships. The existence or survival of the group is more important than the survival of individual members within it, perpetuating the life of the social



collective rather than its individual members. In a low group social context, people are not constrained by or reliant upon a group of others, and they experience more of a competitive, entrepreneurial way of life (Gross & Rayner, 1985). There are four criteria - survival/perpetuation, membership criteria, life support, and group allegiance - used to evaluate group.

When simultaneously considering high or low strength in both the grid and group dimensions, four distinct possibilities of social environments emerge as shown in Figure 1.

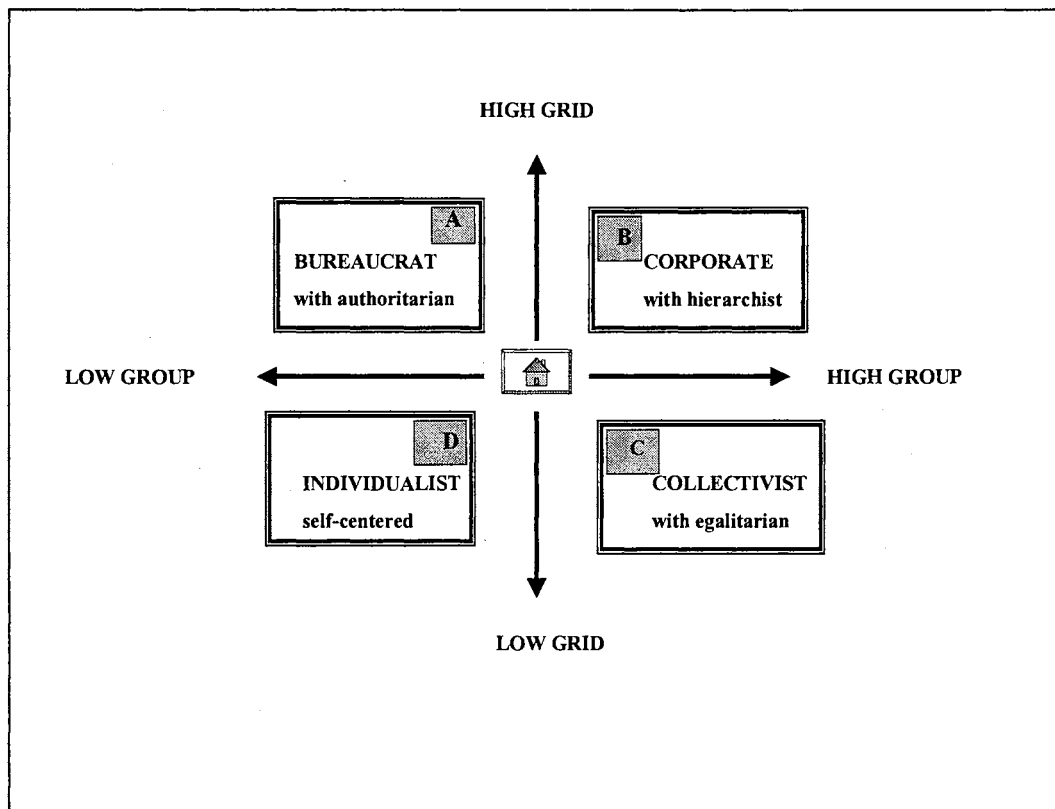


Figure 1. Mary Douglas's Typology of Social Environment Prototypes

Since its introduction, grid/group analysis has undergone considerable theoretical elaboration (Douglas, 1982, 1989, 1992; Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982; Thompson, Ellis, & Wildavsky, 1990). Researchers inspired by Douglas's insights have used the

framework primarily for describing particular social units and constructs such as technology policy and preferences (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990, Stansberry, 2001), high-tech firms (Caulkins, 1997), work cultures (Mars & Nicod, 1984), career expectations (Hendry, 1999), higher education (Lingenfelter, 1992), and school culture (Harris, 1995), school leadership (Kelly, 1999), urban environment (Aronsson, 1999), site-based decision making (Barnes, 1998), and even implications of US policy over China (Crider, 1999).

### Procedures

These research procedures in this study are inextricably tied to the purpose of the research, the research question, and the assumptions and understandings the researcher brings to the process. Douglas's Typology of Grid and Group provides a context for the methodology (Crotty, 1998). The methodology of this study was embedded in the assumption that faculty members' preferences for certain testing practices are culturally derived and historically situated. According to Douglas (1982), social reality is represented within an institution by organized social conventions.

A case study is the preferred research strategy when "how" or "why" questions are posed, when the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) presents five reasons the case study is a particularly good means of educational evaluation: 1) the ability to infer causality among complex, real-life interventions; 2) the ability to describe the real-life context in which an intervention occurs; and 3) the ability

to illustrate specific topics in a descriptive mode; 4) the ability to explore situations in which an intervention exists but has no clear, set outcomes; and 5) the ability to provide a meta-evaluation--a study of an evaluation study.

Yin (1994) defines case study as “an all-encompassing method—with the logic of design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis” (p. 13). Merriam (1988) contends that case studies are more concrete, more contextual, and more developed by the interpretations of the reader. She further notes that a case study is more apt to explain reasons for a problem and give better understanding of bounded situations. It can give summary, evaluations, applications, and alternatives for specific behaviors and events observed. By utilizing this design, the researcher can be more inquisitive and gather more data from varied sources than in other designs of research with more firsthand interactions in the study.

Yin (1993) suggests three types of case studies—exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Each type has distinctive characteristics, although there is overlap among them. The exploratory case study is aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures. The explanatory case study presents data bearing on cause-effect relationships in an effort to explain which causes produced which effects. The descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context. This study was considered an explanatory case study because its main objective was to use theory to determine priorities for data collection and to specify differences within the case of study (Yin, 1993).

Since it is the nature of qualitative case study research to be subject to researcher bias, my research topic was influenced from my own teaching experiences and testing practices. Through my working relationships with other faculties, I have witnessed their differing perceptions of the use of student assessment in their jobs. My own practices have shaped my interpretation of the data.

### Data Collection

Gathering data from a variety of sources from different points of view while checking data against different questions, different sources, and different methods is referred to as triangulation (Erlandson, et al. 1993). Yin (1994) added that collecting multiple data sources in case studies allows an investigator to "address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioral issues" (p. 92). This study included the following methods of data collection: questionnaire, interview, document and artifact analysis, and participant observation with the aim of corroborating emergent facts or phenomena.

The questionnaire is one source of the multiple data system associated with explanatory case studies, and also an aspect of "pre-ethnography" discussed by Lincoln & Guba (1994). The decision to use a questionnaire was motivated by the need to collect routine data from a large number of respondents (Anderson, 1998). The questionnaire was developed based on the anthropological framework for organizational culture provided by Mary Douglas (1982). The items were drafted using Grid and Group questionnaires from previous research studies combined with current literature in the areas of higher education faculty studies and student assessment in higher education.

While some valuable data can certainly be gleaned from the questionnaire, the interview method offers the best opportunity for more thorough and accurate communication of ideas between the researcher and the respondent (Berg, 1998). One of the most important aspects of using interview as a method is selecting respondents. A good respondent is one who is capable of contributing to the understanding of the research question (Erlandson, et al. 1997). In order to select such respondents, the researcher must engage in purposive sampling. According to Erlandson, et al. (1997), purposive sampling involves making two basic decisions: 1) who and what to study to help answer the basic research questions, and 2) who and what not to study in order to narrow the pool of possible sources. Purposive sampling strategies were applied in this study to the selection of colleges, which were both observed to have the ability to address the basic research questions and fit the purpose. For the purpose of this study the two colleges selected consisted of faculty members who have exhibited different student assessment strategies in their teaching activities.

### Setting and Participants

The participants in this study included higher education faculty members within two faculties at a private higher education institution in Thailand, which will be referred to as Sala University (SU). The University's mission focuses on the advancement of education for local, national, and international populations. The goal of general education at SU is to assist graduates in their growth and ability to function in an ever increasingly global and complex world. Two faculties were selected, the Faculty of Justice

Administration (FJA) and the Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA), because they each have unique disciplines and organizational context. Yin (1993) discussed the importance of exemplary case designs, in which the case or cases selected for study must reflect strong, positive examples of the phenomenon of interest. FJA and FHCA each have a diverse use of student assessment practices throughout their individual programs.

In summary, the participant selection for this study involved two faculties with the following participants from each college:

1. Five faculty members in FJA.
2. Five faculty members in FHCA
3. An administrator from each faculty.

### Significance of Study

This study may benefit those in higher education, because it will give insight into how the social environment affects the practice of student testing by: (1) reporting and examining classroom teacher perceptions and expectations of student assessment; (2) identifying teacher perceptions of effective student assessment administration; (3) determining the extent to which classroom teachers perceive the selected student assessment adopted to their specific cultural context; (4) explaining the relationships among student assessment, administration and culture in those two faculties using Douglas's Grid and Group Typology (1982) model. The study may benefit researchers, because a relatively new area of research will be set forth for future empirical studies.

This study may benefit the current body of literature, because it will help in understanding the relationship between organizational culture and student assessment administration. The lack of research focusing on this particular field, especially in Thailand, is a gap in the literature.

### Summary

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the ways the student assessment is practiced in Thai private universities, which two faculties of Sala University were used as the sites for studying. The research questions are:

1. What is the "Grid and Group" make-up of the two faculties studied?
2. How does this "Grid and Group" make-up affect assessment practices and preferences of these faculties?
3. What research-findings do not fit in the Grid and Group Typology?
4. How useful is Douglas in understanding student assessment?

### Reporting

Chapter II reviews the literature. Chapter III provides the qualitative research methodology. Chapter IV presents the data collected in two faculties at Sala University. Chapter V provides an analysis and interpretation of those data. Finally, Chapter VI presents recommendations for future research, a summary, implications, conclusions, and a discussion.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on student assessment is comprehensive. The relationship of assessment and culture, however, is not as developed, which reinforces the value of this study. This chapter explores the various studies related to student assessment, explains assessment traditions in Thailand, and includes a section on the work done by and on Mary Douglas. In this study and in this review of the literature the term assessment is used interchangeably with the words measurement, test and evaluation.

Traditionally, student assessments have been used to determine many things, including placement, promotion, graduation, or retention. Assessment literacy includes knowledge about the basic principles of evaluation practice, the appropriate uses of terminology, development strategies, and familiarity with standards of quality. Alternatives to traditional measurements of learning as a way of making student assessment more effective are important concerns of this research.

This literature review is divided into three sections:

1. An overview of student assessment;
2. Student assessment environments in the academic institution; and
3. Mary Douglas's theory of grid and group.



## An Overview of Student Assessment

### Definitions of Assessment

The definition of assessment has a long and diverse history. The Latin root "assidere" means to "sit beside," and connotes accompanying and guiding the student to better learning. In an educational context, assessment may include the process of observing learning, describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about a student's or one's own learning. When it is most useful, assessment is an event in the learning process, an act of reflective and personal understanding of one's progress.

In the spring of 1995, Thomas A. Angelo, then director of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Forum suggested it was time to "reassess assessment in higher education" (Angelo, 1995, p.11). Angelo presented a draft definition of assessment and solicited responses. Colleagues in education were invited to comment on, revise, and expand the definition. The original definition was:

Assessment is a means for focusing our collective attention, examining our assumptions, and creating a shared culture dedicated to continuously improving the quality of higher learning. Assessment requires making expectations and standards for quality... systematically gathering evidence on how well performance matches those expectations and standards; analyzing and interpreting the evidence; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance (Angelo, 1995,p.23).

Responding to feedback, Angelo developed five themes of assessment. He said that assessment should: (1) focus on improving student learning; (2) not be limited to the classroom, but include the wide range of processes that influence learning; (3) be embedded within larger systems; (4) focus collective attention, create linkages, and enhance coherence within and across the curriculum; and (5) be used for teacher and student accountability (Angelo, 1995).

These criteria caused the revised definition to read as follows:

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality, systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance. When it is embedded effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education (Angelo, 1995, p. 33).

This view of assessment, however, is not the only notion in the academic community. Dietel (2001, p. 21), for example, defines assessment as "any method used to better understand the current knowledge that a student possesses." This idea implies that what a student knows is always changing, and we can make judgments about student achievement only through comparisons over a period of time.

Academic institutions also have different perceptions and applications of assessment. For example, assessment at Eastern New Mexico University has grown to include measures of academic achievement, students' values and attitudes, and students' satisfaction with the institution. At the College of St. Benedict at St. John's University, student evaluation involves data collection and analysis, which influences program planning and accountability. At Front Range Community College, assessment includes the evaluation of content mastery, cognitive and affective gains, evaluation of programs and services that contribute to student learning, and student satisfaction (AAHE, 2001).

### Assessment Reform

There is an increasing emphasis is on accountability worldwide. According to "Reaching for New Goals and Standards: The Role of Testing in Educational Reform Policy," all realms of society have concentrated their efforts to search for ways to motivate their schools and students to reach for new and higher levels of achievement. (NCREL, 1994) There is an expressed need across countries and universities for reform in assessment, especially as it relates to knowledge and skills for career achievement and/or life success. (Bond, Friedman, & Van der Ploeg, 1994).

Student assessment has also become the focus of many curriculum developers. The belief is that curriculum must be re-examined, and the improvement of instruction must be the goal. The new emphasis must include pedagogy and instructional materials (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985).

In 1993, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, composed of six higher education institutions, set what they referred to as the "Guidelines for Assessment", which were meant to provide assistance in gathering, analyzing, and using data to enhance educational programs and support services. Three levels of assessment were adopted: (1) The classroom level, where assessment of student learning takes place in individual classes; (2) The program level, which includes both academic programs and support programs; and (3) the institutional level (AAHE, 2001).

Many educators and policymakers have coined the phrase that "what gets assessed is what gets taught" (p. 27). In other words, the format of assessment will influence the format of instruction (O' Day & Smith, 1993). It is the expectation and hope of policymakers that changes in assessment will change the ways teachers and schools to about the work of education and that these changes will raise the test scores of students (Linn, 1987).

Assessment of critical thinking, problem solving and writing in higher education has traditionally taken two forms: direct (constructed response) and indirect (multiple-choice) measurement. Indirect assessments involve an estimate of the examinee's probable skill level based on observation of knowledge about the skill level (i.e., for writing, vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and so on. would be the observations). In the new efforts to enhance learning and evaluation, there is an emphasis on a comprehensive approach to assessment, which combines the best of both direct and indirect methods.

Student testing in different countries has followed similar reform movements. There has been considerable diversification in the methods of assessing student learning

in higher education in the United Kingdom. Few courses in the United Kingdom now rely solely on the conventional final examinations supplemented by essays or, in scientific subjects, laboratory reports (Brown, 1999). The diversity of assessment practice is well illustrated by surveys carried out in Scotland (Hounsell et al. 1996). There are also a growing number of journals from various parts of the world reviewing alternative assessment practices (Birenbaum & Dochy, 1996; Brown et al. 1997). Other European authors focus on specific aspects or forms of assessment, such as self-assessment and peer assessment (Boud, 1995), profiles (Assister et al., 1992) or group-based tasks (Thorley & Gregory, 1994). Brown et al. (1999) comments that innovative assessment has the potential to encourage students to take an interest in their studies, work harder, engage in genuine or deep learning and produce good outcomes, which will have long-lasting benefits.

At the University of Technology, Sydney, there is a debate regarding the best evaluation methods. One camp favors multiple-choice or objective tests, which are largely used to test factual material and the understanding of concepts (Trigwell, 1992). Objective tests are often criticized, because they encourage guessing. Obviously, the quality of the items will have a large bearing on the way students select options as being correct or otherwise. Another group espouses essay tests. But the critics claim that essay grading is a notoriously unreliable activity. All teachers like to think they are exceptions, but many studies of well meaning and conscientious teachers show that essay grading is unreliable (Ebel, 1972; McKeachie, 1986).

## Trends of Educational Assessment in Thailand

The National Education Act of 1999 has put great public pressure on Thailand to reform all aspects of education, including testing. Policymakers are attempting to create laws that demand a greater accountability from higher education institutions (Erwin, 1998). Concurrently, accreditation agencies are requiring assessment of student outcomes to be an integral part of the accreditation process. More and more, Thailand colleges and universities are being asked for more direct measures of student outcomes.

Based on the National Education Act of 1999, a new assessment framework is proposed for 2002. The framework will decentralize authority and shift assessment responsibility to schools, teachers, parents, and students. The revisions introduce multiple assessments and alternative assessments, such as portfolios. According to Boonchoo Chalassathien of the Thai Ministry of Education, five areas of research will be given attention: grading of essays, especially online; methods to discourage excess test preparation; item bank development across several economies; improved schools; and student data reporting to the public.

Chalassathien also emphasizes that assessment is to be aligned with national standards and higher-order thinking skills. He believes educators should use multiple instruments and techniques (such as performance tasks and portfolios for both summative and formative evaluations), and classroom assessment should be used as feedback for improving teaching and learning, as mentioned by Lewis (Lewis, 2000).

Billions of dollars are spent each year on education, yet there is widespread dissatisfaction with the Thai educational system among educators, parents, policymakers,

and the business community. Efforts to reform and restructure schools have focused attention on the role of assessment in school improvement. After years of increasing the quantity of formalized testing and the consequences of poor test scores, many educators have begun to strongly criticize the measures used to monitor student performance and evaluate programs. They claim that traditional measures fail to assess significant learning outcomes and thereby undermine curriculum, instruction, and policy decisions. The higher the stakes, the greater the pressure that is placed on teachers and administrators to devote more and more time to prepare students to do well on the tests.

As a consequence, narrowly focused tests that emphasize recall have led to a similar narrowing of the curriculum and emphasis on rote memorization of facts with little opportunity to practice higher-order thinking skills. The time-limited nature of the tests and their format of one right answer has led teachers to give students practice in responding to artificially short texts and selecting the best answer rather than inventing their own questions or answers. When teachers teach for traditional tests by providing daily skill instruction in formats that closely resemble tests, their instructional practices are both ineffective and potentially detrimental due to their reliance on outmoded theories of learning and instruction.

Objectivity and subjectivity, refers to the scoring aspect of assessment rather than to the type of items in assessment. True-false and multiple-choice test is said to be objective because once the scoring key is set, nearly everyone who scores a student's responses arrives at the same scores. Essay items, along with portfolios, and performance assessments, on the other hand, have a history of being scored differently by different persons and differently by the same persons on different occasions. In addition,

subjective test yields results, which cannot be empirically verified by another person. Because of this, they are said to be subjective methods of assessment (Nitko, 2001).

The disadvantage of the subjective test on grading can be improved in the stage of test construction. Not only allow enough time for create the test questions, but also the scoring key for best possible answer(s). This will include the weight to the scores for each items in the scoring key (Viboolsri, 1997).

The objective test is largely used to test factual material and the understanding of concepts. Because of the objectivity and ease of marking, it is frequently used for testing larger groups. It is claimed also that skilled items writers can develop items to test higher-level intellectual skills but it is the perception of students that these types of questions only test the recall of facts (Cannon & Newble, 1983).

There are serious issues surrounding the purposes of assessments. But most of all, the right or appropriate practice for any assessments should be the ultimate concern of all stakeholders. Linn, et al. (2000, p. 15) gives valuable insights:

“The arguments, pro and con, regarding traditional, and alternative forms of assessment to give primacy to evolving conceptions of validity if, in the long run, they are to contribute to the fundamental purpose of measurement, the improvement of instruction and learning. An important outcome of the alternative assessment movement is that it challenges the education community at large to reconsider just what are valid interpretations of any kinds of assessment information?”



## Student Assessment Environment in Academic Institution

### Assessment Environment in the United Kingdom

Apparently, throughout the world, the subject of assessment is becoming more and more central to the whole process of higher education. This is due to the emphasis on ways to assure and enhance the quality of education with a change of focus on outcomes rather than on input (Brown & Glasner, 1999). For example, both the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the United Kingdom are increasingly interested in identifying threshold standards and benchmarks. They, like all the teachers around the world, need to be absolutely confident about the ways in which they assess students (Brown & Glasner, 1999).

United Kingdom higher education since 1993, has introduced subject reviews in order to encourage improvement in quality assessment (Glasner, 1999). Fifteen subjects are assessed and reveal innovative thinking. For most courses in law, assessment included examination and coursework in varying combinations. Coursework mainly took the form of essays, projects, dissertations, and assessed presentations. Dissertations and projects were used to encourage students to pursue scholarly work and independent research.

In other studies in the United Kingdom, institutions assessed student progress by means of written examinations supported by coursework of various types, including both practical and written work. A variety of assessment methods based on examinations and coursework were used in different forms and varying combinations in most courses and programs in business and management studies. In England, much care has been taken to

ensure that methods of assessment are effective, fair, and appropriate to aims and objectives. Within these parameters, there are many examples of willingness to experiment with innovative methods of assessment. Excellent practice was seen in several content areas, especially chemistry when written examination were combined with continuous assessment, timed assignments, oral presentations subjected to peer and self-assessment, dissertations, or extended essays, and research projects. All of this made a numerical contribution to final assessment (Glasner, 1999).

The United Kingdom offers an excellent example of how the overall environment can effect education and assessment. In the United Kingdom there has been an atmosphere of reform, innovation and a willingness to try new things. This creative environment has apparently influenced student assessment as well, because the literature indicates that assessment practices in the United Kingdom have been progressive and productive (Glasser, 1999).

### Assessment Environment in Thailand

In Thailand, there is a highly structured, hierarchical, traditional environment that provides the context for educational change. In the Thai system, higher education institutions are under both the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of University Affairs (MUA). MOE is responsible for the assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions such as Rajabhat Institutes, Vocational Colleges and Private Vocational Colleges where as MUA is responsible for both public and private universities. Public universities are less controlled or supervised than private universities.

In the case of the latter, there is the Establishment Screening Committee (ESC) to appraise any new proposed project. The ESC checks to see that the administrative, physical, academic, staff and financial plans are all synchronized and feasible. If the ESC approves, the plan will be put forward in the bureaucracy to the Private Higher Education Board.

Recommendation from the Board will then be submitted to the MUA for endorsement and approval for license. After obtaining the establishment license, each academic program to be offered must be approved by the MUA. The requirements to be considered for approval are divided into two parts: curriculum and readiness in curriculum management. As for program accreditation, external examiners are set to monitor the quality aspects of the program. Every semester, an appointed External Examination Committee will examine the test items of all subjects in each program to make sure that they are relevant to the course outlines and grading practices are of general standard.

Approximately two years before awarding the degree, the institution has to submit the application for program accreditation. The requirements to be considered are along the same lines as those of the application for approving academic programs. The Committee of Experts in the specialization will appraise the on-going program against the proposed plan along with inputs from External Examination Committee then recommended approval to the Board. Finally, the Minister will accredit programs with the recommendation for approval by the Private Higher Education Board (Sujatanond, 1995).

It should be noted also that, in the case of Thailand, the Bureau of Assessment and Testing Services under the Ministry of Education, is quite active in the assessment planning, implementing, and training. But the said agency involves only the primary and secondary education. Private higher education is under the umbrella of two bureaus. One is the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC) of the Ministry of Education and the other is the Office of Central Assessment, of the Ministry of University Affairs.

It should be clarified here that the Office of Central Assessment of the Ministry of University Affairs concentrates only on the entrance examination for public higher education. The main responsibility is relied upon the OPEC and the self-responsibility of each institution. Not many universities, both public and private, have their own assessment agencies. The public has complained that graduates from colleges and universities are not as capable as compared with other countries in the working world. The blame has been laid on the traditional practices of rote learning, lack of constructive thinking, and ineffective assessment and evaluation practices.

One criticism is that the system relies solely on multiple-choice tests for student assessment (Office of the National Assessment and Testing Service, 2001). Due to the 1999 National Education Act, there is a call for the reform of the evaluation and assessment mechanisms in higher education.

In addition to the established stratification in which student assessment administration has been determined in Thai private universities, there are cultural artifacts that can become liabilities when they shape our way of handling assessment mission. For example, decentralized organizational structure, faculty autonomy, and societal pressure. It should be noted that Derek Bok, the former President of Harvard University, believes

that the decentralized, loosely coupled nature of relationships among the large number of relatively autonomous American colleges and the predominant organizational structure within these institutions has provided a rich ground for experimentation. However, it is this decentralized structure that weakens higher education's ability to effectively diffuse successful initiative throughout a university or university system (Bok. in Copeland, p.22). Seymour (1993 in Copeland, p. 22-23) supports by identifying what institutions are lacking are a comprehensive or systematic approach to quality. Individual within such organizations is isolated into their discrete departments, rarely having meaningful discussion with others regarding the overall improvement of the organization.

Another issue to be considered in shifting to a healthier climate for student assessment is faculty autonomy. This highly centralized; formal education system is reflected in faculty autonomy across Thailand's universities. Generally speaking, faculty do not have the same freedom as many faculty have in the United Kingdom or the United States. There exists a pervasive distrust and questioning of the quality of the collegiate experience, and faculty members and universities have come under great scrutiny, which has affected academic freedom (Copeland, 1997). Hutching and Marches (1990) have documented that institutions, particularly their faculty, have resisted the pressure from external and internal agents of change to examine the manner in which they are conducting the business of higher education. They feel, more or less, threatened and defensive. There is great prejudiced against the judgment of outsiders as appropriate, unfounded, and even intrusive.

The previous findings are barriers to adopting innovations, or even enhancing common development in the organization. Hutching and Marches (1990) challenge their

fellow members with the following statement: "It is against this high regard for individual autonomy that assessment interposes questions about a collective faculty responsibility for student learning. It says to faculty, ' Your job is not only to tend to the learning of your own students, but to worry about how that learning relates to other courses, and to ask what students' learning over many courses adds up to."

Edward de Bono (1999) comments that it is very difficult to restructure from within an organization for a number of good reasons. The reasons raised, regarding to organization and culture, are (p. 161-162):

“People within an organization have got so used to the existing structure that they cannot see anything odd or inefficient about it. They are so good at adapting to the existing structure that there is little motivation to change it. You need an outside eye to look 'innocently' at the structure and to wonder why things are done in such a bizarre way. “

And, Bono continued that,

“Within an organization there are problems with territories, politics, personalities, etc. An outside agent is not immediately subjected to these. Many people within an organization may want changes and may even know what they want to do. But they do not have the political muscle to make it happen. A management consultant is often of value in reflecting back, with far more credibility, what some people already know. If the fee is high enough the consultancy is likely to be believed.

Any suggested change within an organization is likely to be viewed with suspicion and regarded as arising from the special interest of a person or group of

people. Change is trouble, hassle, disruption and new things to learn. No change is a preferred option. If you have learned to play the existing game why should you want the game changed?"

Changes will come in the face of much faculty hesitation and even some resistance. Kerr (1995) notes at least two important changes that need faculty support. One is directed toward overcoming the fractionalization of the intellectual world, and the other calls for procedures devised to make administration more personal, including faculty administration. Then, the faculty world seems to sense a loss of unity--- intellectual and communal unity. In large measure this can be attributed to 'the overwhelming predominance of things that are new over things that are old' (p. 76). Knowledge by now is in so many bits and pieces and administration so distant that faculty members are increasing figures in a "lonely crowd," intellectually and institutionally (Kerr, 1995).

The educational assessment with the usage of multiple-choice and essay tests are practiced in Thailand as a result of the importation of westernized education. Due to the era of increased accountability for Thai higher education and pressure on quality of graduates, our focus of attention has been on standardized testing. By 2003, student quality will be highly measured because of the National Education Act 1999. By this dissertation I want to boldly explore supporting this trend toward higher standards of testing systems. Though multiple-choice tests are the most efficient testing measure yet developed, they, similar to any single form of assessment if used alone, remain limited. And, it is also the time for policymakers and educational administrators to recognize that even when you remove all disadvantages of the essay tests, this will not and shall not

remove the bias from testing. What the education community needs are more experiments employing combinations of assessment approaches to arrive at an appropriate melding of test form.

And, among those criteria and whatever vision may come, it will not be possible without the effective administration. The study will focus on the organizations where the tests are performed. The processes of tests and how the people concerned function will reveal nature of the administrative process. Without them, educational assessment will never be developed. But the need of having a magnificent lens to look through the process of assessment is the same importance. In this dissertation, the use of the well-known Mary Douglas's the grid and group typology is most beneficial in discovering the myth of adopters and non-adopters of the newest or last developed assessment.

#### Overview of Mary Douglas's Theory of Grid and Group Typology

The term "culture" has been given different meaning by different scholars. For examples, Schein (1985) cited in Staessens and Vandenberghe, (1994), posits that culture is 'the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment". In other words, Staessens points out that members of an organization create their own culture and culture can be considered as a socially constructed reality. Peacock (1986) writes,

"Culture is shared meaning. To comprehend meaning, one must see the world as others see it, to comprehend experience in terms of the others' frame of



reference. This is the endeavor of interpretive ethnography. Ethnographic fact is relatively meaningless and trivial as object. It becomes significant as an account of the interplay between subject and object, the ethnographer and the 'other' whom he wishes to understand" (p. 32).

### Organizational Culture

Other meanings of culture are built on Schein's (1985) conceptualization of organizational culture, in which three levels of cultures is categorized. Level one, or artifacts includes, an organization's written and spoken language, physical arrangements of rooms, organizational structure, dress codes, technology, behavioral norms, and patterns of behavior (habits, norms, rites, and rituals). Level two are values, ethos, philosophies, ideologies, ethical and moral codes, attitudes, and beliefs. Level three, or assumptions, includes spirit, truth (i.e., in the social constructionist sense), and transactional analysis concept of organizational scripts. This typology of organizational culture provides a framework that is particularly useful in studying academic institution cultures (Preskill, 1995).

In this related conceptualization, Mary Douglas (1982) has constructed Grid and Group Typology that has been popularized for its usefulness to interpret and compare social environments. To examine the applicability of Douglas' typology to selected educational cultures, conceptions of four cultures are described here within the grid and group categories.

It should be noted here that culture is often overlooked in the Thai academy. It seems to consider culture only in reference to "tradition," which altogether means the totality of conventional social behavioral patterns or arts or beliefs; or the passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation as described by Microsoft, Bookshelf (2000). Culture in this meaning is far away from administration awareness. It is nevertheless omnipresent, sub-consciously guiding the behavior, choices and interactions of its constituent members (Crider, 1999). The above-mentioned paragraphs shed a light on the elusive nature of culture. Those definitions of culture are based on a survey of several of the past and the most current writings and forums regarding socio-cultural phenomena.

Institutions are perceptual, cognitive, emotive and behavioral systems-- conventional domains of "you know." As the grammar allows one to make sense of a string of words, so institutions provide individuals with consensual ways for deriving meaning from their social interactions. They also provide individuals routine ways for making decisions and acting in various situations with various types of others. As Mary Douglas observes in How Institutions Think (Syracuse University Press, 1986:102), "the instituted community blocks personal curiosity, organizes public memory, and heroically imposes certainty on uncertainty. In marking its own boundaries it affects all lower level thinking, so that persons realize their own identities and classify each other through community affiliation."

Academic culture is a subject that is receiving more and more attention in the current issues over effective administration and academic improvement. Educational

researchers are starting to better understand the role played by culture in the formulation and exercise of educational leadership (Goddard, 2000).

### The Lens of Mary Douglas

Geertz (1973), in reviewing a number of studies on culture, concludes that the study of culture can be simplified, and there appear to be two dimensions of common problems all research on cultures faces. One dimension concerns the relationship between the individual and the group, and the second concerns the relationship to authority. Trompenaars (1994) agrees that there is a limited number of universally shared human problems need to be solved. One culture can be distinguished from another by the specific solutions it chooses for those problems.

Mary Douglas has presented a typology of culture that allows researchers to simplify the complex dimensions of a social environment. Douglas uses two dimensions to explain four possible social environments one could be in. In "In the Active Voice," these four cosmologies are as either corporate, collectivist, individualist or bureaucratic. These 'co-exist' in a state of mutual antagonism in any society at all time' (p.43). The concept enables readers to predict about a range of choices that an individual might make.

The two dimensions that determine the classification of a social environment are grid and group. Douglas defines grid as the dimension of individuation, and group as the dimension of social incorporation (Douglas, 1978; Douglas, 1982).

Grid Dimension. The grid dimension denotes that degree of social regulation and stratification. Douglas (1982) describes a high-grid social context as one in which "an explicit set of institutionalized classifications keeps social context as one in which "an explicit set of institutionalized classifications keeps (individuals) apart and regulates their interaction (Douglas, 1982). In this setting, strict rules and lines of authority are established, and definitive roles separate men from women, fathers from sons, rulers from peasants. Cultures with a low-grid rating have less definitive separations as individuals are "increasingly expected to negotiate their own relationships with others"(Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990, p. 6)

Group Dimension. Gross and Rayner (1985) suggest that group represents the degree to which people value collective relationships and are committed to a social unit larger than themselves. Determining group involves recognition of the holistic aspect of social incorporation and the extent to which people's lives are absorbed and sustained by corporate membership (Harris, 1995). A low/high continuum shows group level. On the high end of the continuum, there are specific membership criteria and explicit pressures to consider group relationships. The existence or survival of the group is more important than the survival of individual members within it, perpetuating the life of the social collective rather than its individual members. In a low group social context, people are not constrained by or reliant upon a group of others, and they experience more of a competitive, entrepreneurial way of life (Gross & Rayner, 1985). There are four criteria - survival/perpetuation, membership criteria, life support, and group allegiance - used to evaluate group.

Grid and Group Interaction. Harrell (2001) of SUNY Institute of Technology remarks that in any social environment the interplay of the individual and the group is very important. This determination, as he suggests, requires that a boundary be defined so that living within a group involves the behavioral definition of that boundary and the control of persons or things, which might attempt to cross it. In addition, a group boundary may be either very strong or weak. In the low group where the entrance and exit of individuals is not a matter of great concern, the location of the boundary may not be entirely clear. Furthermore, grid refers to a network of ego-centered roles, and socially defined expectations constrain the behavior of individuals according to laws or principles. Individuals can be interdependent and inter-terminate without being members of a common group. A high grid system is high in ascribed roles; as the grid weakens, the individual has greater autonomy and control (Harrell, 2001).

When simultaneously considering high or low strength in both the grid and group dimensions, four distinct possibilities of social environments emerge as shown in Figure 1 in Chapter I. Since its introduction, grid/group analysis has undergone considerable theoretical elaboration (Douglas, 1982, 1989, 1992; Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982; Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990). Researchers inspired by Douglas's insights have used the framework primarily for describing particular social units and constructs such as technology policy and preferences (Schwarz & Thompson, 1990, Stansberry, 2001), high-tech firms (Caulkins, 1997), work cultures (Mars & Nicod, 1984), career expectations (Hendry, 1999), higher education (Lingenfelter, 1992), and school culture (Harris, 1995), school leadership (Kelly, 1999), urban environment (Aronsson, 1999), and site-based decision making (Barnes, 1998).

Most recently, grid and group was used by Stansberry (2001) to explain faculty preferences in a university setting. Her findings are significant to this study, because while my study uses grid and group to look at faculty preferences in student assessment, Stansberry (2001) explained faculty preferences in using instructional technology. She found that culture could affect significantly faculty preferences in using technology.

### Summary

Preferences in types of student assessment can be examined in a number of ways. But one approach is to investigate the interaction between the individual and its surroundings. The lens of Mary Douglas will be used as the specific tool to investigate this interaction.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe the methodology and data collection procedures used to complete this study. Since this study featured close interactions with human subjects, their perceptions and practices of student assessment, and the cultural contexts in which they worked, the qualitative paradigm was deemed as an appropriate approach for inquiry.

Qualitative research allows for categories and themes to develop and emerge throughout the data collection process. A questionnaire, interviews, observations, and document collection in this study allowed the researcher to develop a portrait, or thick description, of the cultural contexts.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the current assessment practices adopted by a higher educational institution in Thailand. Mary Douglas's Theory of Grid and Group was used as the lens to explore the organizational cultures of two faculties within Sala University. The research questions that guided the study were the following:

- (1) What is the "Grid and Group" make-up of the two faculties studied?
- (2) How does this "Grid and Group" make-up affect assumption practices and preferences of these faculties?

- (3) What research-findings do not fit in the Grid and Group Typology?
- (4) How useful is Mary Douglas's cultural theory in understanding student assessment?

An explanatory case study was used for the following reasons: "how" or "what" questions were posed, the researcher had little control over events, the focus was on the contemporary phenomenon of student assessment within a real-life context, and the main objective was to use theory to determine priorities for data collection and to specify differences within the case of study (Yin, 1993).

Yin (1994) presented five reasons the case study is a particularly good means of educational evaluation: 1) the ability to infer causality among complex, real-life interventions; 2) the ability to describe the real-life context in which an intervention occurs; and 3) the ability to illustrate specific topics in a descriptive mode; 4) the ability to explore situations in which an intervention exists but has no clear, set outcomes; and 5) the ability to provide a meta-evaluation.

Yin (1994) defined case study as "an all-encompassing method—with the logic of design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis" (p. 13). Merriam (1988) contended that case studies are more concrete, more contextual, and more developed by the interpretations of the reader. She further noted that a case study is more apt to explain reasons for a problem and give better understanding of bounded situations. It can give summary, evaluations, applications and alternatives for specific behaviors and events observed. By utilizing this design, the researcher can be more inquisitive and gather more data from varied sources than in other designs of research with more firsthand interactions in the study.



## Data Collection Procedures

The participants in this explanatory case study included higher education faculty members within the Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA) and the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA) at Sala University. Yin (1993) discussed the importance of exemplary case designs, in which the case or cases selected for study must reflect strong, positive examples of the phenomenon of interest. The FHCA and FJA each showed diversity in student assessment throughout their individual programs.

### Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used as an initial, interdependent, and complementary data source among multiple data sources and was also an aspect of “pre-ethnography” discussed by Denzin and Lincoln (1994). The decision to use a questionnaire was motivated by the need to collect routine data from respondents and to tentatively place the faculties in one of the Douglas quadrants (Anderson, 1998). The questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed based on the anthropological framework for organizational culture provided by Mary Douglas (1982).

Following initial approval from each faculty, an email requesting participation in the study was sent to faculty members in FHCA and FJA in February 2002. The questionnaire included a space for participants to provide their name if they were interested in being interviewed as a further participant in the study.

In FHCA, a total of six out of 18 (33 percent) faculty members answered the questionnaire. The Associate Dean sent an initial email request on my behalf to faculty members. Additionally, she sent two follow-up emails requesting that faculty members respond to the online questionnaire. A total of six out of 19 (31 percent) FJA faculty members answered the questionnaire.

### Interviews

The interview method offered an opportunity for more thorough and accurate communication of ideas between the researcher and the respondents (Berg, 1998). This study used a semi-structured interview, where broad, open-ended questions were developed, but these questions also allowed for probing and follow-up questions when appropriate (Berg, 1998; Merriam, 1988; Erlandson, et al. 1997).

All interview participants in this study were contacted via email and/or phone in order to set up an interview time in their place of choice. Most chose to be interviewed in their office, but some chose more informal settings. Each interview began with informal background gathering on the participant and progressed to a more structured discussion of their perceptions and practice of student assessment. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The semi-structured interviews consisted of three main questions (Appendix C).

Six interviews were conducted in the FHCA and six were conducted in the FJA. Pseudonyms were given to all participants involved with the study. Information taken

from the interviews, observations, and documents were recorded in such a manner that subjects could not be directly identified.

### Observation

Merriam (1988) stated that observation is best to use in a situation, organization or event when one wants meaningful, relevant information, when a “fresh perspective” is wanted or the researcher is unable to obtain interviews from participants. I chose to add observation to this study for more meaningful, relevant information. Erlandson, et al. (1993) compared observation to taking a picture of the research setting with a wide-angle camera lens—over the course of the study this picture is brought into focus with other data collection activities. Like the questionnaire and all collection strategies in this study, the observations complemented by, gave meaning to, and were mutually dependant on the other multiple sources.

According to Berg (1998), field notes should be completed immediately following any encounter with the study’s participant, whether it is within or without the boundaries of the field. Erlandson, et al. (1993) espoused the technique of constructing “critical incidents” as field notes. A critical incident is defined as a “specific event occurring in the social context being studied” that “reflects ‘critically’ on the operation of that context” (p. 103). Field notes should be used to relate a story or information that can later be transferred into text.

During the data collection process, observations were conducted on a formal and informal basis. Arrangements for formal observations were made during interviews and

via email. The “observer as participant” (Merriam, 1988) stance was taken, as the researcher’s observer activities were known to the group and the researcher’s participation was definitely secondary to the role of information gatherer. No arrangements were made for informal observations conducted in each faculty. Field notes were taken during all observations with pen and paper.

### Document Collection

Document and artifact analyses were further sources of data collection this study utilized. A document can be practically anything in existence prior to and during the investigation. Erlandson, et al. (1993) listed possible examples of documents: "historical or journalistic accounts, works of art, photographs, memos, accreditation records, television transcripts, newspapers, brochures, meeting agendas and notes, audio- or videotapes, budget or accounting statements, notes from students or teachers, speeches, and other case studies" (p. 99). I would like to add Web sites to that list, because they were also important in this study

At the beginning of this study, the most public and accessible documents were gathered first. The main website of each college was accessed and analyzed. Brochures and flyers available in the main college offices were collected. During each of the interviews, participants were asked if they would be willing to provide any documents such as course descriptions, syllabi, actual assessment tools and instruments, academic policies and procedures, etc. that would contribute to the study.

## Data Analysis

Gathering data from a variety of sources from different points of view while checking data against different questions, different sources, and different methods is referred to as triangulation (Erlandson, et al. 1993). Yin (1994) added that collecting multiple data sources in case studies allows an investigator to "address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioral issues" (p. 92). This study included the following methods of data collection: questionnaire, interview, document and artifact analysis, and participant observation with the aim of corroborating emergent facts or phenomena.

The questionnaire responses provided insight into the cultural context of each of the faculties. A study of two faculties in two different cultural quadrants gave me the opportunity to compare the faculty members' perceptions on their work contexts. The FJA was placed in the corporate quadrant of the typology, and the FHCA was placed in the Collectivist quadrant in accordance with their questionnaire responses. Data collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis reinforced each college's placement in their respective quadrants of cultural bias.

Analysis of interview data occurred simultaneously with data collection and was an ongoing process throughout the study (Merriam, 1988). Verbatim transcripts were created from each of the interviews. The field notes taken during and immediately following observations (Berg, 1998) were analyzed along with the interview transcripts. Scanning the data for regularities, patterns, similar ideas, and relationships developed coding categories. Categories were created from bits of coded data that were similar in characteristics.

As documents and artifacts were gathered, they were organized into three-ring binders according to the respective college. Analysis of documents and artifacts took place as they were gathered and folded into the same coding scheme as the interview data.

Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Typology served as a lens for initial coding categories, for sorting data, and for assisting in conceptualizing themes. Emerging themes were examined to determine suitability and theoretical significance to the study. The following chapter offers thick descriptions of the two faculties.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

Sala University and two faculties, the Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA) and the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA), will be discussed in this chapter. Data for these descriptions came from multiple sources, including interviews, observations, and pertinent documents. This chapter begins with a portrayal of the context of the study, Sala University, and then offers a thick description of JHCA and FJA.

#### Sala University

The following is a brief description of Sala University as it was at the time of this case study (February, 2002). In this description I will present the institutional practices and organizational structure of the University. A variety of documents added to my understanding of the institution, including the Sala University Catalog (1999, 2000, & 2001), unpublished faculty reports, and the Royal Gazette (1999), Thailand's official journal for public announcements.

Sala University is a privately owned institution of higher education, accredited by the Ministry of University Affairs in 1973. This large, private university is located in the

outskirts of Bangkok, a city of over ten million people. The university consists of seven faculties for undergraduate levels and a graduate school, the latter of which provides four master's degrees programs: business administration, communication arts, engineering, and public administration. The seven faculties for undergraduate levels are the Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Communication Arts, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Health Care Administration, and the Faculty of Justice Administration.

Approximately 12,000-13,000 students attend Sala University each year. Among these students are students from different provinces in Thailand and foreign students from many countries, including the United States, Canada, Finland, Japan, India, and China.

Prior to the 1980s, colleges and universities in Thailand were thought of as intellectual institutes for the elite. They were for the most part public with four to five-year curricula focusing on medicine, political sciences, law, or teacher training. After a law enactment in 1986 the growth of private universities mushroomed, and they were recognized as legitimate institutions. This recognition also gave way to notions of how to best define and distinguish between public and private universities.

There were several consequences of the rise in both public and private education in the country. First, both types of institutions were placed under the general category of higher education. Second, the rapid growth of higher education gave way to construction, high-rise buildings, and campuses were expanded. Additionally, enrollment numbers increased in both public and private education, but especially in private, and the explosive expansion of private universities was seen mostly in the areas of business administration and engineering.



## General Student Assessment Practices at Sala University

Strong leadership characterizes Sala University. The President of the University is the chief executive officer, and a strong board of directors helps give direction to the University. One of the important goals of the board and President is the adoption and continuation of a consistent assessment process. Thus, Sala University has adopted a nationally accepted approach to assessment, which is led by the University President and Deans and supported through the Quality Assurance Policy (QAP). The goal of QAP is to ensure quality teaching by providing faculty and staff with evidences of the faculties' academic activities.

In 1999, after the enactment of the National Education Act 1999, Sala University became aware of the need for the establishment of qualified international standards of student assessment. The implementation of these standards, with pilot projects and schemes of ISO 9002, and the Quality Assurance Policy, became foundations for the development of teaching and learning in this university. The institution has recently come under the inspection of external auditors for ISO 9002 and is currently in the process of being certified for its quality assurance.

There are a few general guidelines for student assessment that are supposed to be followed by Sala University instructors. For example, all instructors should give a final examination. The final examination must be given in the format and timelines as indicated by the university, and this examination generally counts 50% of the final grade. Also, all instructors are to give letter grades to each student, such as, A, B+, B, C+, C,

D+, and D, and these grades should be based on fair, consistent assessment (Sala University Catalog, 2001).

While each faculty in the University varies to some degree in its organization, governance, and assessment practices, Sala University's policies give very broad direction to the guidelines and practices of student assessment for each faculty. The President is actively involved in and keeps abreast of national and international educational issues and seeks to ensure that student assessment policies and practices are in place. Thus, while every faculty have the general guidelines mentioned above concerning fair and impartial assessment and letter grading, there are some differences in the practices of student assessment in each faculty. The Faculty of Health Care Administration and the Faculty of Justice Administration are two such examples.

#### The Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA)

The Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA) consists of a Dean, three Associate Deans, 15 full-time instructors, and support staff, which totals 20 personnel. There is one instructor who holds a doctorate, and the rest have master's degrees. The Dean is female, the associate deans are female, there are 13 female instructors and two male instructors, and the support staff is comprised of one female. In sum there are two men and 18 women in FHCA. There are 298 FHCA students who are working on a four-year degree, 146 credit hour program in nursing. There are 29 nursing courses worth one to four credits for a total of 98 credits in the major. The remaining credits of the 146 are electives.

## Participants

Dean. The Dean of FHCA completed a nursing degree from one of the prominent nursing schools in Bangkok and then received a government scholarship to study in the United States. She earned another bachelor's degree at the University of Florida and a master's degree at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. After graduating in the U.S., she spent 40 years in government services in Thailand, including Ministry of Public Health. On her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1992 she retired from public service and was invited to be the first dean of FHCA at Sala University in 1995.

Faculty Members and Associate Deans. There are five faculty members who participated in this study. Three of the five had the dual role of faculty member and associate dean. These three were H-1, H-3, and H-5. H-1 earned a master's degree in nursing education and is now a Ph.D. candidate in education in one of Thailand's universities. This 45-year old participant is married with two grown children who attend Thai public universities. She is expected to take over the Deanship in the near future. She is now the associate dean of faculty administration.

H-2 earned a Ph.D. at a young age from one of the prominent Thailand universities in science teaching. She is known as the "computer expert" and is actively involved in "quality testing." She has been working as a teacher at Sala for five years and is in her mid-30s.

H-3 is in her late 60s and has a very close relationship with the Dean. She taught with the Dean at a public University before coming to Sala. Her Master's Degree is in

clinical psychology. H-3 is the senior associate dean who deals with diversity in student affairs.

H-4 is in her twenties and very enthusiastic about her career. She has a Master's Degree in nursing science, and she plans to complete a Ph.D.

H-5 is in her early forties, is one of the best teachers at Sala, and serves as the Dean for Academic Affairs. She has a master's degree in nursing education. She is also a recognized expert in student assessment and quality assurance. H-5 works on the university committee responsible for quality assurance and ISO 9002.

### Shared Values and Beliefs

There are certain values and beliefs that are shared implicitly by the participants. Representations of those beliefs are as follows:

...everyone has knowledge, capability, and intention to do their best. I thus delegate work separately...this teacher is responsible for this job, that teacher is responsible for other job. If there are any problems, I ask them to tell me. I also will tell them to make appropriate decisions in my absence and then report them to me afterward. I like for people to express their opinions. Argument is always welcomed. I am not too strict, and I try to tell them what type of a person I am.

People are good not because of births but their own deeds... I consider all people as equal (Dean Interview).

One faculty member said:

My goals as the individual's teacher will depend on the existence of the organization. I devote myself for the work of the faculty... I also feel that our organization is quite new, we try our best to be accepted. To produce the graduates from our faculty to be accepted by the labor market is the push and devotion needed to us all...In reality our faculty beliefs are 'virtue leads, wisdom excels, service to society, and develop ourselves in sustainable way' (H-5, personal communication).

H-3 commented, "My goal is the same as the (FHCA) goal, i.e., to produce the nursing graduates with high quality. They are going to be responsible for human lives--mentally and physically" (H-3, personal communication).

H-1 said:

We do need to take into consideration the whole FHCA when making decision. If we do on our own purposes, the work through the people at large will never be succeeded...The teachers here are founded that many if not all, to be kind, helpful, and devoting...with only little stimulus, they are ready to do their jobs (H-1, personal communication).

H-2 voiced, "To me, my goal is to teach the best to the students, and the faculty's goals are to produce the quality graduates" (H-2, personal communication).

### Work Environment

Almost all the participants characterized the work environment at FHCA as "collaborative", "friendly" and "not top down." The roles and responsibilities of the

FHCA members are more tacitly known than explicitly defined. The Dean's major activities revolve around general oversight of the FHCA and teaching. The three associate deans' roles are the following. There is one associate dean for administration, one for academic affairs, and the third for student affairs. The Associate Dean for Administration is responsible for fiscal, general management, personnel matters. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for all teaching matters. Associate Dean for Students Affairs is responsible for pursuing activities that help students grow physically and mentally (H-2, personal communication).

The faculty members in FHCA seem to have both an egalitarian and collective mindset for their work. For example:

“Group assignments are in practice whereas the individual works are recognized. Each one does their works individually and collectively” (H-1, personal communication).

"When I initiate something, I will bring it to consult with my peers first, if no negative response, I will forward my initiation to administrator. But if the negative point-of-view from my fellow teachers are quite strong, I will reconsider of it and possible to revise (initiation) heartily" (H-2, personal communication)

“In the practices here, there should not be any individualistic minds. Faculty goals are the uttermost or supreme mandate of the organization” (H-3 communication).

One senior teacher remarked about the leadership of the work environment:

The administration is run under the well-planned framework, mission, and philosophy of the university and written faculty policy. The Dean delegates her

authority to the associate deans, and the associate deans forward to their subordinate teachers. We all work together for the same goals (H-3, personal communication).

H-5 commented:

We do not have real Department Heads, since we have a small faculty... The division of work is arranged accordingly. For example, child-care, senior-people care, community-health care, etc. But there is not top down structure (H-5, personal communication).

In the workplace, FHCA has fairly loose rules and regulation. The dean holds regular meetings once a week for updates about projects and for feedback. The university policies and regulation are told to everyone and records of the meeting are conducted accordingly and immediately.

H-5 Writes:

Informal atmosphere is what I feel here. Rules, regulations or orders are not in consideration to the FHCA membership. Seniority is concerned with respect to aging persons. But empowerment is consistently practiced (H-5, personal communication).

As one associate dean claims, "Empowerment is giving each person the authority to make their own decisions and not have to report to everyone..." (H-4, personal communication).

One teacher believes that there is no need for written rules and regulations, because the faculty are familiar with guidelines and there is no need for a legalistic approach. When asked about the practices within the faculty, one teacher responded:

The job description is ambiguous, one may do the work of the others, or sometimes some people who are assigned do not perform his or her duty and be taken over by the other (H- 4, personal communication).

H-1 states:

The Dean never comes to see me and never asks whether I have done that or why not have I done this? Teachers realize their responsibility, individual task presumed ...No teachers ever denied the autonomy they experienced at FHCA (H-1, personal communication)

H-2 further explains:

I think our faculty is managed in the horizontal (or lateral) approach with the directing in certain issues...decentralized...no departments specified. Each teacher when is assigned for any subjects, she/he has autonomy in every concerned...curriculum, pedagogy, etc... many subjects in FHCA are team-taught, which helps bond the teachers (H-2, personal communication).

### Communication Networks

Concerning the communication in the faculty one person said, "It's two-way communication, from the Dean to Associate Dean and to the faculty almost the same time...Every faculty member can talk to the Dean anytime, any letters ... communication is fast because it is direct" (H-2, personal communication).

Most of the teachers commented in same way about being able to go directly to the Dean without bothering the associate deans. For example:



Communication in the office is agreeable to all of the faculty members as the informal communication. Its evidence that teachers raised up is the small size of the Communication is smooth. No distinction among title or position difference. I never have to rehearse for what I am going to tell with any of them” (H-2, personal communication).

Another participant commented on the informal, congenial communication process: “We have openness, generosity, and friendliness here. Though conflict ever happened, we will sit and talk” (H-3, personal communication).

### Labor and Social Activities

Within the work environment of FHCA labor and social activities are commingled. For instance, "Breakfast together is our ritual of this society....It's really good! We talk and feel the thoughtfulness of each other..., an informal type of communication I suppose" (H-5, personal communication). Faculty like to get together even after work hours. "After work, many of them go out to dinner together; they take trips together often...Every summer, we take a long trip inside or outside Thailand, depending on the availability of money" (H-1, personal communication).

"I never absolutely isolate from the group" (Faculty Interview: H-2).

One participant said:

We create a special culture by coming together in the morning around seven. If anyone comes in at 8.30 a.m. (the timeline of the university is at 8.30 a.m.), it is unusual. We have morning talks with coffee and something to eat. At lunchtime,

we eat at the table in our workplace. We spend a lot of time together. It helps build relationships (H-4, personal communication).

Many teachers laughed when asked about the relationships within the organization, because to them, “working at FHCA is like within the family” (H-2, H-3, H-4, interviews).

Several made comments about how individualism and isolationism do not play a part of the FHCA:

"Individualism is not quite practical here" (H-4, personal communication).

"I myself do not like isolation. I realize that being with people gives me opportunity to learn. If we alienate ourselves, we will not learn as much so how we could learn to with others” (H-2, personal communication).

Collaboration is the mode of operation of FHCA:

Assistance was occurring in many situations. Since most teachers are able to teach interchangeably. This means that each teacher can teach all of the subjects about nursing and health care. When someone is sick or on-absence-leave the other teacher can manage the class instead of her peer, especially in the laboratory teaching. This is similar to the practices among nurses of changing their work-shifts for attending ward" (H-1, personal communication).

### Current Practices in Student Assessment

Current practices in student assessment in FHCA are diverse. One of the main reasons for this is because the faculty have quite a bit of autonomy in choosing their

student assessment strategies. The Dean explained that she delegates the decision of student assessment to the faculty members:

It's the academic freedom for the teachers to make decisions. No matter to be objective or subjective tests, I only made a remark that the subjective is justifiable in mid-term exam, and the other is for final one. This is due to the time is plenty during the middle of the semester. For the final can be the combination, as long as the faculty can finish their grades to the dateline, which is so near (Dean Interview).

The autonomy is curbed to some extent by University guidelines and collective goals and beliefs of FHCA. For example, the University mandate to give a final that counts 50% of the final grade, which many faculty disagreed with. "The mandate final test with 50% score or more is too much for student in single test, I would like to propose the accumulated score from class quizzes, and other from-time-to-time measurement...not exactly attendance, but punctuality the students performed" (Faculty Interview: H-3).

"The rule is final exam should not be 50%, I do not agree with that concept...I want it to be cumulative measurement...either from performance, academic activity types...like in the 'Farang' (western) institutions that keen in assessment and emphasize in the analysis approach" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

"I did not have the knowledge of teaching and assessment when I first came here three years ago with my Ph.D. The Dean is the primary teacher for me on the teaching and student assessment. I learned by doing with the review directly from the Dean. Then I learned from peer group" (H-5, personal communication).

Collective goals also curb autonomy to some extent, as alluded to by H-3:

The assessment begins since we recruited our new students. Knowledge, personality, and ethics must not be missed. When our nursing students are finished with the university enrollment process, our faculty will review them to make a finalization. We never missed. One-thirds or one-fourth is selected... This is the best way for them to be able to cope with our standards, including of our student assessment (H-3, personal communication).

H-4 explains:

I learn the methodology of student assessment since I was attended school for my nursing education (for bachelor's degree), after that I learn it again when I was oriented as new teacher and again and again with the new coming fellow teachers" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

"I think we do (objective tests) by the primarily concerned with standards, and the context of the subject as second. It is indeed suitable. Though not by our own will, but not by enforcement..."(Faculty Interview: H-3).

"Subjective test is obligated as quality test, but the objective test can be so, if well prepared... but need skilled teacher" (Faculty Interview: H-2).

"I like to have the mid-term test in the subjective type, and the final test in the objective type" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

"Objective tests are preferred by students, I guess. It is easy for them by just jot with the check mark. To answer the subjective tests, they have to think...how to hit the point and explain...Subjective (many) teachers as the method to measure and explore students in diversified dimensions will reference test. How they think systematically?

Objective test cannot notify. They let us learn students of knowing and not knowing...that is all" (Faculty Interview: H-5).

"There is the possibly of oral test in one-way or another. Case study methodology will be given to students with the three-minute allowance for thinking. The trend of this test types are limited to certain subjects and cannot be applied in general" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

"Current assessment is mostly with the objective approach. This is for fairness in scoring. The current objective approach is, though, understood that it can be qualifying or creative, but it is difficult to do so. Synthesis is my idea but the question is how to give score fairly. This implies the use of the combination, both of subjective and objective tests" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

"First or second year will be alright with objective test. But the later year in the third and the fourth years, it should be suited with subjective test. It will teach the students to be able to adjust to any new situations that will occur" (Faculty Interview: H-3).

"Subjective test is difficult to determine in some cases since many of them know the subjects but do not know how to write well, whereas someone write a lot but do not show any of the subject content. The objective test is not accurate more or less, since the students whoever look at the content that appears in the test accidentally is lucky to get good scores. The combination (between subjective and objective tests) may be a remedy in one level, but not at every problematic issues" (Faculty Interview: H-2).

"The possibility to do either way of traditional tests, all teachers never forgets to mention the time limit. Time points to the usage of objective test. Anyhow, the subjective

one is not proper for the teachers who lack the credential properties as teachers, since bias will induced easily. Bias must be eliminated by no student identification at the test papers" (Faculty Interview: H-5).

Purpose of Testing. From the Dean's point-of-view, many faculty members confirmed that the major purpose of the assessment was the improvement of student learning. Bloom's Taxonomy with its 6 cognitive domains was emphasized during the interviews. Assessment was consistently seen as integral to an effective learning environment.

For example:

"Depend on the subject too...tough subjects, like anatomy, microbiology, pathology...these subjects need memorization, not application. The ones that needs practices and application uses must rely on the essay test" (Faculty Interview: H-2).

"The test makes us understand the students' learning. Teaching is also being evaluated. In the ward (in hospital), we will monitor with test" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

FHCA as the faculty concerned with professional ethics, and the content of the test usually has some application to ethics. "It is in the case study type ...it is quite important that the nurse personnel must maintain since they are going to give the services to the patients who at the moment are the weak...situation in the test will relate to the answer with ethic involved" (Faculty Interview: H-3).

"The works of nurses implied with services to human, we try to establish the professional ethic to our students, for example, to keep the patients' secrets...that is the way we will bring to the test item with situation that stimulates the students to recall of ethical consideration" (Faculty Interview: H-4).

### The Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA)

There are 11 instructors in the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA). Among them are seven males and four females, one Dean, and one Assistant Dean. None of the members of FJA have Doctoral degrees, but ten have master's degrees and one has a bachelor's degree. There are 498 students in the 144 credit hour program.

The main objective of the faculty since its establishment in 1994 is to produce quality lawyers to serve the needs of Thai society. FJA claims to produce graduates with the expertise and knowledge to acquire prestigious careers and positions at all levels of the Thai workforce (University Website on-line)

The Dean administers the faculty with assistance from the Assistant Dean and a number of teachers assigned to different departments without holding the real titles of department heads. This is due to the small number of personnel in each department. "There is a distinct chain of command and hierarchy from the Dean downward to all the faculty members" (Dean Interview).

## Participants

Dean. The Dean is a significant figure in the hierarchy of the FJA. The Dean has a masters' degree in Juvenile Correction Administration from Arizona State University, and has experience as an instructor, lawyer, and judge in the Royal Thai Government. When he retired from the Thai government in 1994 at age 60 in 1994, he was invited by the President of Sala University to be Dean of FJA.

Faculty members spoke of the Dean in the following ways:

"The Dean acts as the highest administrator in the faculty" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"The Dean is the only person who informs and assigns our work in the monthly meeting" (Faculty Interview: J-3).

Faculty Members. Five of the 11 faculty members were participants for this study:

J-1 earned master's degrees in law from the largest public university in Thailand. She is modest in her speech, but she has a national reputation for her academic achievements in Thailand. She is in her late 20s, single, and desires to further her studies. She has been on the faculty for two years.

J-2 likes to speak straight forward--wrong is wrong and right is right. He has a master's degree in law from a famous law university in the country and has been in the FJA for three years. He was editor for his faculty law journal at the time of interview.

J-3 earned a master's degree from a prominent university in the United States. She is an outspoken person who has worked as a legal officer in a large corporation. She



views teaching “as a way of transferring her knowledge to her students.” She has been on the faculty for a year.

J-4 is in his early 30s and has been on the faculty about five years. He is a pioneer in the area of the legal aspects of technology, such as the Internet fraud.

J-5 is the Assistant Dean and in his early 40s. He has 15-years experience as a lawyer and owns a law firm. His expertise includes intellectual properties, partnerships and companies. He has no background in teaching or student assessment other than the new teachers orientation provided by Sala University.

### Work Environment

Faculty members feel that expertise in content, knowledge and certain areas of law are vitally important in the workplace. Some apply themselves to teaching, others for research, and others for studying for courses in order to update themselves with new laws. Those who advocate teaching consider themselves as “the social engineers to better community development” (Faculty Interview: J-2). Another said, “I am just learning about the teacher's life...I want to a strong conceptual framework in my students” (Faculty Interview: J-3).

The FJA occupies two halls in the second and third floors of Building 3 of Sala University. By rough measurement, the two halls are around 300 square meters. The work environment is quite like the Thai traditional workplace, with seniority, respectfulness, rituals, and a hierarchical atmosphere. The Dean said, “ I think of myself as a senior lawyer, senior in age and experience. Part-time teachers may specialize in one

particular area of law ...In my policy, I use the participate approach by letting everyone involved in the meetings from time to time, or at least once a month" (Dean Interview).

"Not all the members have the intention to remain as a teacher forever, but as long as you work here the loyalty to the faculty must be obligated or committed. Make the organization better and develop as much as possible. In the same tone, the organization must provide the compensation for the long services of the members with titles, and other rewards in response" (Dean Interview).

"Openness, generosity, and friendliness are easily to get here. We are presumably from the same university, or at least the same field of study--law, whatever what branches diversified...Seniority is also the tool...It seems to me...positions do not work here, since everyone is equal in this organization...Assistant Dean and (pseudo) Department Head are closely like brothers, Dean is almost other generation, we respect him differently" (Faculty Interview: J-2).

"Generosity is being able to listen and opposing ideas of other teachers. In the faculty meetings, the generosity in FJA is moderately; one who has better reasons will be accepted. Openness is also moderately, when working together and finding obstruction, they will consult and reveal those point-of-views, including bring forward to Dean.... Seniority is always a consideration.

Administration. The FJA administration is described as "top-down" with a distinct "chain of command" by many. One senior faculty member said: "The top management is the Dean. The position of associate dean was established for years, but it was vacant for a number of years until now (J-2 Interview). J-5 concurs:

At present, after the Dean, there will be an assistant dean who will be responsible for the works that only assigned for him from the Dean. If no order to do anything, the assistant dean will perform the ordinary works as the same with another classroom teacher. There will be department heads to take care for particular group or groups of subjects. Unfortunately almost of the department heads are their own bosses, they perform the functions of head and the subordinate under their own administration (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"Many of the assignments, especially the project for the faculty, are assigned to many teachers who have shown leadership and willingness to perform the tasks enthusiastically" (Faculty Interview: J-1).

Other faculty members clarify:

First, is the procedure that the Dean directs the teachers directly? In the academic work, he will consult with the head(s) and all teachers in the department. Second, the Dean informs the assistant dean and let the man does the assigned works for him. The assistant dean, in this case, will transfer the needs that required by the Dean to the heads. Assistant dean in another case will be assigned each time to take place of the Dean when he will not be in office, or cannot perform his duty for certain time. The rule and regulation in the faculty is to follow the university reinforcement. Faculty is not specified differently. By traditionally, division of work is already be distinguished by the academic degrees, specifically the major subjects, to assigned work in teachings, in meetings, or in seminars (J-4 Interview).

“Regard to one senior teacher, the assistant dean is responsible as the second in rank on the hierarchical chain of command. Otherwise, he can perform any duties to take place for the Dean in full task, whereas the assistant dean does the dean's job whenever the latter wish to consent to the assistant dean respectively or in any single intention (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"Our Dean told us (in the faculty meeting) of the assistant dean's responsibility as the temporary delegation of authority. By this, we will let the assistant dean checks our job that was only assigned to him. If not delegated to him, we report directly to the Dean" (Faculty Interview: J-4).

"Administrator will be the mainstream of the organization with the leadership traits. The Dean with more vision, and more systemic will better develop the faculty tasks" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

The Dean is not viewed as an autocrat because he desires his faculty to have creative ideas and does allow for some autonomy in certain areas: "We let the teachers decide on their own choices in curriculum settings, teaching styles and including student assessment, with the exception of only essay type is fixed to go in the same direction. A little bit more of the test is recommended, i.e., the purpose is for the decision-making type, rather than rote memorizing type" (Dean Interview).

From the top to the bottom of the line, there will be different points of view, and not all the subordinates look at administration the same way. One seems to dislike the administration with hierarchical procedures." ... The field of law study is extended nowadays without the proper knowledge of administrator to manage. The administrator

may need the new information. Structure of the faculty should be restructured" (Faculty Interview: J-2).

"It seems to me that ...if there is one rule, the Dean himself is the rule" (Faculty Interview: J-2).

### Labor and Social Activities

Labor and social activities are commingled in FJA to a limited extent, due primarily to general University activities that all university faculty attend. Teachers also join together for meals during weekdays and sometimes accompany fellow teachers to certain assignments outside the campus. As one faculty member said, "There is a hierarchy, but there is also openness, friendliness...a close relation" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

Cooperative work is typically the norm and work in isolation rarely happens in FJA. There is really only one exception to this and it entails a faculty member who chooses to isolate himself from the group. This is due to a space phobia he has, but he does join the rest of the FJA staff in certain activities.

There is a tendency for strong cooperation in the workplace. They can leave classes for personal businesses while their substitute for their classes. This is because there is a sense of respect for others expertise and abilities and also a sense that what is good for FJA is good for individual faculty members. As one faculty member said, "it is all for one and one for all" (Faculty Interview: J-3)

“From the familiarity with each other, my colleague and I are likely to help one another. When I become the editor of faculty journal, the fellow teachers help me in every way. When anyone needs me, I do not hesitate to help him or her too” (Faculty Interview: J-2).

There is a philosophical assumption by most of the faculty that “to work cooperatively is good” (Faculty Interview: J-2, J-3, and J-4). The merging of labor and social activities is viewed as good for the FJA as a whole. As the Dean mentioned, "Some teachers may like to be separated from the faculties in the short period of time, but most of them are enjoying being with the group. There may be one exception from the long time teacher who prefers his solidarity" (Dean Interview).

"There is some social contact among the faculty members. Sometimes at work, and sometimes after work" (Dean Interview).

"Faculty gathering and chatting is everyday events with the current issues from politics, government, world events, and at last but not least on the academic jobs that assigned to anyone" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

### Motivation

"At the present time, the salary and incentive for the judges, attorneys, law officers in the government agencies are approximately three times higher than other careers. Also, the higher Royal Decoration Orders are offered for judges in a shorter period of time of services. Besides that, the age of retirement for the law career in juristic

branch is extended to 70 years old. This is certainly attractive to many teachers (Dean Interview).

When asked about the motivation that influenced them, there were diverse views. One theme was self-motivation. Some were motivated by the institutional goals. And the third theme was a mixture of the above.

"I do both of the work assigned by the faculty, but I also do the work I assigned for myself, in which I preferred better" (Faculty Interview: J-3)

The work that most people do is the work assigned to the group rather than working individually. This one is echoed by one teacher, "mostly initiated in the faculty meeting, and it is good to do this kind of job since we need cooperation to succeed" (Faculty Interview: J-1).

Monetary compensate for position is not the real motivation, since there is no real exist or the incentive is quite small to be inspired. But it is good to be recognized as an administrator by such entitled.

"I think I will try my best. I do not look for the outcomes and promotion. I would like to develop whatever I did to be the best" (Faculty Interview: J-4).

"To be promoted I think it will depend on academic work including the development of pedagogy...research also...(Faculty Interview: J-3).

"Self-motivation should be the mainstream of the faculty, because the law people can get more money in other legal careers. The ones who become teachers are not for the compensation" (Faculty Interview: J-2).

## Communication

Most of communication is based upon the face-to-face approach. But in many cases teachers believe that FJA's practices are likely to be performed in writing. This is due to its own nature of the law work in general. Face-to-face communication may be easy to perform, but it must be supported by written documentation.

"Title makes no difference, only the exception of the Dean as the top management. But when he got sick that will be a problem" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"The process of interaction between dean and his fellow members is either on the job or out of the job. It may be either face-to-face with the informal atmosphere or formal type, like in the faculty meeting, record is kept (Faculty Interview: J-5).

Dean likes contact with all of his subordinates by talking informally with them and visiting their offices. "The contact in the party type, or take a trip to other provinces, does not happen much. They enjoy each other in the workplace mostly" (Dean Interview).

## Student Assessment

Almost all the student assessment practices are the same in FJA. Subjective tests are the traditional practices that all of the FJA teachers are accustomed to. Assessment activities in FJA were developed by faculty alone, or by the university administration. FJA practices reflect the majority of student assessment practices and preferences at Sala University. The only difference is they use a subjective approach exclusively with the essay test at the final exam, and no mid-term exams.



The faculty explained that the students seem to like this approach because it is predictable and graduates always get good placement in jobs and career path. A number of graduates continue their graduate studies in many prominent public universities.

"I learn the method of tests from the experience I was a student and the observance from the tests that some teachers make them. The third approach was from consult with my advisor that I was acquainted long time ago. The fourth approach was based on the contemporary events that were important as societal problems with the law" (Faculty Interview: J-4).

FJA believed that the most effective method of assessing the quality of student learning was likely to be traditional, essay, subjective testing with legal application. In reality, these were considered as the only valid way. In addition, faculty members continued to express suspicion of the misuse of assessment with other methods.

The Dean confirms the importance of the essay test type, "The reason of law matters must be tested in subjective approach that needs discretion, not for rote learning. A case study is usually introduced. This is accordance to the capability of the teachers who usually comprehend knowledge of being lawyers or with master's degrees to master their knowledge in one field or another. The part-time teachers in the faculty even have more qualified experiences (Dean Interview).

FJA expressed frustration regarding the amount of time devoted to assessment. Faculty members in FJA also expressed concern regarding those aspects of student learning they considered as a practical in law school. This sentiment was captured in a number of the faculty interview.

"Though the teachers know the limitation of the narrow scope of essay type, they see the necessity of its demand for the profession. Writing in the legal language needs much of the practices. Graduates from the law school should be condemned in case of unable to write the lawsuit appropriately" (Faculty Interview: J-4).

"I told my students that I will not give lecture on the same thing that the textbooks provides. Teaching will be different from the text content. And the test will be different from all of those" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"I am not concerned too much on current practices of student assessment. This is because the law subject as so-called the last science (on earth) since it adjacently adapted to the last event of social interaction...the test must be up-date by its methodology...not to produce the same pattern of graduates...no thinking... but conformity" (Faculty Interview: J-2).

"When everything is conceived and approved by the Dean and University, the frame should be set and announced in order to let everyone in the organization does the same thing" (Faculty Interview: J-3).

"The various type of objective student assessment, such as multiple-choice test, may lack of the decision-making, only for rote learning. Guessing is inevitable. The case study that required subjective approach will let the students go toward the decision and memory in the same time. The students have to come up with the component of the law before solving the case. This difficulty has made many students fail in studying law. The disadvantage of subjective test is only the limit of the scope of context to be covered. Hence, the test is within the limit, suppose one-fourth; the students have to study the whole texts anyway. The only thing that worries us now is the only final test will not be

good enough, in the event that the student are sick or cannot do well at that final test day he has no other opportunity. It is just a single event. The Ministry of University Affairs has declined to accept this rigidity by allowing the private universities to have a mid-term exam but should not be more than 30% of the total score. The final exam must not less than 70 % and must include the whole texts not cutting apart from the mid-term exam. But in practice, there is no change now" (Dean Interview).

Many teachers confirm the traditional practices of the subjective test from their learning experiences, and from their own teachers' experiences. "Essay test is a blueprint for law school and there is no plan to change" (Faculty Interview: J-1, J-2, J-3).

"In reality, the practice of objective test with multiple-choice type is impossible for law school. It is a mandatory...I think of the introduction of open-book exam, because it should not involve rote memorizing" (Faculty Interview: J-5).

"I think even we use multiple-choice test but with in-dept analysis, this will be the remedy for multiple-choice advantage" (Faculty Interview: J-3).

"Fellow teachers cannot change the idea of new method beyond the essay test. It must come directly from the faculty dean or from the university" (Faculty Interview: J-1).

The combination in general, is the middle-way of remedy in traditional concept of the society without any research support. The combination will bring together the advantage points of assessment.

There are arguments from many teachers to use the combination, since they are not in favor of the objective test. The combination will lead students to answer the subjective items without the reference to the objective items. This is due to the perception that there should not be repetition in each other. When the item is in the objective test, the

subjective will skip it; this is thus unreasonable to answer the subjective with those specific issues. If the combination is available, every teacher is quite certain of the students' preference, i.e.; the objective test will be their first priority to do.

Many teachers denote the difficulty and time spent for creating the objective test.

"The trend of the change is difficult in the near future since almost of the law school administrators who also represent the national association for law schools in private universities are rather familiar with one type of the test, i.e., the subjective test" (J-2, Interview).

FJA concerns with only QA but not in the university scheme of ISO 9002. All of these implications are expected the good results to the testing administration. Though some of them are still underway.

"The innovation of QA/ISO 9002/NEA 1999, are concerned at one level. There are the records, evidence, etc., but to specify particularly, the ISO 9002 is not much involved. The NEA 1999 is not effective yet. I think it is possible to invent the new student assessment...but with clear-cut transparency (Faculty Interview: J-4).

"The effect of those mechanism will change the concept of testing. Teacher will be more aware of the testing, since it will be the document to be checked. Everything will be disclosed, no more of hidden or shelved in our faculty. Quality is needed" (Faculty Interview: J-1).

Faculty is still the dominant factor to direct the decision on test administration (Faculty Interview: J-2).

## Summary of FHCA & FJA

This chapter presents the descriptions of FHCA and FJA, with emphasis on their respective workplace norms, participant perceptions, and assessment practices. FHCA and FJA each have distinct cultural contexts and assessment practices. For instance, FHCA is an egalitarian environment with a flat chain of command. There are no preferences for specific kinds of tests, but rather there is preference for diversity and experimentation in student assessment. FJA is more of a corporate environment that desires conventionality and conformity in assessment. One faculty member commented, "What is good for one is good for all" (J-2, Interview). In the following chapter each faculty will be viewed through the lens of Douglas's Grid and Group Typology. Douglas's offers a language that can help the reader understand and distinguish the cultural nuances more significantly.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS

“Culture, no matter what it is bounded, makes us nervous. The symptom of it, if known, will be the remedy, or in higher degree of “nirvana,” of all illness, if any” (Garber, 1998).

The previous chapter presented descriptions of the Faculty of Justice Administration and the Faculty of Health Care Administration developed from interviews, observations, and pertinent documents. A questionnaire was also used as a preliminary, but not exclusive, data source in this study to assist in determining the grid/group category of each site studied. The questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed based on the anthropological framework for organizational culture provided by Mary Douglas (1982).

This chapter provides analysis of these narratives in the case presentation format described by Lingenfelter (1996), focusing on the following features of the social environment: the playing field (work environment); the players (people at work); and the rules of the game (rules and roles at FHCA). The questionnaire results will be discussed first for each college in order for the reader to gain an awareness of the initial, approximate grid/group category of each college. The analysis following the questionnaire results reinforces and complements these initial findings.

It is important to remind the reader that the dimensions of grid and group in this typology are on a continuum, and any environment under study is not static, but rather, in constant flux and change to some degree. So in this discussion the faculties will be categorized according to the data obtained and with the understanding that in reality the environments are in constant shaping.

## The Faculty of Health Care Administration

### Questionnaire Results

A total of six out of 18 (33 percent) FHCA faculty members answered the questionnaire. The Associate Dean sent an initial email request on my behalf to faculty members. Additionally, she sent two follow-up emails requesting that faculty members respond to the online questionnaire.

Grid Questions. 23 of the responses were in the low grid category, while 21 were high grid. The questions that indicated low grid included:

Item # 2: Work and labor activities seen either self-directed.

Item # 3: Instructor rank and roles are achieved by individual productivity.

Item # 4: Authority structures are decentralized.

Item # 5: Communication channels are informal.

Item # 7: Hiring and placement decisions are decentralized.

Item # 8: Curricular decisions are individually negotiated.

Group Questions. 28 of the responses were in the high group category, while 15 indicated low group. The questions that best portrayed clearly high group are following:

Item # 11: Work and labor activities are initiated and planned collaboratively by the collective group.

Item # 12: Authority is corporate, with clear accountability by members.

Item # 15: Hiring and replacement decisions are corporately regulated and made by the faculty.

Item # 16: Social activities and work are commingled.

#### Playing Field (The Work Environment)

Grid Considerations. FHCA has focused on creating a pervasive environment for the ultimate goal of molding a good health care person. The goal of providing a pervasive environment to meet this end extends to all an environment of learning and on-going assessment. Individual faculty members are provided choice and opportunity in the work environment that includes all types of testing options.

The environment is designed for faculty and student choice and opportunity. Because of the flattened chain of command, the pervasive autonomy, especially the faculty members' individual freedom to choose which assessment strategies and opportunities to take advantage of, this work environment is considered low-grid.

Group Considerations. In FHCA work and social activities are commingled, group goals for assessment are paramount, and there is corporate ownership of the



assessment strategies, indicating a high-group environment. When faculty members have questions or need assistance regarding student assessment, they confer with each other or go directly to the Dean. The communication is unhindered by walls or partitions and there is an egalitarian atmosphere.

Students are able to take advantage of this free form of communication as well. This work environment is an example of a high-group social system that organizes and manages resources for the benefit of the whole.

### The Players (People-at-Work)

Grid Considerations. Like many other higher education institutions, the roles in FCHA included administrators, faculty members, and students. Since all of these roles were dedicated to the common mission of molding a good health care person, role distinction seemed to fit best on the lower end of the grid continuum. The Dean was clearly the leader of the group, but she had a very decentralized, laissez-faire leadership style, which is an example of low-grid.

Many of the instructors negotiated their responsibilities to include teaching and clinical practice in addition to administrative responsibilities. The Dean and Assistant Deans expressed similar values. Their desire and efforts to participate in the same activities as the faculty members in the college indicates a low-grid environment.

Faculty members combined their talents for team teaching endeavors. Teaching teams were comprised of a variety of FHCA instructors. This situation is indicative of a

low-grid, task/goal system in which individual assignments change in accordance with the goal or need at a specific time (Lingenfelter, 1996).

The curriculum was designed to offer a variety of opportunities for students, an indication of a low-group environment

Group Considerations. The relationship between individuals in different roles was described as creating “a family environment” by many faculty members. These descriptions indicate a high-group environment, in which the entire group shares a focus and corporate labor involves extensive social interaction among the participants (Lingenfelter, 1996). Not only do faculty members interact extensively together on teaching teams, but also students and staff voices are heard and expertise is valued as well.

Authority within the college is organized corporately, with clear accountability for individual responsibilities. The administration clearly saw its role as one of providing an environment for faculty members to take advantage of opportunities. Faculty members collaborated on teaching teams to create opportunities for students within the curriculum. Work and social activities are commingled, which is another high group criterion. Comprehensive assessment support was offered to faculty members as well as to students, and evaluation of goals and guidelines were determined at the faculty level. Lingenfelter (1996) described work in a high-group environment as “corporately organized cooperation.” This description is fitting of FHCA.

## Rules of the Game (The Rules and Roles of FHCA)

Grid Consideration. The game, as described in this study, was faculty member preferences for the use of student assessment. In FHCA, traditional classroom use of teaching and assessment appeared to be undergoing some transformation. While the instruction was still dominated by lecture a concern regarding updated teaching and assessment practices was evident.

The faculty members were motivated more by self-defined interests, a low-grid concept. Faculty members reported using assessment primarily to enhance learning. The typical faculty member in FHCA was seen as someone who thinks outside the traditional “box” and is “not a performer”. These motivations represented intrinsic factors that outweighed the absence of extrinsic rewards for teaching and assessment in the FHCA.

An important thing to recall here is that many of the senior teachers were government officers in either hospitals or departmental agencies under the Ministry of Public Health. They expressed the 'freedom' of working in the FHCA environment as opposed to the restricted government places (Faculty Interview: H-3 and Observation). They understand that they have quite a bit of freedom in the roles and rules that impact them. Position (or title) does not obstruct in communication or delay any processes.

Group Considerations. In a high-group environment, the institution decides which risks are socially acceptable and which are not (Gross & Rayner, 1985). Sala University sets general guidelines which outline assessment criteria. In this sense, the university

takes a large part of the risk while allowing faculty the freedom to instruct and test students as they see fit. This is really the best of both worlds for faculty members.

Also, the rules for assessment are implicit or tacit rather than explicit and defined. In short, the faculty can choose any form of student assessment they desire.

### Summary for FHCA

The actual development and implementation of assessment activities are done generally through university rule and order, but primarily through the FHCA faculty. Strong centralization of the test implementation on the University level has never occurred. The control over student assessment tends to be under the control of the faculty with guidance from the FHCA dean. In sum, in FHCA there is/are:

- A low-grid/high –group Collectivist work environment;
- An inclusive, team approach to teaching and assessment;
- Multiple processes for identification of assessment activities;
- No consensus regarding the ability to assess all aspects of student Learning;
- A decentralized implementation for student assessment (faculty driven);
- A strong sense of common mission and purpose on the faculty;
- A variety of testing strategies utilized, however, there is a slight preference for essay tests for some teachers;
- A desire to use modern testing strategies and progress into the Twenty-first Century.

The categorizing of FHCA in Douglas Typology can be seen in Figure 2.

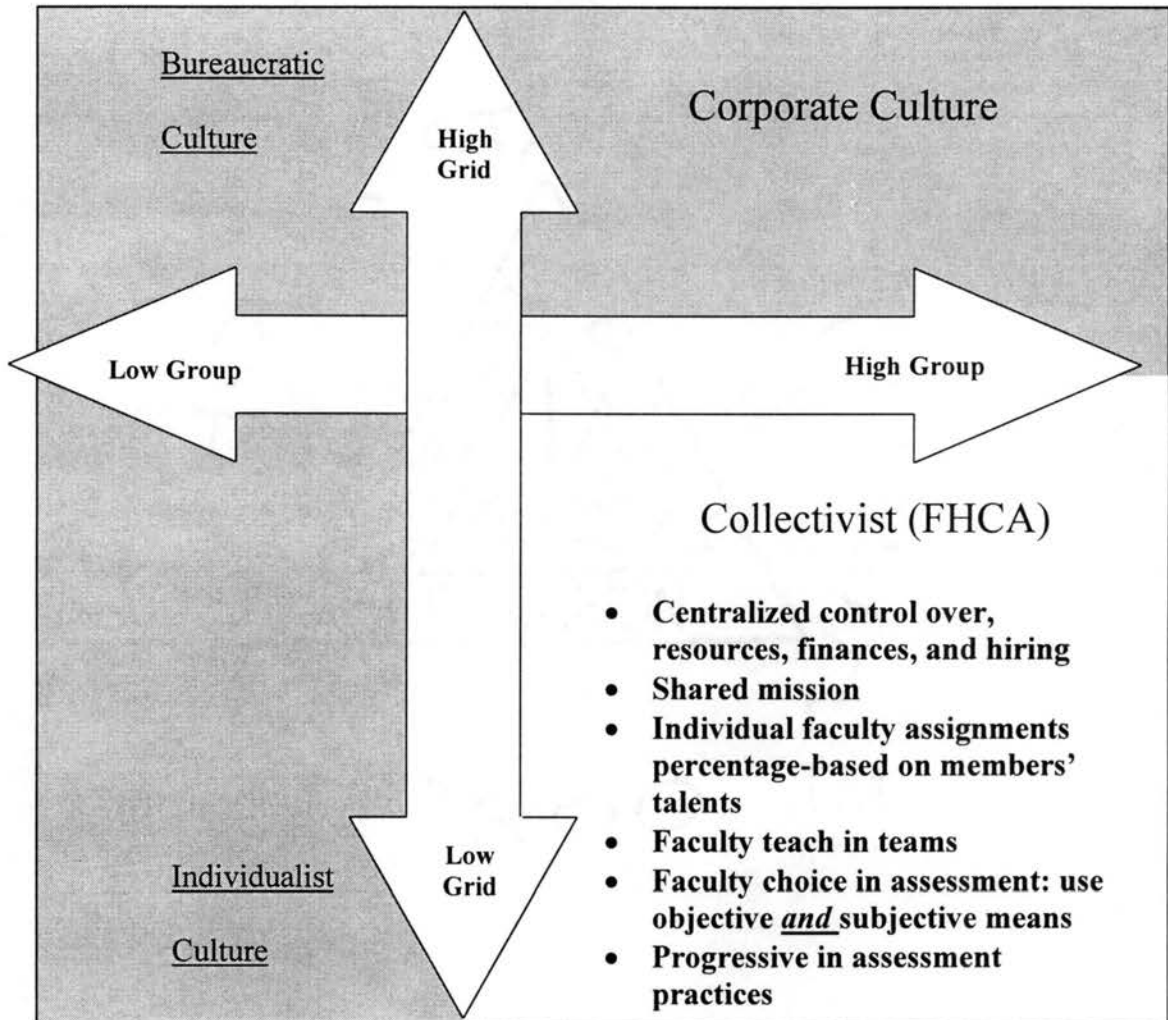


Figure 2. The Faculty of Health Care Administration Grid and Group Typology

### The Faculty of Justice Administration

#### Questionnaire Results

A total of six out of 19 (31 percent) FJA faculty members answered the questionnaire.

Grid Questions. 31 of the responses were in the high grid category, while 11 were low grid. The questions that most clearly indicated high grid included:

Item #1: Fiscal resources are allotted to faculty by the administration.

Item #4: Authority structures are centralized.

Item #9: Institutional rewards motivate instructors.

Group Questions. 34 of the responses were in the high group category, while nine indicated low group. The questions that most clearly indicated high group included:

Item #13: Communication flows through corporate regulated/maintained processes.

Item #15: Hiring and placement decisions are corporately regulated.

Item #16: Social activities and work are commingled.

Item #18: Student assessment practices are for the betterment and success of the FJA in the long run.

As mentioned above, the dimensions of grid and group in this typology are on a continuum. The initial grid and group category for the FJA was Corporate (High grid, High Group). Other data collection efforts revealed a similar pattern.

### Playing Field (The Work Environment)

Grid Considerations. Typical of a high grid culture in which property is viewed as a status symbol, Administrators in FJA were in separate offices from faculty members, and their workspaces were nicer than the typical faculty member's office (Lingenfelter,

1996). Communication patterns and practices in FJA were also formal between administration and employees, but there was a lateral communication flow among instructors.

Work related tools in a high-grid environment are allotted to faculty by the college or unit administration. The Dean in FJA had much say in decisions regarding student assessment. A strict centralization of authority, however, did not characterize FJA, and it was sometimes hard to determine whether it was centralized or decentralized. In general terms the work place can be described as a moderately high-grid environment with strong leadership that allows for some autonomy among the instructors.

Group Considerations. In a high group culture, ownership and management of property and resources are organized for the benefit of the whole group (Lingenfelter, 1996). FJA reflected this environment in relation to the playing field. Physical spaces were maintained at a college level and goals and practices for the individual faculty members were largely determined by group goals and practices. Also, the communication flows were not only high grid in structure, but the regulation and maintenance of those systems were maintained by group considerations. This is a strong indicator of a high group environment in which communication flows primarily through corporately regulated or maintained processes (Lingenfelter, 1996).

## The Players (The People at Work)

Grid Considerations. The players within a social environment endorse and act out certain roles. In high grid environments title, role and the rules associated with those roles are valued. Lingenfelter (1996) described a role as the specialization of labor into tasks that are marked by differences in skill, authority, and compensation. Differences in roles were evident among FJA administrators and faculty members. In addition to differences in roles, grid placement can also be assessed by rule, or the regulation of a worker's schedule, productivity, relationships, and compensation by those who direct the labor process (Lingenfelter, 1996). In FJA, the administrative model was one of moderately strong rule, indicating a high grid environment.

A typical high-grid, structured authority structure was prevalent in FJA. Repeatedly, the Dean was described as a "strong, capable leader." One faculty member's description of an administrative emphasis on "top-down control" was reflected throughout the faculty.

A high grid environment also typically features an administration consciously involved in maintaining group goals through the hierarchical roles that exist. In this culture, group goals take precedent over individual goals. It was apparent that the Dean desires to get input from faculty members when developing vision for the college, but when it is all said and done, he makes the ultimate decisions. However, although the division between administration and faculty members was pervasive there was no animosity toward the administration; quite possibly, because Thai culture is pervasive with hierarchy, and that has been a successful *modus operandi* in that culture.



In a high-grid environment, hiring and placement decisions are centralized and made by administration rather than by a collective process involving players of different hierarchical roles. Decision-making and power clearly rested with the FJA administration.

Group Considerations. Within a high-group environment, work can be described as corporately organized cooperation (Lingenfelter, 1996). While individuals in this type of environment have separate work activities, the group may call on members to participate in corporately organized activities. This description fits FJA well. Individual faculty members perform separate work activities in accordance with his or her personal interests and professional discipline. Faculty groups plan schedules and details of courses to be offered within their disciplines. Decisions on faculty assignments are made according to group needs and goals.

### The Rules of the Game

Grid Considerations. The game, as described in this study, was faculty member preferences for the use of student assessment. The preference for assessment seemed to center on traditional methods of testing, especially the essay and subjective tests.

The administration sets the tone and precedents for activities in FJA, which is an example of a high-grid environment. If the faculty member is not successful, he or she risks not being reappointed, tenured, or promoted. This process is indicative of a high-

grid environment, in which authorities and experts make the decision to set risks at a certain level and set standards to mitigate risks (Gross & Rayner, 1985).

Student assessment practices and policies were outlined with general specificity in university policies, and faculty across the University had leeway on selecting strategies. However, the faculty in FJA did assessment all in the same manner. That is, they all gave subjective, essay tests. There were opportunities for faculty members to obtain special training in this area. When faculty members took advantage of these opportunities, they were expected to produce a return on the college's investment.

Group Considerations. While the FJA itself was the largest determinate of how assessment strategies are carried out, student assessment practiced were based primarily on tradition. In a high-group environment, the institution decides which risks are socially acceptable and which are not (Gross & Rayner, 1985), and in this case it was far less risky to go with the flow of the faculty than to develop new ways of assessment.

Lingenfelter (1996) discussed the importance of time within a social environment. He noted that the calendar spells out the particular arrangement, sequence, and time frame with which activities and relationship occur. Within FJA, faculty members' activities adhered to a traditional semester course schedule. Faculty members were expected to teach the same amount of course hours regardless of how much extra time was required to spend on developing new testing strategies in their courses.

## Summary

FJA is a high-grid, high-group, corporate environment. For FJA the way things have been done in the past concerning student assessment is fine for now and the future and what is good for the individual is good for the whole. The common processes of identifying and developing assessment activities of FJA are summarized in the following:

The Dean is the primary figure involved in development of assessment strategies; traditional testing in the form of subjective, essay tests is the primary strategy for assessing student learning.

The faculty members of FJA expressed distrust for other assessment types; Assessment is seen as time intensive. Figure 3 depicts FJA on the Douglas Typology below:

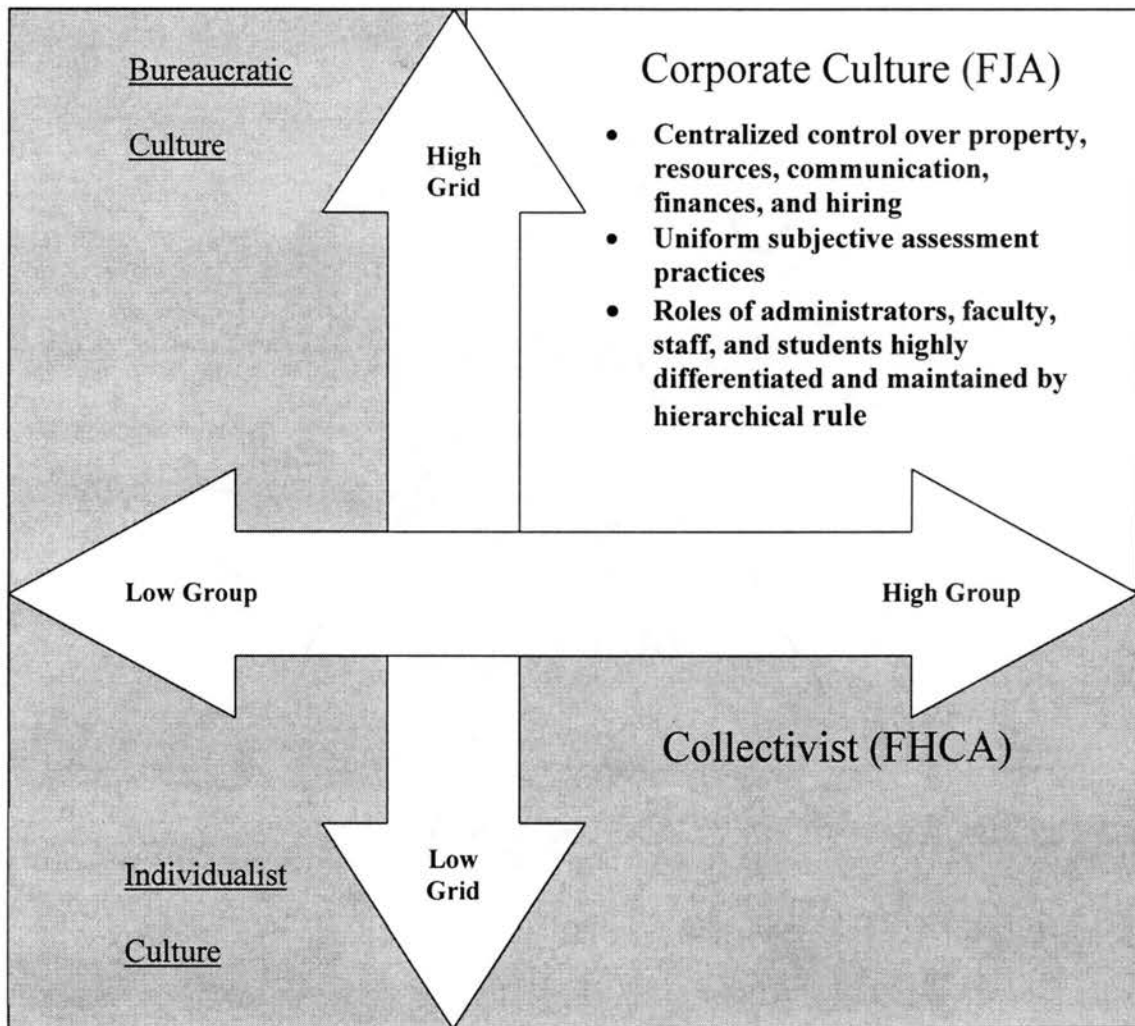


Figure 3. The Faculty of Justice Administration's Grid and Group Typology

### Comparing FHCA and FJA

This study looked at the organizational cultures and assessment practices of two faculties at Sala University, namely Faculty of Justice Administration and Faculty of Health Care Administration. Based on the data the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA) was categorized as a Corporate Culture in Douglas's typology and FHCA was classified as a Collectivist Culture. That is, the FJA was a High-Grid/High -Group and

FHCA was Low-Grid/High-Group. The obvious similarities were in their Group dimensions and their obvious differences were in their Grid dimensions.

In strong group environments work is corporately organized, interaction and work are co-mingled, rewards are group-focused and the organization, itself, is seen as a life support system for the whole. These things characterized both FJA and FHCA. As mentioned above, the cultural characteristics that distinguished the two faculties were Grid related.

FJA is high-grid because of the emphasis on role and status, and individual identification is heavily derived from being lawyers or judges before. Status is achieved rather than ascribed; roles are basically hierarchical, but the insulation factor between classes is moderate due to the family atmosphere. Status and leadership roles are governed by competence. In this traditional and contemporary hierarchy the administrators are the high-ranking authority for judges, and distinct lines of expertise are drawn in the realms of academics and administration.

FHCA, on the other hand, is more the egalitarian in its regard to individuals. That is, status is not very important, work and labor activities are more self-directed, authority structures are more decentralized, communication channels are informal, and curricular and assessment practices are individually negotiated.

Important to this discussion is how culture influences preferences. According to Douglas preferences originate in the social environment, and the cultural bias of each environment stems from a distinctive way of looking at the world (Douglas, 1982). The Corporate environment (e.g., FJA) tends to exert pressure on individuals to adopt hierarchical and more traditional preferences toward life strategies and practices. The

Collectivist social context (e.g., FHCA) tends to apply pressure on individuals to assume more egalitarian and autonomous views of life preferences. It is not surprising to those who espouse Douglas's Theory that FJA was a hierarchical environment that preferred traditional testing over modern strategies, while the more egalitarian faculty of FHCA preferred a wide variety of assessment strategies and promoted an unrestricted use of instructional and testing practices. Table 5-1 below summarizes the salient grid and group features of the two faculties and contrasts their assessment preferences.

Table -5-1

MAINPOINTS FOR CULTURAL COMPARISONS BETWEEN FHCA AND FJA

In work Environment: Grid/Group

Work Environment	FHCA	FJA
Grid	<p>-Work and labor activities seen either self-directed (low grid), or authority directed (high grid) with the tendency to the latter category.</p> <p>-Instructor rank and roles are achieved by individual productivity (low grid)</p> <p>-Authority structures are decentralized (low grid)</p> <p>-Communication channels are informal (low grid)</p> <p>-Hiring and placement decisions are centralized (high grid), but some feel the tendency of decentralized (low grid)</p> <p>-Curricular decisions are individually negotiated (low grid) but some feel of the institutionally prescribed (high grid)</p>	<p>-Work and labor activities are authority directed (high grid)</p> <p>-Instructor rank and roles are ascribed by administration (high grid)</p> <p>-Authority structures are centralized (high grid)</p> <p>-Communication channels are formal (high grid)</p> <p>-The same with FHCA (high grid and low grid)</p> <p>-Curricular decisions are unanimously to institutionally prescribed (high grid)</p>
Group	<p>-Work and labor activities are initiated and planned collaboratively by the collective group of FHCA (high group)</p> <p>-Authority is corporate, with clear accountability by members (high group), but some feel that the authority</p>	<p>-Work and labor activities are initiated and planned collaboratively by the collective group of FJA (high group)</p> <p>-Many feel that authority is ambiguous and fragmented (low grid), but a few feel that it is corporate with clear</p>

	<p>is ambiguous and fragmented (low group)</p> <p>-Communication flows primarily through individual, informal networks (low group) whereas a few feel of its flow through corporately regulated/maintained processes (high group)</p> <p>-Hiring and replacement decisions are corporately regulated and made by the FHCA (high group)</p> <p>-Social activities and work are unanimously commingled (high group)</p>	<p>accountability to members (high group)</p> <p>-Communication flows through corporate regulated/maintained processes (high group)</p> <p>-Hiring and replacement decisions are corporately regulated and made by the FJA (high group)</p> <p>-Social activities and work are unanimously commingled (high group)</p>
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In Student Testing: Grid /Group

Student Testing	FHCA	FJA
Grid	-Self-defined interests motivate instructors (low grid) but a few feel of the institutional rewards as motivator (high grid)	-Institutional rewards motivate instructors (high grid)
Group	<p>-Student assessment practices are for betterment and success of the FHCA in the long run (high group), but some feel opposite (low group)</p> <p>-Productivity is evaluated according to individual goals and priorities (low group), but there are still the faculty members who think of group goals and priorities of FHCA (high group)</p>	<p>-Student assessment practices are unanimously by faculty members as for betterment and success of the FJA in the long run (high group)</p> <p>-Productivity is evaluated according to group goals and priorities of FJA (high group)</p>



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, BENEFITS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary of the Study

Although there has been innovation in student assessment and pressures to use new, progressive and innovative assessment strategies, many higher education faculty members in Thailand are still using traditional methods. Why do certain individual faculty members prefer to use innovative and varied testing strategies and others do not? Mary Douglas would say that assessment preferences and, in fact, *all* preferences are influenced by culture. Using the lens of Mary Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Typology, the purpose of this case study was to answer the following:

1. What is the "Grid and Group" make-up of the two faculties studied?
2. How does this "Grid and Group" composition affect assessment practices and preferences of these faculties?
3. What research-findings do not fit in the Grid and Group Typology?
4. How useful is Douglas in understanding student assessment?

The participants in this explanatory case study included higher education faculty members within the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA) and the Faculty of Health

Care Administration (FHCA) at Sala University, a large private institution in Thailand. The two faculties were selected because of their distinct practices in student assessment.

Multiple methods, including interviews, observations, document analysis, and a questionnaire, were used for data collection. The purposes of data collection and analysis were to characterize each faculty within the cultural contexts presented in Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Typology and to present the data findings in reference to the framework and literature.

Data analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously throughout the data collection phase. Triangulation of data was accomplished by comparing multiple sources, such as questionnaire responses, documents, interview transcripts, observation field notes, purposive sampling, and rich description.

### Summary of the Findings

Findings in this study indicated that there were similarities and differences in the cultures of the two faculties studied and differences in their assessment practices. The overall cultural context that best described each college was different. For instance, the FJA was best described as a Corporate (high grid/high group) culture, while the FHCA best fit in the Collectivist (low grid/high group) category. The major cultural similarities were in the group dimension of the Douglas Typology, because high group is common in the Corporate and Collectivist environments, which characterized FJA and FHCA respectfully. The major cultural differences dealt with grid issues, as Corporate environments are high grid and Collectivist settings are low grid.

The findings also suggested patterns of student assessment preferences and practices in each faculty. The FJA (Corporate) was deeply entrenched in traditional, subjective, essay type testing, while FHCA (Collectivist) was far more egalitarian, diverse, and progressive in its strategies. Moreover, FJA had no plans to change from their traditional approaches, and FHCA desired to progress even farther in their student assessment knowledge and practices.

### Conclusions

The research questions that guided this study are discussed below.

What is the Grid and Group makeup of each college?

FJA was plotted in the Corporate (high grid/high group) quadrant. Douglas (1982) characterized the Corporate culture:

1. The social experience of the individual is constrained by the external boundary maintained by the group against outsiders.
2. The individual's identification is derived from group membership.
3. Individual behavior is subject to controls exercised in the name of the group.
4. A hierarchy pyramid of role levels exists with greater individual power at the top of the pyramid.
5. Group survival and perpetuation of tradition are of utmost importance.

Corporate cultures are typically "tradition-bound institutions in which everyone knows his place, but in which that place might vary with time" (Gross & Rayner, 1985, p. 31). This aptly described the hierarchy of roles and traditional testing practices of FJA.

Gross and Rainer (1985) also imply that in corporate settings the group functions for the good of the whole, or as one respondent said, “What is good for one is good for all.”

In Corporate environments the administration is consciously involved in maintaining group goals through the hierarchical roles that exist. FJA administration was often referred to as having “top-down control.” Control over resources, finances, and hiring decisions was exercised at the administrative level. The Dean was somewhat insulated from faculty members in terms of physical space and power, but there was not an oppressive atmosphere in FJA. Also, social relationships within a corporate context are shaped by the goals and standards of the group, which was certainly the case in FJA.

In contrast, the FHCA was best described as a Collectivist (low grid/high group) culture. Douglas (1982) provided further characterization of this culture:

1. The individual’s identification is derived from group membership.
2. Individual behavior is subject to controls exercised in the name of the group.
3. There are few formal specialized roles. Role status is competitive, yet because of the high group influence, rules for status definitions and placement are more stable than in low group societies.
4. The perpetuation of corporate goals and group survival is important.

These descriptors of the Collectivist culture suggest a group that is cohesive and works to maintain values and standards in the existing group, yet egalitarian values are dominate. FHCA fit this description well. Unambiguous roles allowed for more negotiation in decisions. Specific faculty member assignments were negotiable, and faculty members had freedom in selecting various instructional and testing strategies, as long as those strategies fell in the purview of Sala University guidelines.

Leadership in the Collectivist culture tends to be charismatic and lacking clear rules for succession. The Dean in FHCA was clearly a charismatic figure and served to create an environment in which the FHCA's mission could be carried out. Also, in a typical Collectivist culture, the group does not allow competition of role status to overshadow the main focus of maintenance of group actions and standards.

How does the "Grid and Group" composition affect assessment practices and preferences in these practices?

The findings of this study suggested a connection between the grid/group typology of a higher education institution and the cultural members' assessment practices and preferences. However, a strict, predictive, one-to-one correlation between grid/group and assessment was not a certain conclusion. That is, the relationship is not necessarily a predictive one, but it very possibly is, because perpetuation of tradition is one characteristic of Corporate (e.g., FJA) environments, while role and rule are not as prevalent in Collectivist (e.g., FHCA) cultures.

What can be said conclusively from the evidence from this study is the following:

1. there were two very distinct cultural contexts studied;
2. FJA was a Corporate/Hierarchical Context, the faculty members practiced and preferred traditional, essay type testing, and they were not planning on changing; and
3. FHCA was Collectivist/Egalitarian Context, and the faculty members practiced and preferred a wide range of testing methods, including progressive, modern ones.

What research findings do not fit in the Grid and Group Typology?

Douglas (1989) noted, “The most interesting questions [grid/group] is designed to answer are about attitudes, values, and established thought patterns which correlate with particular grid/group positions” (p. 175). The data collected served to answer questions about attitudes, values, and established thought patterns regarding assessment as well as to establish a distinct placement within the typology. Most of the data collected and consequent finds did fit the typology, because the typology was very instrumental in developing the research questions and data collection strategies.

How useful is Douglas in understanding student assessment?

The model was very useful in understanding assessment, because it is geared to understand how culture affects preferences and practices. Since every social environment has its own distinctive features and characteristics, each environment must be studied separately if one is to understand the dynamics of values and practices within the environment in the context of the larger culture. In the cases of the two faculties, the framework was useful in understanding why faculty preferred and valued certain assessment practices. The faculty in FJA, a Corporate environment, prefer traditional, essay tests, and the faculty in FHCA, a Collectivist environment, prefer to use varied student assessment

### Benefits

The findings from this case study impacted theory, research, and practice. Following is a discussion of these areas.

## Research

Significant research efforts have been undertaken to explain the various forms of assessment reform and how assessment can enhance the instructional process. I have referred to those studies in Chapter II of this study. However, there have not been any specific studies that have addressed the relationship between assessment preference, practices, and organizational culture. Hagner (2000) addresses the importance of this kind of research, “If institutional culture is an important consideration affecting the success or failure of teaching transformation, innovators must consider the systemic characteristics rather than the “practice” characteristics prior to transformation” (p. 32).

The significance of using Douglas’s (1982) Grid and Group Typology as the theoretical framework in this study lends credence to research calling for a cultural perspective of student assessment. Thus, using Douglas’s typology in this qualitative study served to enhance the knowledge base of assessment from an organizational culture perspective.

## Theory

Douglas’s (1982) Grid and Group Typology made two primary assumptions:

- that an individual will fail to make any sense of his surroundings unless he can find some principles to guide him to behave in the sanctioned ways and be used for judging others and justifying himself to others, and

- that the social context of an organization serves to permit and constrain effects upon individuals' choices (Douglas, 1982, p. 190).

In accordance with these assumptions, Douglas's framework was useful as a descriptive tool focusing on higher education faculty members' student assessment preferences. Its effectiveness in identifying the cultural context of two faculties assisted in examining the relationship between cultural context and preferences and practices of various forms of assessment.

While Douglas's typology hasn't been used for this specific purpose, it has been successful in describing particular social units and constructs such as work cultures (Mars & Nicod, 1984), career expectations (Hendry, 1999), higher education (Lingenfelter, 1992), and school culture (Harris, 1995).

### Practice

This study provided implications for practice related to the nature of assessment and higher education settings. This study provided insights into how and why faculty members choose and are motivated to various assessment strategies, and the theoretical framework helped put into perspective on faculty preferences.

The findings of this study indicate benefits to leadership decisions related to student assessment in higher education settings. The ability to identify the cultural context of an organization and its relationship assessment will allow leader(s) in the organization to bring the pieces of this puzzle together into a complete picture. As a leader in an educational institution, a critical role is to acclimate faculty members into the



institution's culture. While this may appear to be a simple task, actually defining the culture and providing for the social integration into this culture is often an elusive process. This study will assist leaders in realizing the necessity of understanding the organization's cultural context and providing a method for studying that context.

### Recommendations

Several recommendations for further research related to this study must be noted. This framework could be applied to other faculties within Sala University or to colleges within other higher education institutions in order to develop patterns that might move beyond description to a more predictive mode.

Gross and Rayner (1985) illustrated the use of Grid and Group Typology as a change model. Research using Douglas on how institutions are changing as a result of national reform efforts is warranted. Conducting a longitudinal study to illustrate stages of change on one or both of the cases presented in this study would also be beneficial.

The applicability of Douglas's typology to assessment in a higher education setting was successful enough in this study to warrant further research. Selection of specific constructs such as leadership, risk, labor, and resources would focus the research more clearly than allowing such constructs to emerge naturally from the data, as occurred in this study.

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APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University  
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 11/8/02

Date: Friday, November 09, 2001

IRB Application No ED0233

Proposal Title: A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF CULTURE AND STUDENT TESTING IN  
THAILAND

Principal  
Investigator(s):

Wiroj Tirakungovit  
308 Willard  
Stillwater, OK 74078

Edward Harris  
325 Willard  
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and  
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

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Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

  
Carol Olson, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B  
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

GRID/GROUP TYPOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE  
For the Faculty of Health Care Administration

**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

**Position (check one):**

- Full Professor    Associate Professor    Assistant Professor    Administrator  
 Other (Please Explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Below are 18 pairs of statements. For each pair mark the statement that BEST represents your work environment in the Faculty of Health Care Administration (FHCA). Please remember to keep in mind the entire FHCA, but NOT Siam University as a whole, as you answer each question.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Fiscal resources are obtained through individual competition or negotiation  | <input type="radio"/> Fiscal resources are allotted to individuals by the administration (i.e., either Department Head, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator).    |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Work and labor activities are authority directed.  | <input type="radio"/> Work and labor activities are self-directed.   |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Instructor rank and roles are ascribed by administration (i.e., either Department Heads, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator). | <input type="radio"/> Instructor rank and roles are achieved by individual productivity.   |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Authority structures are decentralized.  | <input type="radio"/> Authority structures are centralized.  |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Communication channels are formal.   | <input type="radio"/> Communication channels are informal.   |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Financial resources are obtained through individual competition or negotiation.  | <input type="radio"/> Financial resources are allotted to the faculty by the administration (i.e., either Department Head, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator). |
| <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>   |  |

○ Hiring and placement decisions are decentralized; made by the instructors and/or other non-administrative employees.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are centralized; made by administration (i.e., either Department Head, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator).

○ Curricular decisions are individually negotiated.

○ Curricular decisions are institutionally prescribed.

○ Institutional rewards motivate instructors.

○ Self-defined interests motivate instructors.

○ Instructors individually control fiscal resources.

○ Fiscal resources are corporately controlled by the FHCA.

○ Work and labor activities are initiated and planned collaboratively by the collective group of FHCA.

○ Work and labor activities are initiated and planned by individual instructors.

○ Authority is ambiguous and fragmented.

○ Authority is corporate, with clear accountability to members.

○ Communication flows primarily through individual, informal networks.

○ Communication flows through corporately regulated/maintained processes.

○ Financial resources are corporately regulated/maintained.

○ Financial resources are individually regulated/maintained.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are corporately regulated and made by the FHCA.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are individually regulated and made by instructors and/or non-administrative staff.

○ Social activities and work are kept separate activities.

○ Social activities and work are commingled.



Productivity is evaluated according to individual goals and priorities.

Productivity is evaluated according to group goals and priorities of FHCA.

---

Student Assessment practices are for the betterment and success of the individual students in the long run.

Student Assessment practices are for the betterment and success of the FHCA in the long run.

GRID/GROUP TYPOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE  
For the Faculty of Justice Administration

**PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

**Position (check one):**

- Full Professor    Associate Professor    Assistant Professor    Administrator  
 Other (Please Explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Below are 18 pairs of statements. For each pair mark the statement that BEST represents your work environment in the Faculty of Justice Administration (FJA). Please remember to keep in mind the entire FJA, but NOT Siam University as a whole, as you answer each question.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Fiscal resources are obtained through individual competition or negotiation | <input type="radio"/> Fiscal resources are allotted to individuals by the administration (i.e., either Department Heads, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator). |
|---|--|

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Work and labor activities are authority directed. | <input type="radio"/> Work and labor activities are self-directed. |
|---|--|

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Instructor rank and roles are ascribed by administration (i.e., either Department Heads, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator). | <input type="radio"/> Instructor rank and roles are achieved by individual productivity. |
|--|--|

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Authority structures are decentralized. | <input type="radio"/> Authority structures are centralized. |
|---|---|

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Communication channels are formal. | <input type="radio"/> Communication channels are informal. |
|--|--|

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Financial resources are obtained through individual competition or negotiation. | <input type="radio"/> Financial resources are allotted to the faculty by the administration (i.e., either Department Heads, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator). |
|---|---|

○ Hiring and placement decisions are decentralized; made by the instructors and/or other non-administrative employees.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are centralized; made by administration (i.e., either Department Heads, Subject Area Chiefs, or other Faculty Administrator).

○ Curricular decisions are individually negotiated.

○ Curricular decisions are institutionally prescribed.

○ Institutional rewards motivate instructors.

○ Self-defined interests motivate instructors.

○ Instructors individually control fiscal resources.

○ The FJA corporately controls fiscal resources.

○ Work and labor activities are initiated and planned collaboratively by the collective group of FJA.

○ Work and labor activities are initiated and planned by individual instructors.

○ Authority is ambiguous and fragmented.

○ Authority is corporate, with clear accountability to members.

○ Communication flows primarily through individual, informal networks.

○ Communication flows through corporately regulated/maintained processes.

○ Financial resources are corporately regulated/maintained by the FLA.

○ Financial resources are individually regulated/maintained.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are corporately regulated and made by the FJA.

○ Hiring and placement decisions are individually regulated and made by instructors and/or non-administrative staff.

○ Social activities and work are kept separate activities.

○ Social activities and work are commingled.

Productivity is evaluated according to individual goals and priorities.

Productivity is evaluated according to group goals and priorities of FJA.

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Student Assessment practices are for the betterment and success of the individual students in the long run.

Student Assessment practices are for the betterment and success of the FJA in the long run.

APPENDIX C  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

### **Administrator Questions**

1. Please describe the faculty in which you work?
2. How would you define student assessment?
3. How do the instructors in your faculty define student assessment?
4. How does faculty use student assessment?
5. What kinds of student assessments are used in your faculty?
6. Why does your faculty use student assessment in this manner?

### **Faculty Member Questions**

1. Please describe the faculty in which you work?
2. How would you define student assessment?
3. How do you use student assessment in your courses?
4. How does your administrator define student assessment?
5. What kinds of student assessment do you use?
6. Why do you use student assessment in this manner?

APPENDIX D  
INTRODUCING MARY DOUGLAS

## INTRODUCING MARY DOUGLAS

### Brief Historical Background

Mary Douglas is the former Margaret Mary Tew, who was born in San Remo on 25 March 1921. She was the first child of Phyllis Margaret Twomey (1900-33) and Gilbert Charles Tew (1884-1951).

This British anthropologist is frequently cited even by non-anthropological authors, and when one reads essays and dissertations by students of psychology, medicine, social work or psychotherapy, her name comes to light more than of any other social anthropologist, even Evans-Pritchard, who was once her teacher at Oxford, or Malinowski (Littlewood, 1998).

After her born in Italy in 1921, Mary Douglas took her first and doctoral degrees at Oxford where she studied with Edward Evans-Pritchard. Her fieldwork was done among the Lele of the then Belgian Congo, and the result of this research inspired much of her subsequent writing. Most of her academic career was spent progressing from lecturer to professor at University College, London, which she left in 1977 to become Director of Research on Culture at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York, then Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities at Northwestern, and Visiting Professor in the Department of Religion at Princeton, before retiring from formal academic commitments and returning to live in London.

Mary Douglas was the recipient of the Society for Social Studies of Science's 1995 Bernal Prize. Steven Shapin (1994) gave a very remarkable citation on that day for showing what Mary Douglas's contribution to the society. "For almost thirty years Professor Mary Douglas has been telling academics why the consideration of such things



might properly belong within the same inquiry, and why it is important that they be thought about together. And for those whose most viscerally located instincts bridle at any such suggestion, she has offered, and continually refined, a set of resources for the comparative study of culture, its forms, biases, and uses" (Shapin, 1994).

Four prominent themes were praised for the splendid work of the award (Shapin, 1994). First, she introduces culture to attention, to acknowledge of nature, and specifically proved of cosmological and taxonomic notions, as embedded within systems of accountability. Culture was then restored in its grassroots and it is modified after its foundation as people use it more and more. It is believed to be a tool in everyday social action. There is no fundamental problem of the relationship between culture and social action. Because culture is the means by which social is accomplished, by which members say 'good' and 'bad' about each other's actions, and by which they recognize them as actions of a certain sort. Second, knowledge, including natural knowledge, is treated as constitutively social. For Mary Douglas anything but a fully general social epistemology followed from a misunderstanding of the sort of thing knowledge was. Third, beliefs and representations become knowledge--a collective good--by successfully making the transition from the individual to the communal, the private to the public. The achievement of credibility is a practical problem attached to all beliefs: no belief or representation shines by its own lights, carries its credibility with it. And credibility, as Mary Douglas remarks, depends so much on the consensus of a moral community that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that a given community lays on for itself the sum of the physical conditions which it experiences. Finally, Mary Douglas develops a set of techniques for the systematic comparative study of "cultural bias." Cultural diversity has

finite forms, and, because these forms do not map onto existing Great Divide theories, the comparative study of cultural bias by Mary Douglas, has the capacity to join up the linkages of any differences, even those who study primitives and those who study the modern stuffs.

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VITA

Wiroj Tirakungovit 2

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

DISSERTATION: A GRID AND GROUP EXPLANATION OF CULTURE AND FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT TESTING IN A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN THAILAND

MAJOR FIELD: Higher Education

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Personal Data: Born in Bangkok, Thailand, on January 12, 1946, to the son of Mr. Lert and Mrs. Thongbai Tirakungovit.

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