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**Abstract**

Recent studies have indicated that, while there is a great deal of interest among both governments and institutions in inter-institutional cooperation, the terminology of cooperation is confused and imprecise. Mergers are sometimes characterized as being an extension of inter-institutional cooperation, sometimes they are regarded as separate, unique, and situated on a plane or continuum different from that of such structures as federations and consortia. Yet, in generic terms, mergers share a number of characteristics with other forms of cooperation, and are often pursued for the same reasons. This study investigates the origins and motivations of inter-institutional cooperation in order to show that the various forms of cooperation, including merger, are part of a single evolutionary continuum. Next, it develops a lexicon or taxonomy of inter-institutional cooperation. Finally, it discusses the directions that inter-institutional cooperation might take in the future along that continuum. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Lang, Daniel W., E-mail: dan.lang@utoronto.ca