Chapter 2 sets up the analysis pursued in subsequent chapters. It does so through a focus on the “risk communication” strategies deployed by local universities that sought to secure funding and support for their bids for an NBL. It was in those strategies that the local civic dialogue began in each civic and community context. It is in part the great similarity in risk communication strategies, coupled with variable local response, that makes comparing them so informative. Chapter 2 provides an important justification for the book’s comparative argument: that variation at the community level was mostly a function of local civic dynamics, not distinctive university risk communication strategies. In the context of established civics and discourse, even an issue like biodefense, while “new,” was locally understood via events, experiences, and beliefs that were a priori to it, requiring an analysis of such civic dimensions to apprehend and explain local response.

This chapter reports the chemical weapons (CW) prohibition regime's two core goals of disarmament and nonproliferation. It also describes two cross-cutting issues that are affecting several areas of the evolving regime. These are, on the one hand, universality and national implementation and, on the other, scientific and technological developments of relevance to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Nonproliferation presented the second core goal of the CW prohibition
regime. With respect to the CW prohibition regime, the most pertinent national measures are contained in Article VII of the Convention. The adoption of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Action Plan on National Implementation was a major step to rest on and improve the initial Article VII activities. It is possible that there are to be five hard cases of states that will not ratify or defer to the CWC unless major political changes occur that go well beyond the scope of the regime.