

International Higher Education: Reflections on Policy and Practice

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Table of Contents

PREFACE	xi
INTRODUCTION	xiii
PART 1	
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES	
1 What Higher Education Does Right: A Millennium Accounting	3
2 Global Challenge and National Response: Notes for an International Dialogue on Higher Education (with Todd M. Davis)	7
3 The Crisis in Multinational Higher Education	15
PART 2	
GLOBALIZATION	
4 Higher Education and the WTO: Globalization Run Amok	23
5 GATS Redux: The WTO and Higher Education Returns to Center Stage	29
6 Knowledge and Education as International Commodities: The Collapse of the Common Good	33
7 Why the United States Will Not Be a Market for Foreign Higher Education: A Case Against GATS	41
PART 3	
INTERNATIONALIZATION	
8 The Perils of Internationalizing Higher Education: An Asian Perspective	47
9 American Accreditation of Foreign Universities: Colonialism in Action	51
10 Foreign Study: Changing Patterns and Competitive Challenges	55
11 International Higher Education: America Abdicates Leadership (with Hans De Wit)	59
12 Internationalize American Higher Education: Not Exactly (with Patti McGill Peterson)	63

PART 4

RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

13	The Costs and Benefits of World-Class Universities	71
14	The Dilemmas of Ranking	77
15	A World-Class Country without World-Class Higher Education: India's 21st Century Dilemma	81
16	The Tyranny of Citations	87

PART 5

ECONOMIC ISSUES

17	Who Is Paying for Higher Education—and Why?	93
18	Let the Buyer Pay: International Trends in Funding for Higher Education	97

PART 6

PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION

19	The Rise of the Pseudouniversity	103
20	The Anatomy of Private Higher Education	109
21	Private Higher Education: Themes and Variations in Comparative Perspective	113
22	The Private Sector in Asian Higher Education	119

PART 7

THE DILEMMA OF CORRUPTION

23	Academic Corruption: The Continuing Challenge	125
24	The Question of Corruption in Academe	129

PART 8

THE ACADEMIC PROFESSION

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 25 | The Deteriorating Guru: The Crisis of the Professoriate | 135 |
| 26 | Academic Salaries, Academic Corruption, and the Academic Career | 139 |
| 27 | Contradictions of Academic Development: Exploiting the Professoriate and Weakening the University | 143 |
| 28 | The American Academic Profession: Future Challenges (with Martin J. Finkelstein) | 147 |
| 29 | Cosmopolitanism Run Amok: Work and Rewards in Asia's Universities | 151 |
| 30 | Evaluating and Rewarding Professors: Mexican Style | 155 |

PART 9

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 31 | Academic Freedom: International Warning Signs | 161 |
| 32 | Academic Freedom in Hong Kong: Threats Inside and Out | 167 |

PART 10

CURRENT ISSUES

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 33 | What's In a Name? How Universities Sow Confusion and Cheapen Academe | 173 |
| 34 | Students: Politics and Revolution | 177 |
| 35 | The University of Buenos Aires Model for the Future of Higher Education: A Neglected Perspective | 181 |

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----|
| | ABOUT THE AUTHOR | 187 |
|--|-------------------------|-----|

Preface

All of the contents of this book appeared in *International Higher Education*, the quarterly publication of the Boston College Center for International Higher Education. The pieces were selected for their timeliness but have not been revised for this publication. In some cases, statistics or other details may have changed in the subsequent period of time. Subscriptions to *International Higher Education* are available without cost; and *IHE* is available on the Center's website (<http://www.bc.edu/cihe>).

The work of the Center is funded by the Ford Foundation and the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. We are indebted to Edith Hoshino, who edited all of the chapters in this book and manages to keep a high standard of language and logic in the Center's publications. Salina Kopellas assisted with the preparation of the manuscript, as well as the Center's other publications.

Philip G. Altbach
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
August 2006

Introduction

The themes in this book—globalization, the role of the research university, the academic profession, academic freedom, private higher education, and others—are all central to the contemporary debate about higher education worldwide. Higher education is affected by the broad worldwide trends known as globalization. These include the revolution in information technology; the questioning of the ideal of higher education as a public good and the concomitant decline of state funding and the privatization of public higher education; massification and the ever-increasing demand for access; private higher education; the role of English; and the growing hegemony of world science—as well as other factors. The interplay between these broad factors, the policies for higher education, and what happens on campuses throughout the world is of great concern in these articles.

The reality of 21st century higher education is a combination of the global, the national, and the local. The broad trends of globalization are not, in general, the result of specific policies but rather the result of an increasingly integrated world economy. Governmental policy, the influence of multinational corporations, multilateral actors such as the World Bank and the European Union, and technological change all contribute to the direction of higher education worldwide. A few cases, such as the World Trade Organization's efforts to open higher markets in higher education through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), contain specific initiatives. For the most part, however, factors such as the massification of higher education worldwide drive policy. Academic institutions as well as government authorities must deal with the implications of mass higher education as the central force in contemporary academe.

This book addresses these and other central themes in higher education policy and practice in a comparative perspective. Some of the articles focus on specific countries—such as India, Mexico, and Argentina—to illustrate more general themes. Academic freedom, world rankings of universities, the professoriate, international students, and other topics are analyzed in a broad comparative framework. These presentations and interpretations are not, in the strict sense of the term, research based but rather draw upon contemporary reality to analyze policy and practice.

The purpose of this book is to stimulate thinking about some of the central issues of higher education today. The reader may not agree with all of the interpretations or conclusions—but if thoughtful reflection is stimulated, the goal has been achieved.

Part 1
Comparative Perspectives

What Higher Education Does Right: A Millennium Accounting

The new millennium is upon us. The challenges are daunting—access, expansion, privatization, distance education, technology, and the rest. But let us take a minute to reflect on the successes of the past half century in higher education before we get too depressed about the prospects for the future. The fact is that higher education is a major force in practically every society and that on balance academic institutions have met severe challenges with reasonable success. The universities are at the center of today's knowledge-based economies. The postsecondary system has provided access to unprecedented numbers of students. With more than 100 million students enrolled worldwide, higher education has moved from an elite enterprise to a mass phenomenon. These are real accomplishments that are all too often forgotten in the waves of criticism dominating the popular press in many countries. It may be useful to enumerate some of academe's accomplishments.

Massification and Differentiation

Most countries have successfully expanded their higher education systems. Massification has been accompanied by a differentiated academic system of institutions with a variety of purposes operating at different levels of quality. The traditional research university is still the pinnacle of most academic systems, but it is no longer the sole model for postsecondary education. Most wealthy and middle-income countries now educate more than 30 percent of the relevant age group in postsec-

ondary education; this is up from under 10 percent or less just two to three decades ago. Many developing countries have doubled access as well. This unique wave of expansion worldwide has added to the knowledge and skills base of society.

Research

Universities are the key research institutions in most countries. They are the central source for basic research, and as such have provided the underpinning of many of the innovations of modern society. To take just one field, the basic technology that went into the computer and the Internet itself had their origins in universities. Universities are the essential sources of new knowledge in almost all fields. They combine research with teaching in an atmosphere of free inquiry that provides the necessary conditions for productive research.

Social Mobility

Higher education provides unprecedented opportunities for social mobility and improvement in most societies. Bright students from poor backgrounds are able to obtain an education and improve their prospects. Everywhere, higher education increases income levels. Academe has opened up to women practically everywhere, with more women obtaining degrees and joining the academic profession. Inequalities remain, but progress has been impressive.

Differentiated Funding

In most countries, academe has found multiple sources of funding. While government in many places remains the key fiscal base for higher education, postsecondary education now obtains money from a much wider array of sources. These include students and their families, philanthropic foundations and individuals, corporations that pay for research and development, consulting fees, patent and other income, and even the sale of sweatshirts. Less dependence on a single source of money has to some extent insulated academe from the vagaries of governmental policies.

Internationalization

Postsecondary education is more international than at any time since its origins in medieval Europe, when the common language of instruction was Latin. An unprecedented number of students—more than one million—are studying outside the borders of their home countries. There is an international academic labor market, with scholars and researchers routinely crossing borders for jobs. Perhaps most impor-

tant, knowledge production and dissemination are international in scope, with research teams cooperating across borders and much of scientific communication taking place in English—in many ways the Latin of the 21st century. The curriculum is slowly becoming internationalized as well; and some parts of the world, most notably the European Union, are moving toward common degree structures and mutual recognition of academic qualifications.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Inquiry

While there are still restrictions on research and, in some cases, teaching and expression in a number of countries, academic freedom has made remarkable progress in the past half century. There is a recognition that for academic institutions to be effective they must be allowed freedom of inquiry.

Higher Education and the Civil Society

Universities contribute to the cultural and political life of modern society. They are not only the source of expertise on everything from genetic engineering to classical Greek, but are also the place where controversial issues are debated in an atmosphere of inquiry. Universities are among the few places in modern society where objective analysis takes place. It is not surprising that so many respected experts hold appointments in universities. Academic institutions are central to a civil society and have been able to maintain their independence under sometimes difficult circumstances.

Academic institutions are not perfect, yet they have been remarkably successful during a half century of challenges. Their much criticized conservatism has permitted them to maintain their core values—autonomy, commitment to research and teaching without intellectual restrictions, and the conviction that ideas are important. At the same time, they have adapted to new circumstances. Differentiated academic systems have joined the elite universities, the curriculum has been broadened. Back in the 1960s, British scholar Sir Eric Ashby characterized the US academic system as “any person, any study.” At the beginning of the 21st century, much of the world has joined the United States in offering academic diversity to large numbers. This is a considerable accomplishment.

[Winter 2000]

Global Challenge and National Response: Notes for an International Dialogue on Higher Education

Higher education has profoundly changed in the past two decades, and those involved in the academic enterprise have yet to grapple with the implications of these changes. Academic institutions and systems have faced pressures of increasing numbers of students and demographic changes, demands for accountability, reconsideration of the social and economic role of higher education, implications of the end of the Cold War, and the impact of new technologies, among others. While academic systems function in a national environment, the challenges play themselves out on a global scale. We can learn much from both national experiences and international trends. Ideas and solutions from one country or region may be relevant in another.

Since academic institutions worldwide stem from common historical roots and face common contemporary challenges, it is especially appropriate that international dialogue take place. A comparative and global approach to thinking about higher education benefits everyone. The experience of one country may not be directly relevant to another, but issues and solutions touch many nations. This essay has several key aims:

- to highlight issues in higher education that face many countries and about which an international discussion can contribute insights;

- to contribute to the internationalization of higher education through discussion of international initiatives and linking of people and institutions committed to a global perspective and expanded international programs;
- to create a network of colleagues and centers working in the field of higher education worldwide in order to foster ongoing dialogue, communication, and possible collaborative research; and
- to link policymakers, key administrators, and the higher education research community in a creative dialogue on the central issues facing contemporary higher education.

We see this essay, and the discussions that we hope it will stimulate, as a first step in an ongoing discussion. We are especially concerned to link “North” and “South” in a discussion that has been for so long dominated by the industrialized countries. We are convinced that there is much that can be learned by considering the experiences of countries and systems worldwide.

While it may not yet be possible to think of higher education as a global system, there is considerable convergence among the world's universities and higher education systems. The medieval European historical origin of most of the world's universities provides a common antecedent. The basic institutional model and structure of studies are similar worldwide. Academic institutions have frequently been international in orientation, with common curricular elements and in the medieval period a common language of instruction (Latin). At the end of the 20th century, English has assumed a role as the primary international language of science and scholarship, including the Internet. Now, with more than one million students studying outside their borders, with countless scholars working internationally, and with new technologies such as the Internet fostering instantaneous communications, the international roots and the contemporary realities of the university are central.

Higher education systems have also been moving from elite to mass to universal access, as Martin Trow pointed out in the 1960s. In North America, much of Europe, and a number of East Asian countries, academic systems approach universal access, with close to half the relevant age group attending some kind of postsecondary institution and with access increasingly available for nontraditional (mainly older) students. In some countries, however, access remains limited. In China and India, for example, despite dramatic expansion, under 5 percent of the age group attends postsecondary institutions. In some countries with

relatively low per capita income, such as the Philippines, access is high, while in some wealthier nations, it remains a key point of challenge. Throughout Africa, access is limited to a tiny sector of the population. Access is an increasingly important issue everywhere, as populations demand it and as developing economies require skilled personnel.

Demands for access come into conflict with another of the flash-points of controversy of the present era—funding. Higher education is an expensive undertaking, and there is much debate concerning how to fund expanding academic systems. Current approaches to higher education funding emphasize the need for “users” to pay for the cost of instruction, as policymakers increasingly view higher education as something that benefits the individual, rather than as a “public good” where the benefits accrue to society. This new thinking, combined with constrictions on public expenditures in many countries, have meant severe financial problems for academe. These difficulties come at a time when higher education systems are trying to provide expanded access. Higher education’s problems have been exacerbated in many of the poorer parts of the world by the idea, popular in the past several decades and stressed by the World Bank and other agencies, that basic education was most cost-effective; as a result, higher education was ignored by major lending and donor agencies. Now, higher education is back on the agenda of governments and multilateral agencies just as academe faces some of its most serious challenges.

Academic systems and institutions have tried to deal with these financial constraints in several ways. Loan programs, the privatization of some public institutions, and higher tuition are among the alternatives to direct government expenditure. In many parts of the world, including most of the major industrialized nations, conditions of study have deteriorated in response to financial constraints. Enrollments have risen, but resources, including faculty, have not kept up with needs. Academic infrastructures, including libraries and laboratories, have been starved of funds. Less is spent on basic research. Conditions of study have deteriorated in many of the world’s best-developed academic systems, including Germany and France. Students have taken to the streets in large numbers to protest declining budgets and poor conditions for the first time since the 1960s. There has also been a dramatic decline in academic conditions in sub-Saharan Africa and in some other developing areas.

While these trends, and the circumstances discussed below, vary to some extent from country to country, there is considerable convergence. Academic leaders worldwide worry about the same set of topics. Specific conditions vary from one country to another, and there are cer-

tainly major differences between the Netherlands and Mali. Yet, solutions from one country may be relevant, at least in terms of suggesting alternatives, elsewhere. For example, there is much interest in Australian ideas concerning “graduate tax”—repayment schemes based on postgraduate income. The United States, as the world's largest and in many respects leading academic system, experienced the challenges of universal access first, and American patterns of academic organization are of considerable interest elsewhere.

We live in a period of rapid change in higher education, a period when we can learn much from the experience of others. In short, higher education has gone global but with a variety of accents. These global concerns or issues are actually not discrete topic areas. They are better understood as issue clusters. The following related concerns are increasingly difficult to isolate and manage in a reductionist manner. A discussion of the short list of issue clusters follows.

The Issue Clusters

We identify several themes that seem to us to be central to current developments in higher education worldwide and deserve elaboration and analysis. These themes affect countries and regions differently, although we believe that all are relevant internationally and that a discussion of implications can promote comparative and national analysis.

Education and work are activities that should feed one another. The links and transition points from initial education to the workforce are weakly articulated. This is true in the developed world as well as in the developing world. Educators and business leaders rarely discuss, let alone agree upon, a set of skills and orientations that are prerequisites for successful employment. The formal structures by which education systems prepare students for tomorrow are similarly weakly developed. Models developed in Germany, through the linking of postsecondary education and apprenticeship arrangements, or the community college system in the United States are currently being explored in several areas. Professional education often links well to employment in many countries, but education in the arts and sciences is less well articulated. It is not clear how close the articulation can be, but the issues are worthy of further consideration.

While the initial transition from school to work may be poorly articulated, the demand for education throughout the life cycle is becoming apparent. Fed by rapid changes in technology and the creation of employment categories that did not exist 10 years ago, workers and employers must continually attend to the educational dimension. As the nature of work has evolved, so have the needs of those in the work-

force to continually upgrade their capacities. This has led to the development of a variety of educational forms beyond the bachelor's degree. In Germany, recent changes in the degree structure have led to the modularization of graduate degrees. In the United States, certificate programs and short-term courses of study are being rapidly developed. By one recent estimate corporations in the United States alone will spend \$15 billion over current expenditures by 2005 just to maintain current employee training levels. Others estimate that worldwide expenditures on training amount to many billions of dollars annually to ensure that their workforce has the skills necessary to compete in an ever competitive and high-velocity business environment. In many countries, especially in the developing world, graduate education is coming into its own as the need for advanced skills and for continuing education becomes increasingly clear.

It has become a point of banality to remark on the changes that technological developments have wrought. Indeed, many of the dislocations in school-to-work transition and the press for lifelong education are partially the result of these developments. More directly, however, technology has made possible a revolution in distance education that has important implications for the accreditation of educational institutions and assurance of quality in such circumstances. Technology is also beginning to have an impact on teaching and learning in traditional universities. It is also a truism that this technology is expensive, subject to rapid obsolescence, and requires high initial investment simply to get into the game. For many developing countries, cost is at present prohibitive, and it is precisely these areas where technology can provide the greatest short-term improvement. Technology is also central to the communication, storage, and retrieval of knowledge. The traditional library is being revolutionized by web-based information systems, as are the management systems of many universities. Technology is the least understood of the issue clusters discussed here and perhaps the one with the greatest potential for transforming higher education.

We have noted in passing the increase in the number of internationally mobile students. While this is an exciting and important trend, it is not without some serious consequences. As the market for individuals with transnational competencies has grown, so have opportunities for individuals with marketable skills in other countries. Currently the transfer of talent has been from developing countries such as India and China to the developed world. In the United States, the stay rates for advanced students in the engineering disciplines and the sciences can be higher than 75 percent for students from particular countries. From the perspective of national education authorities, these students may

represent a considerable hemorrhaging of talent that has been developed by the students' countries of origin. If nations are to develop, a means must be found by which talent can flourish in the soils that originally nurtured it. Related issues of internationalizing the curriculum and providing a global consciousness to students—including instruction in foreign language—and ensuring that the academic profession is linked internationally are central to any discussion of the internationalization of higher education.

Although seldom discussed, one of the areas of greatest expansion worldwide has been graduate education—the postbaccalaureate training for the professions as well as for science, technology, and teaching. Graduate education offers great opportunities for international links and cooperation. Countries can take advantage of graduate training capacities elsewhere, and the new technologies can provide key links. Highly specialized and advanced-level teaching and research deserve careful analysis.

The privatization of higher education is a worldwide phenomenon of considerable importance. In Latin America and some parts of Asia the fastest-growing parts of the academic system are private institutions. In Central and Eastern Europe, private initiative is also of considerable importance. Public universities are in some places being “privatized” in the sense that they are increasingly responsible for raising their own funds. They are asked to relate more directly to society. Students are increasingly seen as “customers.” The expansion of the private sector brings up issues of quality control and accreditation since in many parts of the world there are few controls as yet on private-sector expansion. Access is also a central issue. As some developing areas, such as sub-Saharan Africa, will soon be experiencing the growth of private institutions, understanding in a comparative context the problems and possibilities of private higher education is an urgent need.

The academic profession is in crisis almost everywhere. There is a rapid growth of part-time faculty members in many countries, and traditional tenure systems are under attack. The professoriate is being asked to do more with less, and student-teacher ratios, academic salaries, and morale have all deteriorated. The professoriate is being asked to adjust to new circumstances but is given few resources to assist in the transition. Without a committed academic profession, the university cannot be an effective institution.

Access and equity remain central factors but in the current policy context are sometimes ignored. While academic systems worldwide have expanded dramatically, there are problems of access and equity in many parts of the world. Gender, ethnicity, and social class remain seri-

ous issues. In many developing countries, higher education remains mainly an urban phenomenon and one that is reserved largely for wealthier segments of society. Although women have made significant advances, access for women remains a serious problem in many parts of the world.

Accountability is a contemporary watchword in higher education. Demands by funding sources, mainly government, to measure academic productivity, control funding allocations, as well as other issues, are increasingly a central part of the debate on higher education. Governance systems are being strained, sometimes to the breaking point. To meet the demands for accountability, universities are becoming “managerialized,” with professional administrators gaining increasing control. The traditional power of the professoriate is being weakened.

Expansion brings with it increased differentiation and the emergence of academic systems. New kinds of academic institutions emerge, and existing universities serve larger and more diverse groups. In order to make sense of this differentiation, academic systems are organized to provide coordination and the appropriate management of resources.

These are some of the key topics that affect contemporary postsecondary education worldwide. While this is by no means a complete list, it provides the basis for discussion and cooperation. International and comparative analysis can help to yield insights on how to deal with these topics in individual countries.

[With Todd M. Davis, Winter 1999]

The Crisis in Multinational Higher Education

Multinational higher education is big business, and it is about to get much bigger. Glenn R. Jones recently became the chairman and CEO of GATE, the Global Alliance for Transnational Education, an organization that has the aim of fostering and maintaining quality in cross-border higher education enterprises. This is notable because Jones is also responsible for Jones International University, a for-profit provider of online educational programs. GATE moved from its location at the Dupont Circle complex of higher education associations in Washington, DC to Englewood, Colorado, the headquarters of the Jones educational enterprises. GATE, which was largely funded by Jones, is now directly linked with a profit-making corporation in the international education business and is unlikely to be considered an objective arbiter of quality programs. At the same time, the British minister for higher education, Baroness Blackstone, was rapping the University of Derby for poor performance in a joint-degree program it has with an Israeli institution. A report from the Quality Assurance Agency noted that the Derby-Israel collaboration “did not secure the quality and standards of programs offered.” There have been repeated criticisms in the press of British multinational higher education initiatives in Malaysia and elsewhere. All is not well in the world of multinational higher education, and it is time for a careful look at the issues involved.

The University of Phoenix, now America's largest private postsecondary institution and a for-profit corporation listed on the New York

Stock Exchange, has announced plans for a string of campuses around the world. Major investment capital is behind this initiative, which will have a large impact on offshore postsecondary education. The United States has so far been slow to expand overseas, and the Phoenix initiative is a sign that the Americans are moving aggressively into the international education business. Sylvan Learning [currently, Laureate Education] and Kaplan, the test preparation company, have also begun foreign initiatives.

New Trends

Academic institutions and, increasingly, business enterprises are actively engaged in providing educational programs in other countries. The initiative is largely from the industrialized North to the middle-income or developing countries of the South. While higher education has always had an international dimension, with more than a million students studying overseas and with many collaborative arrangements among universities, this multinational thrust is a new development. There is a huge market for “offshore” academic programs since in many countries the demand for postsecondary education is much larger than the supply. This is combined with the ability to deliver programs worldwide through offshore campuses, collaboration with overseas institutions, or via distance education. There is no question but that these initiatives are needed in the context of expansion. And there is universal agreement that it is possible to effectively deliver useful and effective educational programs through new technologies and international collaboration. We need to understand all of the implications of these innovations if they are to serve the interests of students and teachers—and not simply become a vehicle for profit-making corporations.

We are in the midst of a revolution in the delivery of academic programs of all kinds internationally. So far, commentators have focused largely on the positive aspects of the revolution. Increased access, lower costs, and the advent of a truly global market for higher education are all cited as favorable trends, especially when governments are cutting back on higher education spending at the same time that demands for access are increasing worldwide. Enrollments have expanded dramatically—from 40 to 80 million worldwide in the past two decades, and with likely increases of another 20 million in the coming decade, most of it in developing countries. The means to serve these additional students must be found.

The focus here is on the problems and challenges. Our intention is to provide a needed balance to the overblown rhetoric of promise. We

are not arguing that multinational and distance education is necessarily bad or that the problems outweigh the promise. Yet, it is necessary to stand back and carefully analyze the new realities.

First, a few definitions are useful. By multinational higher education, we mean academic programs or institutions that are offered by institutions of one country in another. These may be “stand alone” branches or collaborative arrangements with local academic institutions or business enterprises. They range from such high-end institutions as the University of Chicago Business School or France's INSEAD—each of which have established overseas branches—to tiny schools wanting to ensure their survival through overseas initiatives. There are also examples of free-standing institutions, such as the American University of Bulgaria, which exist in one country but follow the curriculum of another country and are accredited abroad. Distance higher education includes educational programs offered entirely through the Internet and other means that do not involve the student in face-to-face classroom or laboratory experience. Again, the range of programs is immense—and so far largely unevaluated with regard to quality—from the British Open University, generally seen as the Cadillac of distance programs (OU programs include some traditional classroom elements as well as distance aspects) to Turkey's Anadolu University, with 578,000 students. Growing numbers of students are utilizing the Internet to enroll in distance programs offered by institutions outside their countries, often with little knowledge of the nature of the program or of the reputation of the school offering the program.

The Critique

In order to understand the new multinational and distance phenomena, a few central facts must be kept in mind.

Multinational higher education always has elements of inequality. Institutions from the developed world are selling their products abroad, usually in developing countries. They are in general providing “off-the-shelf” programs that are simply used overseas. The decisions about the curriculum, standards, faculty, and requirements are all made by the sponsoring institution.

The motive for establishing multinational higher education enterprises is almost always to make money. This is of course the aim of the growing number of for-profit institutions, but it is also the case for most traditional nonprofit universities. Many, such as Australia's internationally aggressive Monash University, are quite open about it. British and Australian institutions have been especially active internationally as a way of making up for budget cuts at home.

Institutions like Phoenix and Jones International are not really universities, although they have the term in their titles. Rather, they are degree delivery machines, providing tailored programs that appeal to specific markets. They do not have regular faculty, nor is there the kind of participatory governance system typical of universities. They do no research, and there is no free inquiry. They are devoted to delivering a clearly defined product, and they hire employees or contractors to produce and deliver it. They should not be called universities. Perhaps a better name would be the “Phoenix Training and Credentialing Service, a division of the Apollo Corporation.”

The multinational and distance movement does not really contribute to the internationalization of higher education worldwide. Knowledge products are being sold across borders, but there is little mutual exchange of ideas, long-term scientific collaboration, exchange of students or faculty, and the like.

Multinational and distance institutions operate in a largely unregulated environment. Accrediting systems are trying to catch up with new developments; and government agencies, both in the sponsoring and in the receiving countries, are concerned and sometimes critical. GATE shows leaving regulation in the hands of those who own and control the new multinational and distance institutions and profit from them may not be the most effective way of ensuring quality. Higher education is, in general, notoriously difficult to evaluate. The new phenomena, using new and untried methods and extending across international boundaries, are even more unclear.

Multinational and distance higher education are seen as “demand absorbing,” as the economists put it. They provide access at a very low price to those who seek it. It is easy for governments to permit these new institutions to enroll students—every person in a multinational or distance institution will not be attending a traditional university, where the costs are higher and government often foot much more of the bill.

While the factors discussed here constitute some of the major trends, there are many truly collaborative academic arrangements aimed at fostering international research, teaching, and enhancing academic programs. For example, such cases include the collaborative degree program in management between the 28 American Jesuit universities and Peking University or the longstanding collaboration between the Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University, both in China.

Conclusion

All of these problems and challenges do not mean that these new trends are evil. No doubt, the multinational institutions have a role in contemporary higher education. These institutions will not take the place of traditional universities, but there are things that the new technologies and cross-border initiatives can do well. We must, however, understand the problems as well as the promise. So far, everyone wishes to think the best of multinational and distance higher education; a lot of money is being invested, and many see the potential of large profits. Others are happy to see students who demand access being served almost regardless of the quality of the educational experience. Still others are happy to be able to obtain a degree conveniently. Those concerned with the future of higher education and with the broader public interest need to step back and take a careful look at what is actually happening.

[Fall 2000]

Part 2
Globalization

Higher Education and the WTO: Globalization Run Amok

Higher education is increasingly seen as a commercial product to be bought and sold like any other commodity. Higher education commercialization has now reached the global marketplace. The World Trade Organization (WTO) is considering a series of proposals to include higher education as one of its concerns, ensuring that the import and export of higher education be subject to the complex rules and legal arrangements of the WTO protocols and free of most restrictions. In the United States, the National Committee for International Trade in Education and a group of mainly for-profit education providers are supporting this initiative. The established higher education community, including the American Council on Education, is not involved in this undertaking. The WTO initiative poses a severe threat to the traditional ideals of the university, as well as to the national and even institutional control of education, and therefore needs careful scrutiny. We are in the midst of a true revolution in higher education, a revolution that has the potential to profoundly change our basic understanding of the role of the university. The implications are immense and as yet little discussed or understood. It is especially alarming, but not surprising, that the US Department of Commerce Office of Service Industries is behind the effort to commercialize higher education in the United States and worldwide.

I am not arguing against globalization either as a reality or as a concept. Higher education institutions everywhere are subject to global trends—massification and all of its implications, the impact of the new

communications technologies, accountability of academic institutions to government, an increasingly international and mobile academic profession, global research networks, and other phenomena.

Many of these developments link academic institutions and systems globally. The use of English as the lingua franca for scientific communication and for teaching, especially when combined with the Internet, makes communication easier and quicker. The advent of multinational higher education institutions makes it possible to disseminate new curricular and other innovations quickly and to meet the immediate needs of students and the national economies of countries that lack adequate providers of higher education.

For centuries, universities were seen as institutions that provided education in the learned professions (law, medicine, and theology) and scientific disciplines. As independent and sometimes critical institutions, universities preserved and interpreted, and sometimes expanded, the history and culture of society. In the 19th century, research was added to the responsibilities of the universities, followed a little later by service to society. Academic institutions were, in the main, sponsored by the state or the church. Even privately sponsored institutions were defined by the service mission. Higher education was seen as a “public good,” as something that provided a valuable contribution to society and was therefore worthy of support.

Universities were places for learning, research, and service to society through the application of knowledge. Academe was afforded a significant degree of insulation from the pressures of society—academic freedom—precisely because it was serving the broader good of society. Professors were often given permanent appointments (tenure) to guarantee them academic freedom in the classroom and laboratory to teach and do research without fear of sanctions from society.

Downsides of Globalization

Today, trends such as the rise of the Internet and the globalization of knowledge have the potential for creating severe problems for academic institutions and systems in smaller or poorer nations. In a world divided into centers and peripheries, the centers grow stronger and more dominant and the peripheries become increasingly marginalized. Inequalities grow more pronounced. There is little leeway for academic systems or individual universities to independently develop in the increasingly competitive and fast-moving global higher education scene dominated by the world-class universities in the industrialized countries. The traditional academic center becomes ever stronger and more dominant—mainly in the English-speaking countries of the

North (the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada) and in Australia; and in the larger countries of the European Union (notably Germany and France, and to some extent Italy and Spain).

The norms, values, language, scientific innovations, and knowledge products of countries in the center crowd out other ideas and practices. These countries are home not only to the dominant universities and research facilities but also to the multinational corporations so powerful in the new global knowledge system. Information technology companies such as Microsoft and IBM, biotechnology and pharmaceutical firms (Merck or Genzyme), multinational publishers like Elsevier or Bertelsmann, among others, dominate the new international commerce in knowledge, knowledge-based products, and information technology. Smaller and poorer countries have little autonomy or competitive potential in the globalized world. Globalization in higher education exacerbates dramatic inequalities among the world's universities.

The Commercialization of Knowledge and Higher Education

With the growing commercialization of higher education, the values of the marketplace have intruded onto the campus. One of the main factors is the change in society's attitude toward higher education—which is now seen as a “private good” benefiting those who study or do research. In this view, it seems justified that the users should pay for this service as they would for any other service. The provision of knowledge becomes just another commercial transaction. The main provider of public funds, the state, is increasingly unwilling or unable to provide the resources needed for an expanding higher education sector. Universities and other postsecondary institutions are expected to generate more of their funding. They have had to think more like businesses and less like educational institutions.

In this context a logical development is the privatization of public universities—the selling of knowledge products, partnering with corporations, as well as increases in student fees. The proliferation of private academic institutions of all kinds, especially in the for-profit sector, is another by-product of commercialization. Education companies, some of which call themselves universities, sell skills and training, awarding degrees or certificates to customers (students). Research is seen as a fungible product rather than an inquiry conducted to advance the frontiers of science.

The WTO Enters the Equation

In these changed circumstances, it is not surprising that those motivated by commerce, in government and in the private sector, would con-

cern themselves with ensuring that “knowledge products” are freely traded in the international marketplace. If these interest groups have their way, higher education in all of its manifestations will be subject to free trade discipline just like bananas or airliners. The rules of the WTO, and its related General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), it must be remembered, are legally binding. There is a danger that regulations relating to higher education will be included in an international agreement “under the radar” and without much analysis. When something becomes part of the WTO regime requirements and regulations, it is subject to complex arrangements. The implications for higher education are immense, not only because of a new set of international regulations but because the university will be defined in an entirely new way: the overriding goal of GATS and the WTO is to guarantee market access to educational products and institutions of all kinds.

The trade in higher education is, of course, more difficult to codify than bananas. But efforts are now under way to do precisely this—to create a regime of guidelines and regulations to institute free trade in higher education. The WTO would help to guarantee that academic institutions or other education providers could set up branches in any country, export degree programs, award degrees and certificates with minimal restriction, invest in overseas educational institutions, employ instructors for their foreign ventures, set up educational and training programs through distance technologies without controls, and so on.

Educational products of all kinds would be freely exported from one country to another. Copyright, patent, and licensing regulations, already part of international treaties, would be further reinforced. It would become very difficult to regulate the trade in academic institutions, programs, degrees, or products across international borders. Those wishing to engage in such imports and exports would have recourse to international tribunals and legal action. At present the jurisdiction over higher education is entirely in the hands of national authorities.

The questions raised by this initiative relate to the very idea of higher education and to the future of academe especially in the developing nations and in smaller countries. How would countries, or individual universities, maintain their academic independence in a world in which they had minimal practical and legal control over the import or export of higher education? How would accreditation or quality control be carried out? Would there be a distinction made between public or private nonprofit higher education—the “gold standard” for centuries—and the new and aggressive for-profit sector? Would wealthy

profit-driven multinationals force other higher education institutions out of business? Would a full-time professoriate with claims to academic freedom survive? One thing is very clear—once the universities are part of the WTO jurisdiction, autonomy would be severely compromised and advanced education and research would become just another product subject to international treaties and bureaucratic regulations.

The greatest negative impact of WTO control over higher education would occur in the developing countries. These countries have the greatest need for academic institutions that can contribute to national development, produce research relevant to local needs, and participate in the strengthening of civil society. Once universities in developing countries are subject to an international academic marketplace regulated by the WTO, they would be swamped by overseas institutions and programs intent on earning a profit but not in contributing to national development. It is not clear that accrediting and quality control mechanisms that now exist in many countries would be permitted, at least as they relate to transnational educational providers.

Who Should Control Higher Education?

Every country needs to maintain essential control over its academic institutions. At the same time, individual universities need an adequate degree of autonomy and academic freedom if they are to flourish. For centuries, traditional universities have performed a central function in society. While that function has changed over time, it has not disappeared. The challenge of the new initiatives and globalization generally is one of the most serious since the medieval universities faced the rise of nationalism and the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. For almost a millennium, universities have defined themselves as institutions with a core educational mission and a common understanding of the values of academe. For much of this period, universities were understood not only as institutions that provided education in practical fields of knowledge but as central cultural institutions in society. In the 19th century, science and research were added to the academic mission. Universities were recognized as special institutions by society precisely because their goals went beyond everyday commerce. Now, all of this is under threat.

The academic community itself is in considerable part responsible for the changes. Some universities have all too willingly allowed themselves to be caught up in commercial activities and to compromise their traditional roles. The establishment of “for-profit” subsidiaries by such renowned institutions as New York University and Columbia

University is symbolic of these compromises. Monash University, a well-known Australian institution, is establishing profit-making branches overseas. The University of Chicago's business school has opened branches in Spain and Singapore. Universities in China devote much of their attention to providing profit-making consulting and setting up technology companies. Many universities have gone "online" to sell their courses and degrees to customers in all parts of the world.

If universities are to survive as intellectual institutions, they must pay close attention to their core responsibilities of teaching, learning, and research. Maintaining loyalty to traditional academic values will not be easy, but the costs of growing commercialization are much greater.

Governments and other public authorities should give the universities the support they need to fulfill their mission. Constantly squeezing the budget, demanding ever-greater accountability, and insisting that the university fundamentally change its goals does not in the long run serve the public interest. The public must also respect the underlying values of higher education.

The developing countries have special academic needs that must be protected, and any WTO-style treaty would inevitably harm the emerging academic systems of the developing countries. Third World universities are now involved in many international relationships, but these arrangements are based on national needs and allow choice among programs and partners.

The proposed WTO initiatives bring all of the pressures now being felt by universities worldwide into sharp focus. If higher education worldwide were subject to the strictures of the WTO, academe would be significantly altered. The idea that the university serves a broad public good would be weakened; and the universities would be subject to all of the commercial pressures of the marketplace—a marketplace enforced by international treaties and legal requirements. The goal of having the university contribute to national development and the strengthening of civil society in developing countries would be impossible to fulfill. Universities are indeed special institutions with a long history and a societal mission that deserve support. Subjecting academe to the rigors of a WTO-enforced marketplace would destroy one of the most valuable institutions in any society.

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GATS Redux: The WTO and Higher Education Returns to Center Stage

With the collapse of the WTO's Cancun trade talks a year ago amidst recriminations between developing countries and others concerning agricultural exports and other issues, treaty negotiations were pushed to the back burner. Trade discussions moved to the regional and bilateral levels. Now, there are signs that WTO negotiations are again taking center stage. Leaders of the world's trading nations worry that failure will weaken the WTO, move negotiations on to a highly complex set of bilateral treaties, and prevent a "rational" world trade regime. The "Doha round" is being resurrected.

All of this has implications for higher education. The momentum to conclude formal treaty agreements relating to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) also weakened in the aftermath of Cancun. What had been an active set of discussions among trade officials and some in the education community in many countries slowed down. It is likely that GATS will again move to center stage.

Why GATS Is Important

It is very difficult for the higher education community—and, for that matter, the general public—to understand GATS and its implications. It is stated in "trade speak" and the legal circumlocutions of treaties. And much of GATS focuses on broader issues relating to intellectual property, banking services, and other aspects of the international flow of services peripheral to higher education. Parts of GATS, however, have implications for higher education. GATS, as an element of the

WTO is part of an international treaty. Countries, and by implication academic institutions, are subject to WTO adjudication decisions. Thus, the stakes are very high.

GATS potentially strikes at the heart of academic autonomy, institutional decision making, and national higher education policy. GATS agreements can, once individual countries have agreed, enforce open higher education markets and enable institutions and companies from other countries to engage freely in higher education activities—setting up branch campuses, offering degrees, and so on. Local authorities, perhaps including accreditations and quality control agencies, might have little control. Local institutions, unless complex exceptions were written into the treaty, might be forced to consider foreign applicants for academic posts on an equal basis with local applicants. For countries such as the United States and the larger European countries with strong and mature higher education systems, the chances of being greatly affected by foreign providers is slim. However, for countries with high unmet demand for access, smaller academic systems, and universities at the periphery of the world knowledge network, GATS could result in considerable external impact.

GATS as a Political/Ethical Issue

GATS is actually being pushed by a small but very powerful segment of the education and trade communities. It is highly significant that the government agencies arguing for GATS are not education departments or ministries in general, but rather trade and commerce agencies. In the United States, it has been the US Trade Representative and, in the United Kingdom, the Department of Trade and Industry. The growing for-profit education sector, the testing industry, and the English-language schools, among some others, have also favored GATS as a way of obtaining easy access to markets overseas.

Until 2000 or later, the higher education community worldwide—including the universities and other institutions, accrediting agencies, faculty and student organizations, education unions, and other groups—had little awareness of GATS or its implications. This has changed. A large number of institutions, organizations, and interest groups have now educated themselves about GATS and now constitute a significant force. Conferences about the WTO and GATS have been held around the world. Recently, the Association of African Universities sponsored a conference that passed a statement highly critical of GATS. The International Association of Universities, the American Council on Education, and others have drafted a statement on cross-border education and the public interest, dealing in part with

GATS. Education International, a federation of major education trade unions such as the National Education Association in the United States and the German teachers union, has also been quite critical of GATS.

Why the Opposition?

While the groups critical of GATS have many rationales and represent many different interests, they are unified by a concern with what can be called the public good and by a conviction that higher education is not a commodity to be traded without constraint. There is recognition that higher education is a complex phenomenon involving not just the marketplace but also national culture, the values of a society, and access and social mobility.

GATS opponents do not oppose the internationalization of higher education, cross-border collaboration, or even necessarily trade in education. Overseas study, collaborative research, institutional cooperation, and other aspects of internationalization are welcomed. At least three basic underlying elements of the WTO-GATS approach to higher education are opposed—the dominance of the market and the accompanying notion that higher education is a commodity to be traded on an open market where those who have a “competitive advantage” will come to control, the idea that higher education is a private good (to be paid for by “users”—students), and the idea that higher education is a common commodity, easily transferable from one country to another.

GATS critics see the role of higher education differently. Higher education is seen as more than a commodity—it is part of the cultural patrimony and the research infrastructure of a society and is therefore a public good and, at least to some extent, a public responsibility. It is seen as a means of access and social mobility to disenfranchised segments of the population. And for developing countries, it is seen as a central element for nation building. GATS opponents see higher education as much more than a tradable commodity to be determined by the vagaries of an international marketplace.

The Future

For the first time, there are articulate groups debating the pros and cons of GATS and seeking to understand the highly complex details. The playing field, which was at one time completely dominated by pro-GATS forces, is now contested, with ideas flowing in all directions. The WTO remains dominated by government agencies and commercial interests, and it is thus difficult to gauge the outcome. It might be that the very complexity of the issues involved will make GATS difficult to legislate and even more difficult to implement. One thing is

clear—those with concerns about the future of higher education need to be actively involved in the debate and the politics that will inevitably follow.

[Fall 2004]

Knowledge and Education as International Commodities: The Collapse of the Common Good

A revolution is taking place in education. Education is becoming an internationally traded commodity. No longer is it seen primarily as a set of skills, attitudes, and values required for citizenship and effective participation in modern society—a key contribution to the common good of any society. Rather, it is increasingly seen as a commodity to be purchased by a consumer in order to build a “skill set” to be used in the marketplace or a product to be bought and sold by multinational corporations, academic institutions that have transmogrified themselves into businesses, and other providers. Nowhere is this trend more clearly exemplified than in the current debate about GATS, the General Agreement on Trade in Services, now taking place internationally within the World Trade Organization (WTO). The commodification of education will have major implications for how we think about schooling and the university, the ownership and transmission of knowledge, and indeed the role of citizenship in modern society. The implications are immense, both for nations and for the globalization and internationalization of education.

There are positives and negatives in this new dispensation, just as there are in the broader globalization agenda of which education is a part. Globalization is probably both inevitable and unstoppable, and much of it is positive as well. Yet there are many problems associated with globalization, from environmental degradation to growing

inequalities within societies and internationally. The problem with the current debate about globalization is exactly the same as with discussions of its educational implications—the pros see only a bright future of economic integration, while the cons focus only on the negatives. Neither has a balanced vision that takes into account pitfalls and inequalities.

In the knowledge industries, of which education is a central part, globalization is already a key feature. We see implications in the growing use of the Internet for communication as well as for the marketing of knowledge products of all kinds, in the strengthening of a global labor force of highly skilled personnel, in the use of English as a widespread medium for scientific communication and increasingly for advanced training in many fields, and in other developments. Indeed, higher education has been internationalized since the very beginning of universities in medieval Europe, when there was a common medium of instruction, Latin, and both students and professors routinely moved from country to country. Now, perhaps 2 million students study outside their home countries, and a world market already exists for faculty and researchers. The Internet has greatly expanded the international flow of knowledge. One might ask why higher education needs to be subject to the legal strictures of the WTO when internationalization is taking place anyway at a pace and under conditions generally suited to the higher education community.

The challenge for us is to understand both the context and the implications of the globalization of the knowledge economy. My purpose here is to point out some of the problems created or exacerbated by current trends. The picture is certainly not entirely negative, but a balanced perspective requires careful analysis of the downside—viewpoints often not articulated in the rush toward the global future.

Underlying this discussion is a conviction that education at all levels is not simply a commodity to be bought and sold in the marketplace. An education system provides the skills needed for economic success, but it also builds the underpinnings of a civil society and of national participation. An understanding of the past, of culture, and of democratic values, among other things, is part of education, and these elements cannot be subsumed in some global marketplace. They are integral to any society, and are part of the patrimony of a people. Similarly, university-level basic research, certain curricular offerings, and other elements of academic work do not lend themselves easily to commercialization. In other words, there are values of the national and social common good that must be protected and preserved in a globalized educational environment. Protecting culture, intellectual independ-

ence, and the values of a civil society are simply not on the same level as free trade in automobiles or equal access to markets for soybeans—or even to the other service-related activities that are included in the GATS agenda. To pretend that all intellectual “products” are simply to be bought and sold in a commercial market is an oversimplification that contributes to giving globalization a bad name among growing segments of the population. Ensuring that an accounting firm, for example, has free access to international markets or that software is not pirated is simply not the same as protecting an educational system.

Some Potential Downsides

Maintaining standards or even accurate information in a globalized academic environment is problematical. Ensuring appropriate academic standards in a national higher education system is a major challenge. The United States and many other countries do this through accrediting systems that provide reasonably accurate information concerning numbers of colleges and universities, degrees offered, facilities available, and the like. It is difficult enough to ensure minimal standards, track the growing number of “degree mills,” and in general to maintain minimal standards at the national level—doing so internationally seems unworkable. Not only would data be difficult to obtain, but agreement on appropriate standards is unlikely. The European Union’s efforts to “harmonize” aspects of higher education in the EU countries in order to create a “common currency” of higher education are proving to be a major challenge—even though the EU has considerable power and resources to ensure compliance. Tracking academic programs and degrees, not to mention maintaining quality standards, on a global basis is extraordinarily difficult. It is especially problematical when many of those seeking to enter the global marketplace are motivated by a desire to earn a profit rather than by an educational mission.

We are at the beginning of the distance revolution in higher education. There are already a considerable number of degree and training providers who use information technology and distance methods to offer programs. As IT becomes more sophisticated and the curriculum better developed, distance offerings will become more numerous. Already, “open universities” using mainly distance means of course delivery enroll well over 3 million students worldwide—the large majority in the developing world. Seven out of the 10 largest distance-learning institutions are in developing countries. If national authorities are unable to exercise significant control over institutions providing distance higher education in their countries through national accrediting arrangements, degree recognition, and similar measures,

quality control becomes impossible.

Open markets, at least in higher education, reinforce the inequalities that already exist. If educational borders are completely open, the strongest and wealthiest education providers will have unrestricted access. Countries and institutions that cannot compete will find it difficult to flourish. This means that developing countries and smaller industrialized nations will be at a considerable disadvantage. Local academic institutions will find it difficult to compete with providers that choose to set up institutions in their country. Foreign providers will focus on the most profitable segment of the market—today including business and management studies, information technology, and a few others—and leave the rest to the local institutions. Such fields as the basic sciences, requiring expensive laboratories and other equipment and offering little immediate profit-making potential, not to mention support for libraries, will be ignored by the foreign providers.

There is a precedent for this. Several decades ago, the major industrial nations with the support of multinational publishers were able to tighten up international copyright rules and open up national publishing to the international market. What happened is that in many developing and middle-income countries, local publishers found it difficult to compete and were purchased by the multinationals or went out of business. While books continued to be supplied to local markets, something was lost. The multinationals were especially interested in the lucrative textbook market, largely ignoring less profitable general publishing. The result was that local publishers could not compete with the multinationals in the textbook market and were unable to afford to publish general books. Decisions concerning what books to publish were sometimes made in Paris, London, New York, or Amsterdam. Profits were exported rather than being reinvested in the local market. University-level textbooks were increasingly imported from abroad rather than being produced locally. Valuable expertise was lost. It is also the case that foreign capital became available and that publishing standards were sometimes improved. But the loss of independence and autonomy was significant. Higher education will find itself in exactly the same position—with its most lucrative markets creamed off by the multinationals and unable to afford to support the basic functions of universities.

While it can be argued that science is by its nature international, higher education has a central role for nations and societies that goes beyond science and beyond training for specific careers. What may be relevant for the United States in research or training may be inappropriate or at the least irrelevant for Ghana or China. Much is lost if coun-

tries no longer have the ability to control the basic elements of the curriculum, the language of instruction, the pedagogical philosophies, and other key elements of the delivery of higher education. Further, if the most profitable aspects of higher education, such as management studies, are creamed off the top of the academic enterprise by foreign providers, local universities will be left with the least popular—and profitable—fields of study. These institutions will find it more difficult to compete and will be unable to offer a full range of academic specialties. Further, they will have neither the funds nor the infrastructures to engage in scientific research—thus abandoning the research role that is central to educating the best scientists and scholars and leaving research in the hands of the wealthiest universities in the major industrialized nations. In a way, the profits that these rich universities may earn in the developing countries can further strengthen their research profile and contribute to the already existing inequalities in research worldwide.

The New Neocolonialism

In the bad old days of the Cold War, much was made of the efforts by the major powers to dominate the hearts and minds of the world. The Soviet Union, the United States, and others spent lavishly on student exchanges, textbook subsidies, book translations, institution building, and other efforts to dominate the world's academic leaders and intellectuals. We are in an entirely new era of power and influence. Now, multinational corporations, media conglomerates, and even a few major universities are the new neocolonialists—seeking to dominate not for ideological or political reasons but rather for commercial gain. The result is the same—the loss of intellectual and cultural autonomy by those who are less powerful. In the Cold War era, power politics was the motivation. GATS helps to establish open markets for knowledge products of all kinds so that the new neocolonialists will have unfettered access to world markets. In a way, developing countries were better off in earlier times—at least they could choose among feuding superpowers and, if they had the will, keep external influences at bay without risking their entire participation in the world economy.

The new neocolonialism works through the knowledge providers who are selling a variety of products on the world markets. These products include academic programs of all kinds, offered as “twinning” arrangements with local universities or business enterprises, branch campuses offering degrees and certificates from abroad, IT-based academic degrees, corporate training programs, and a myriad of others. There are some “high end” providers currently involved in the interna-

tional trade in training and certification. These include, among others, the University of Chicago's business school in Spain, Pennsylvania's Wharton School initiative in Singapore, and several coalitions of Western universities. There are many more lower prestige or unknown academic institutions and companies in the international educational marketplace offering "products" of completely unknown quality and relevance. All of these providers have one thing in common—the profit motive. Academic collaboration, intellectual exchange, and internationalization are ancillary to the main purpose of the enterprise—money. Often, the programs that are exported are "off the shelf" offerings designed for students in the industrialized countries. The relevance of such offerings for developing countries is, at the very least, questionable because education is not country neutral. Both pedagogy and curricular content must take into consideration local conditions, traditions, and learning styles. Foreign providers are often unwilling to spend the money necessary to do this. While the new neocolonialism is profit- rather than politics-driven, the end result is the same. Countries and academic systems and institutions in the developing countries become dependent on rich and powerful foreign providers.

What Is To Be Done?

This is neither an argument against the internationalization of knowledge nor against collaboration. Inevitable inequalities between the well-established, wealthy, and powerful universities of the North and the less-well-endowed universities of the South are also recognized. This is an argument against forcing those who are less powerful to be subject to a dramatically unequal marketplace, one that will rob academic institutions and systems of the right to make decisions about curriculum, quality standards, and a variety of other educational factors. It is an argument in favor of recognizing that education in all of its many forms is not a simple commodity but a central part of a culture and of a society and deserves to be treated differently than other parts of the marketplace.

In reality, we are not doing too badly right now. The heavy hand of GATS and the WTO is not needed in the educational sphere. International educational transactions of all kinds are at an all-time high. Some countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia, have opened their doors to foreign universities but have done so on their own terms. Others, such as Argentina, are seeking to understand the impact of foreign providers and to regulate them appropriately. China is slowly opening its doors to overseas academic institutions and programs. The United States is trying to cope with adapting its well-established accred-

iting system to American colleges and universities offering programs overseas. Australia is aggressively marketing its educational products overseas. The European Union is moving toward the harmonization of its divergent academic systems. An unprecedented number of students travel abroad for study, and there is a functioning global market for highly educated personnel. The world is moving toward internationalizing higher education by using the energies of academe and responding to market needs. At the same time, those on both sides of the equation have the power to shape educational transactions.

A new treaty that will have the power to force countries with quite different academic needs and resources to conform to strictures inevitably designed to serve the interests of the most powerful academic systems and corporate educational providers will only breed inequality and dependence. Intellectual globalization is alive and well now and does not need the straitjacket of GATS and the WTO. We should be moving toward a globalization based on equality rather than a new neo-colonialism.

[Summer 2002]

Why the United States Will Not Be a Market for Foreign Higher Education Products: A Case against GATS

The United States will not be a major export market for higher education products and services from other countries. Rather, the United States is a major exporter of education—from standardized tests such as the Graduate Record Exam to US-style management education—and it benefits tremendously from the 547,000 students from other countries attending higher education institutions in the United States. It is estimated that foreign students contribute \$11 billion to the US economy—making higher education the nation’s fifth-largest service export. Worldwide, the OECD estimates that the market for educational services exceeds \$30 billion, very likely an underestimation. Free-trade advocates and the for-profit education sector in the United States, along with similar groups in some other rich countries, have been advocating that the world education market be opened up completely and regulated by the new General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization. GATS would guarantee that markets in educational services (including offering postsecondary degrees and certificates, testing and evaluation, online educational programs, and many others), be open to exporters and importers without much restriction among the countries signing on to the protocols. The details are now being debated within the WTO.

It is worth looking realistically at the prospects for educational “free trade.” The fact is that the United States will remain a major benefi-

ary, and that, even with completely open markets, providers in other countries would have little scope to make major inroads into the huge US postsecondary education market. The argument here is that furthering the opening of the world market for educational products and services will benefit the United States by facilitating making exports while other countries will continue to have little potential for penetrating the well-developed and very complex American education market. The United States has a huge educational advantage at the postsecondary level. Not only is it by far the largest academic system in the world, but it is widely perceived as being the best. It is highly unusual for a country to claim both the mass market and the elite market, but in higher education this is the case. Further, the United States has advantages not only in its traditional colleges and universities but also in the ancillary education markets such as testing, specialized training, the control of knowledge networks (such as Lexus-Nexus), and others.

Elements of Advantage

The American higher education system is not only large, it is also diverse and efficient. There are educational providers serving every type and level of study—from prestigious research-based graduate schools to community colleges. Specialized trade schools provide training to meet specific needs, from computer technicians to architectural design. Few niche markets exist in the United States for foreign institutions to serve. Further, with few exceptions, there is no shortage of places in the American system for students. While the competition is fierce for the top undergraduate colleges and universities and for admission to the best medical, law, and business schools, qualified students can gain admission to an institution in their field of interest—even if not necessarily at top-ranked institutions. Interestingly, in those few fields where capacity is limited in the United States, such as medical education, Americans who cannot gain entry at home go abroad to study. Foreign medical schools have not, however, entered the US market. It is unlikely that foreign providers will be able to succeed in penetrating this large and diverse educational market.

Despite domestic criticism of the inefficiency of American academe, in fact US colleges and universities are both efficient and market-savvy. They tend to be nimble in figuring out their niche in the system and in offering programs that will appeal to their particular audience. When interests shift, so, too, do institutional priorities. Most American academic institutions, public and private, are dependent on enrollments to survive and prosper, and thus they have learned how to locate students. The academic system is so diversified that institutions exist in specific

markets—Harvard does not compete with the University of Massachusetts and could be described as being in a different universe from Lesley University, which is located just across the street in Cambridge. Foreign institutions would have a very difficult time operating in this diverse system, particularly given the challenge of adjusting to the constantly changing educational marketplace.

Americans happily buy automobiles made in other countries, but they do not like foreign educational products. While most of the half million foreign students in the United States are studying for degrees, few of the 143,000 American students who go overseas are studying for degrees—they typically spend a semester or even less abroad. Foreign universities would not find a receptive audience among American students. They would have to demonstrate they offer a quality product like Honda or a prestigious name brand like BMW. The fact is that American academic institutions *are* the name brands worldwide. Not since Americans went to Germany more than a century ago to study for the doctorate, before the PhD was offered in the United States, have Americans been lured abroad.

The English language also helps to ensure American academic dominance. English is the world language of science and scholarship, and English is increasingly the language of instruction overseas. While there is a market for education in English in many countries, there is no market in America for education in other languages.

Entering the US higher education market would be very expensive for foreign providers. Local institutions generally have good facilities, and foreign schools would need to make major investments in facilities, marketing, staffing, and the like. Few local institutions in the United States would see an advantage in partnering with foreign schools to set up joint programs. The Open University, a highly respected British institution using distance technologies and related nontraditional instructional techniques recently entered the US higher education market—despite a major investment it failed and has closed its American operations. This is an example of the problems of successfully entering the US market.

A Free Market That Is Not Free

For these and other reasons it is unlikely the foreign providers will be successful in the United States. Thus, the further opening of higher education markets worldwide will help US institutions without any reciprocal direct benefit to other countries. American institutions already have advantages in overseas markets, advantages that further liberalization will only reinforce. Other countries should not make the

mistake of thinking that by legislating free trade in education through GATS they would get into the US market. The only outcome will be to permit increasingly aggressive American educational providers greater access to foreign markets.

[Spring 2003]

Part 3
Internationalization

The Perils of Internationalizing Higher Education: An Asian Perspective

This is the era of academic globalization. The developing countries, along with Eastern Europe, are experiencing a growing multinational trend—with foreign academic institutions, working with local institutions, or setting up shop on their own, offering academic programs and degrees “off the shelf” or based on models from Europe, the United States, or Australia. Distance education, using the Internet, is beginning to be used to deliver degrees. In a way, it is a repetition of colonial era imports of institutions and ways of thinking, but this time the foreigners are welcomed with open arms. It is time to stand back and assess the impact of the explosion of foreign higher education models in Asia.

The announcement in January that Sylvan Learning Systems [currently, Laureate Education]—a for-profit American company so far mainly involved in selling test preparation, English-language, and other vocational programs in the United States and abroad—will set up universities overseas, starting with the purchase of a Spanish private university, is a signal that the Americans, so far slow to expand overseas, will enter the market. Hardly a week goes by without a critical article in the British press concerning the “demeaning” of traditional British academic standards overseas. Similar criticism is now heard in Australia, which has been a major exporter of academic programs to Asia.

Internationalism in higher education is hardly new. All of the

world's universities do, after all, stem from medieval European institutions. In some cases, such as Japan, the Western model was adopted voluntarily. In many other countries, Western institutions were imposed under colonialism. For centuries, Latin was the common language of higher education. In the late 19th century, when universities entered the research arena, German was the main language of science. Now, English has become the Latin of the 21st century and is the most widely used medium of scientific communication and increasingly of intellectual discourse worldwide. There are well over a million students studying outside their home countries—the majority of them from Asia and studying in the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia.

The current wave of internationalism has a late 20th-century flavor. It is largely in the private sector and is motivated by profits rather than by either government policy or goodwill. It is, for the most part, unregulated. The goals are to meet market demand and to create a market niche for an “educational product.” Those providing the product, mainly academic institutions and other educational providers in English-speaking countries, are to a considerable extent motivated by a need to export in order to make up budget shortfalls at home.

There are a variety of educational products being sold. Foreign study remains a big business. The flows are largely from Asia to the West. Marketing is increasingly sophisticated, and despite the economic crisis in Asia, numbers continue to grow. Between 1996 and 1998, for example, the number of students going from Korea to the United States increased by 15.5 percent, from India by 10.4 percent, and from China by 10.5 percent. Japan, still the largest sending country to the United States, increased by just 1.7 percent, and Hong Kong declined by 11.7 percent. The United States hosts 481,000 overseas students, the large majority of whom pay all of their expenses. Related to foreign study are major ancillary industries devoted to teaching English and preparing students for a myriad of entrance examinations and other tests, assisting students with university applications and related formalities, student recruiting enterprises, and others. Most of these are entirely unregulated.

Universities from the industrialized nations are increasingly active in offering “offshore” degrees. Newspapers worldwide are full of advertisements for educational programs offered by foreign universities and other educational providers. Some renowned institutions offer offshore programs, as do a range of low-prestige schools or even “degree mills” that simply sell worthless and unrecognized certificates. Many models are available in today’s educational marketplace—again, without regulation.

“Twinning” arrangements, in which a university in Asia or elsewhere links up with a Western institution, is a common way of offering offshore degrees. Local facilities and often local staff are used, along with some inputs from the Western sponsor. Often, a degree from the Western institution is awarded upon completion of studies. The curricular model, reading materials, pedagogical style, and usually the language of instruction of the Western institution are the core of the program, although there is little direct intellectual input from the host university. In this respect, the host institution is being “neocolonized.” Students generally pay a significant premium for the privilege of studying the Western curriculum.

In some cases, the Western institution is integrally involved with all aspects of the educational program. In others, programs are “franchised,” and there is little direct supervision or involvement by faculty from the “home” university. In a way, such operations are quite similar to McDonald’s—a foreign vendor pays for using a “brand name” and must deliver a product designed abroad to local customers. Unlike McDonald’s, quality control in the educational marketplace is spotty.

Increasingly, foreign educational providers are setting up shop in Asia and Eastern Europe without working with a local educational institution. Often, a business firm or entrepreneur invests resources to start an educational institution and contracts with a Western university or some other institution to provide the service and to award the degree. In some cases, a foreign institution will simply open a program. Again, there are few controls concerning quality, financial arrangements, or other details.

These are a few examples of the growing globalization of higher education. This phenomenon has many positive aspects. It helps serve rapidly growing demand for access to higher education. It stimulates cross-national educational innovation. It prepares students for work in a global economy. Yet, the multinationalization of higher education creates many challenges. Among them are:

- quality control—how can offshore providers be regulated and how can quality be ensured?
- information—who can tell which are worthwhile programs offered by reputable institutions and which are of low quality, sold just to make a quick profit?
- fit—do the programs meet a local need and do they contribute to the higher education system, and how do they related to local institutions?
- costs and benefits—are the programs worth what is charged for them?

These questions are difficult to answer. Measuring educational outputs is difficult in the best of circumstances. Fostering international cooperation and innovation in higher education is a good thing, and imposing too many controls may stifle new ideas. Yet, the current wave of multinationalizing higher education brings with it the dangers of total lack of regulation and control. It is a bad idea, in education at least, to permit caveat emptor to dominate.

[Spring 1999]

American Accreditation of Foreign Universities: Colonialism in Action

American accreditors are beginning to evaluate academic programs and institutions in other countries and giving them accreditation in the United States. American higher education is the world's gold standard, and thus there is interest in understanding the US accrediting system and the beginning of a demand for American accreditation. The imprimatur of US accreditors is perceived to give a significant advantage to foreign institutions. In principle, however, it is a bad idea for Americans to be certifying academic institutions and programs in other countries. Just as the world's military superpower needs to be careful about its overseas interventions, America as an academic superpower has a duty not to abuse its academic muscle around the world, even if this particular US "academic invasion" is welcomed abroad and even invited by others. Foreign accreditation is an act of intellectual hubris with implications that go far beyond traditional institutional evaluation.

Without pushing the Iraq analogy too far, does American higher education want to station semipermanent accrediting troops in foreign countries? Do we want to take responsibility for shaping academic policy in US-accredited universities in countries whose intellectual traditions and higher education context differ substantially? Do we really want to take responsibility for ensuring that academic and institutional standards in other countries match those in the United States? Do we believe that US academic practices are appropriate for other countries?

Of course, no one is forcing foreign academic institutions to be

accredited by Americans. Indeed, the opposite is the case. A number of foreign institutions are seeking to be accredited by Americans, and US accreditors have been reluctant to get involved overseas. Current demand is likely to be the tip of the iceberg, with interest growing as the word gets out that US accreditation is available. Now, the demand is increasing, and Americans seem more willing to get involved. It is worth looking carefully at the implications of offshore accrediting.

I am not arguing against the involvement of American universities in other countries. Institutional linkages sponsored by Fulbright or other agencies, collaborative programs, student and faculty exchanges, and even the establishment of branch campuses or academic programs in other countries all constitute legitimate and mostly positive endeavors. Traditionally, American overseas programs have been designed to provide international experience for US students and faculty or, in a minority of cases, to strengthen foreign institutions. Recently, overseas initiatives have been aimed at earning income at home—such as the University of Chicago business school campus in Spain. More than a half million international students study in the United States, the large majority self-funded, earning large sums for US universities.

The Workings of the US System

Accreditation is a voluntary activity—no foreign institution is coerced into accreditation by an American agency. There are no accreditation police. Yet, once they become involved, overseas institutions are subject to some extent to the strictures of the accreditation process and the regulations of US accreditors, with modest room for negotiation or adaptation. Indeed, the main purpose of the US accreditation system is to ensure that a base of standards of academic programs, facilities, and policies is in place for every academic institution accredited. While accreditation does not force each institution to have the same programs or philosophy, a common set of requirements is needed to obtain it.

American accreditation is designed for the realities of American higher education. It reflects the history, norms, and values of the US academic system. Accreditation in the United States assumes the recognition of certain ideas about teaching and learning, the facilities needed for an effective academic institution, academic governance and the involvement of professors, and financial resources. While it is not necessarily the case that US accreditors will require the same standards and programs in foreign countries that prevail in the United States, there is likely to be pressure for “Americanization.”

Accreditation is not a governmental responsibility in the United States. It is carried out by regional accrediting agencies that are consor-

tia of academic institutions and by specialized agencies that accredit graduate professional programs in business, teacher education, medicine, law, and other fields. The system is self-financed by the academic institutions and programs. This system works well in the United States and has built up decades of legitimacy and widespread acceptance by the public, academics, and government.

International Implications

International accrediting has implications for both the accreditors and for the institutions being examined. In addition to traveling abroad to carry out their evaluations, accreditors need to understand different academic systems and traditions. So far, most of the small number of foreign universities and programs accredited by American agencies have been US-style institutions operating mostly in English, such as the American University of Beirut and other schools that use the name “American” in their titles. These institutions are easier to evaluate than those operating in national languages and reflecting national academic traditions—and such universities are lining up to demand US accreditation.

US accreditation will place pressure on foreign institutions to conform to American patterns of curricular and academic organization so as to meet accreditation standards. Some will see this as simply externally enforced quality control, but it may also constrain innovation and place foreign standards on universities. In a way, it is similar to the “dollarization” adopted by a few countries to enforce fiscal discipline—Argentina, for example, pegged its currency to the US dollar for a few years. This policy reduced inflation and helped stabilize the economy for a while, but the strategy ultimately failed in part because the discipline was external and did not take into account the realities of the Argentine economy. The country is still trying to dig itself out of an economic crisis. External accreditation may have the same result—self-imposed external discipline unrelated to local conditions with potentially dangerous effects.

US accreditation will also place pressure on other local institutions that are not part of the accreditation process. If US-accredited schools are considered in the local market to be the “best” because of their American imprimatur and confer upon their standards a better chance of gaining access to American graduate schools, this outcome will have an impact on the rest of the academic system. It is also likely that US accreditation will take place mainly in the private sector, thereby strengthening the private institutions at the expense of public universities.

American accreditation overseas will be expensive, and the cost will be borne by the foreign universities. The US accrediting system is financed by the institutions being accredited—the members of the accreditation consortium. Foreign institutions will need to pay these fees, which are costly—and overseas costs are likely to be significantly higher due to travel and other expenses. It is also unclear if foreign institutions will be welcomed into full membership in the various accrediting groups.

What Should Be Done?

International accreditation is an important issue in part because it is related to the larger subject of quality assurance. The issues are complex and intertwined. There is an obvious need to measure academic quality and performance in increasingly diversified academic systems, to rank academic institutions and programs, and to define academic achievement. As universities increasingly seek to recruit students and place graduates internationally, international recognition becomes more important. US accreditation seems like a quick fix. American accreditors may feel that they are performing a service to universities in other countries who ask for accreditation. But it is neither possible nor desirable simply to wave a “magic wand” of US accreditation over foreign institutions to grant them instant respectability.

The complex issues of quality assurance and accreditation must be thought through. International discussions can help to clarify issues. But solutions must take into account national and regional circumstances. An international solution is unlikely to succeed, and simply adopting the norms and systems of the world’s most powerful academic system is definitely a flawed idea. It is possible that regional accreditation may be possible—for example, in regions like Central America or perhaps Arab countries. Once the “Bologna process” is implemented within the European Union, some kind of regional quality assurance or accreditation arrangement may be useful. The United States has a long and largely successful history of accrediting academic institutions and programs, although it should be kept in mind that US accreditation provides a “floor” of minimum quality rather than a measurement of top achievement. The American experience can be studied as one model of accreditation, but it should not be exported—in the long run this is neither a service to those institutions currently clamoring for it nor a positive contribution of American accreditors.

[Summer 2003]

Foreign Study: Changing Patterns and Competitive Challenges

Foreign study is already big business internationally, but it has somehow either been ignored or written off as an intellectual enterprise rather than a potential “profit center.” Now, academic institutions, government agencies, private corporations, and even individual entrepreneurs are seeking to cash in on the growing trade in higher education. Our concern here is with one aspect of this trade—the flows of foreign students. Some 1.8 million students now study outside their own countries—with by far the largest number traveling from developing and middle-income countries to a small number of industrialized nations. Worldwide, most international students are self-supporting, paying university fees and their own living expenses. There is a considerable flux introduced into this marketplace as countries seek to maximize their advantages, increase their influence, and above all earn more money from the trade in degrees.

Ancillary industries have emerged around the edges of the flows of international students, seeking to serve specific market niches and to earn a profit as well: for example, recruiters, expeditors, counselors, testers, credential evaluators, and a huge English-language industry to provide the language skills needed for international study. The underside of the foreign study market consists of enterprises that falsify admissions and language tests, provide fraudulent degrees, and produce fake visas and other documents.

Most of the emphasis is on opening up markets for foreign study, increasing flows, and maximizing the market potential of foreign study.

Few are concerned about how foreign study serves the public good in both the sending and receiving countries or how increased flows might contribute to brain drain. Fewer still worry about the huge costs of international study—funds largely flowing from the countries least able to afford the expenditure to the richest academic systems in the world.

For example, international education contributed US\$11 billion to the US economy in 2000, much of it coming from 73 percent of international students who have non-US funds as their primary source of support. International education is one of Australia's top-earning exports, contributing more than A\$4.4 billion to the economy (US\$2.6 billion)—more profitable than beef or wool—and considerable emphasis is on further improving educational export income. In the United Kingdom, 58 percent of students from Commonwealth countries are self-funded. If one adds non-Commonwealth students, the proportion is considerably higher. These students pay much higher fees than do local UK (or EU) students.

Patterns of Financial Flows

International students are increasingly seen as income earners by the host countries. Worldwide financial cutbacks to higher education and a growing marketization of the universities make income generation an ever more important factor. Nonetheless, there are variations in policy. The English-speaking countries are without question at the forefront of looking at international education as an income earner. Some continental European countries still charge very low fees, or have no fees at all, and few charge non-EU students more than domestic students. This situation includes such major host countries as France and Germany, which rank as number 3 and 4 internationally (following the United States and the United Kingdom). Japan, which has come close to reaching its goal of hosting 100,000 international students, does not charge foreign students more than domestic students, although significant tuition is charged at both the public and private universities. Costs vary among high-fee Anglo-Saxon countries. American private universities are by far the world's most expensive institutions, for both domestic and international students, although the high price is mitigated in some cases by scholarship assistance. US public universities typically charge international students (and domestic out-of-state students) a higher tuition than in-state students are charged. The United Kingdom has a policy of charging non-EU international students the "full cost" of instruction, but fees are still less than in the United States. Fees in Australia and New Zealand are cheaper still.

Flows and Patterns

The overarching reality worldwide is that demand exceeds supply for higher education. However, in a few countries experiencing a decline in the birthrate—such as Japan, Italy, and South Korea—there is no supply shortage. In many developing countries a foreign degree has greater cachet than a local qualification. It is also true that in some countries local students unable to qualify for local institutions can gain admission to institutions overseas. For these reasons, overseas study continues to flourish. While the number of students from industrialized countries going abroad is also increasing modestly, the dominant flow is from South to North. There was a 7.4 percent increase in the number of US students studying abroad, and EU programs have boosted European numbers although not by as much as anticipated by planners.

Although US international enrollments were widely expected to go down in the aftermath of the events of September 11, this does not appear to be the case. In 2001–2002, 582,996 international students were studying in the United States, up 6.4 percent from the previous year. India has replaced China as the largest sending country. Japan has also significantly increased its numbers of international students, with 95,500 as of May 2002, up 21 percent from a year earlier and close to the Ministry of Education's goal of 100,000. Asia accounted for 92.8 percent, with most coming from China, Korea, and Taiwan. It can be said that Japanese enrollments have become regionalized rather than internationalized. UK numbers are also up, due in part to aggressive marketing overseas by British universities to attract high-fee-paying international students. The government has also supported an increase in non-EU international enrollments in order to increase revenues. Australia and New Zealand have also been marketing their universities and have successfully attracted more international students, mainly from Asian countries. Although international study in the EU countries has increased due to major initiatives in recent years, the numbers have not grown as much as hoped by EU officials. A few countries have largely ceased to attract international students—the former Soviet Union was at one time a major host for international students, and Czechoslovakia and Romania were also destinations. Now, these countries attract few foreign students.

Future Prospects

For the immediate future, the numbers of international students will continue to increase, with some changes in destinations as well as in the sending countries. If US visa restrictions become very onerous, it is

possible that fewer students will choose to study in the United States. The overall attraction of the United States, however, seems certain to continue due to the perceived quality of American higher education, the attractions of American society, and the possibilities within the US job market. With fiscal pressures on European universities increasing, it is questionable how long fees for non-EU students can be kept low. It is likely that aggressive marketing will continue to boost numbers for such countries as the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Japan's prospects for attracting students from beyond its immediate region are limited because of the difficulties of learning the Japanese language. Africa and Latin America, which at present send only modest numbers of students abroad, may play a greater role in the future, although economic difficulties will hinder dramatic growth.

The longer-term future is less clear. The impact of distance provision of academic degrees, "twinning" arrangements that will permit students from countries such as Malaysia and China to earn "overseas" degrees while remaining at home, the establishment of offshore branches of European and American universities in Asia and elsewhere (Singapore, for example, is counting on such imports to permit expansion of local enrollments without major new expenditures), and other innovations may affect international student mobility.

International initiatives in higher education are big business. These initiatives will continue to influence global academic development. What is less clear is exactly in what direction change will take place—and how the public good can be served in the new global higher education marketplace.

[Winter 2003]

International Higher Education: America Abdicates Leadership

Internationalism is a central focus of higher education policy worldwide. Nations recognize that they operate in a global economy and that understanding other societies and cultures is both valuable in its own right and necessary to be competitive. Our argument here is that internationalism is mandatory for any higher education system in the 21st century. What is amazing to us is that while the rest of the world's universities are becoming more international, the United States shows signs of de-emphasizing internationalism in its higher education system. In the United States, international programs are under attack in Washington, while America's major competitors—the nations of Western Europe and Japan—are rapidly expanding their international efforts, devoting money and energy to a wide range of initiatives. The Fulbright program, America's flagship international education effort, faces severe budget cuts in Washington. The National Security Education Program, established in 1991 as the first major federal initiative in international education in several decades, is threatened with extinction even before it is fully under way. While many colleges and universities have included a greater emphasis on international studies in curricular reforms in recent years, fiscal problems have prevented full implementation.

The United States is a paradox. On the one hand, the US academic system contains significant international elements. And it is arguably the center of research in most scientific fields worldwide, attracting international attention. English is the dominant language of world sci-

ence—the Latin of the modern era—and most of the major scientific journals are edited in the United States. According to the Institute for International Education, the United States is host to 450,000 foreign students out of a worldwide total of approximately one million. The United States also takes in more than 60,000 visiting scholars annually. Many scientists and scholars from abroad hold professorships in American universities. This dominant international presence in American education and research, contrary to general belief, is largely financed by external sources. International education and research are export commodities that make significant contributions to the national US economy as well as that of many local communities. Higher education is a major “export industry”—one that deserves stimulation and not contraction. Current trends, in our view, will mean that the United States will lose its competitive edge in yet another area.

According to a recent Carnegie Foundation survey of faculty in 14 countries, American professors are the least internationally minded. US faculty go abroad for research or sabbaticals less than do their peers in other major countries, and they seldom read journals or books published elsewhere. In general, American professors do not actively support international education, fearing enrollment losses in their majors or simply feeling that internationalism is not central to their subjects and disciplines.

Fiscal cutbacks have meant that international initiatives are suffering at the state and campus levels. Some state governments recognize the importance of competitiveness and realize internationalism’s role. But beyond trade missions overseas, there is usually little follow-through where it counts—with the next generation of business and high-tech leaders now on the campuses. Allocations to higher education have commonly been cut, and international initiatives have not been supported in state budgetary allocations. Colleges and universities, faced with difficult budgetary decision making, seldom choose to expand foreign-language offerings or support study abroad programs.

American universities are notoriously poor in teaching foreign languages, and few students have a working knowledge of a foreign language. Only an infinitesimal number take such important but “nonmainstream” languages as Japanese, Arabic, Chinese, or Hindi. Only 70,000 American students study abroad—about 1 percent of undergraduates at four-year colleges. And most of those go for a semester, take part predominantly in American packaged programs, and have England as the major destination. There is very little participation and even less diversity.

What are America's major competitors doing? They are investing heavily in international education. A decade ago, Japan declared the goal of hosting 100,000 foreign students by the year 2000, although this goal is unlikely to be achieved that soon. Most of Japan's foreign students come from its major Asian trading partners. Japan is also building dormitories and other facilities for its foreign students and scholars and is investing both in teaching Japanese to foreigners and in developing some courses of study in English. Currently, 43,000 Japanese study in the United States, while only 1,800 Americans study in Japan. Japanese universities are rapidly internationalizing their curricula, and every Japanese high school and university student studies English.

Western Europe has long recognized the need for internationalizing higher education, not only to solidify European integration but to position Europe in the global economy. The European Commission stimulates cooperation in research and education through well-funded programs such as ERASMUS, promoting the mobility of students and scholars within Europe; LINGUA, which stimulates the study of European languages; and COMETT, aimed at fostering university-industry links. Recently, the exchange concept was expanded to secondary education as part of the new SOCRATES umbrella program, which covers a number of disciplines as well as several levels of education. Professional education is internationalized with the LEONARDO program.

Some outside Europe feared that a "Fortress Europe" mentality was developing, focused exclusively on the European Union, but this has not happened. The EU authorities, national governments, and individual academic institutions have stressed the importance of global cooperation and exchange. The TEMPUS program, another EU-funded initiative, stresses exchanges with Eastern Europe, while the ALFA program deals with Latin America, and MEDCAMPUS deals with the Mediterranean region. In cooperation with the US Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, there is a joint program to stimulate US-European exchange, but it is quite small in comparison to the other EU initiatives because of limited funds and the constant pressure of budget cuts.

For a half century after World War II, American higher education has been the undisputed leader in higher education internationally. Cold War competition, a booming US economy, and a rapidly expanding student population were contributing factors. American higher education remains very strong, but it is losing its competitive edge in the international marketplace. The slide has begun, and growing insu-

larity will mean that the United States will fall behind its competitors. Internationalism in higher education permits us to understand the rest of the world, as well as to function in the new international economy of the 21st century. Others understand this—Americans must too.

[With Hans De Wit, May 1995]

Internationalize American Higher Education? Not Exactly

We are on the verge of a global century, and internationalism is in the air on American campuses. Everyone agrees that American students must be prepared for the global environment of the 21st century. No presidential speech or campus planning report fails to stress the importance of internationalizing the university. Institutions proclaim various international initiatives. These include instruction in “nontraditional” languages (such as Japanese, Arabic, or even Kiswahili), expansion of study abroad programs, and strengthening international and area studies in the curriculum.

But let’s look behind the rhetoric. We must ask ourselves whether “internationalize” will be merely a buzzword or a deep-seated reality for colleges and universities. In fact, there are significant constraints in the internationalization of American higher education. In an era of budget cutting, most colleges and universities lack adequate financial resources for major international initiatives. And institutions with a lot of international activity on campus often lack a coherent strategic direction for these activities that would provide the connective tissue among them. For example, how does the goal to have more students study abroad relate to plans for faculty development? Will we have a globally oriented student body being taught by a faculty that is hard pressed to find funds to support opportunities to place their teaching and research in a comparative context? Will foreign students on US campuses be seen as sources of income or as valuable resources of international expertise and experience?

One indication of the lack of a clear strategy is the current debate about “globalism” versus “area studies.” Advocates of a global approach to training academic specialists, led by the Social Science Research Council, are opposed by experts who argue that in order to understand another culture it is necessary to know its history, language, economy, and culture and not just global issues and trends. This debate has implications for scholarship, library resources, and the entire approach to the training of academic specialists. Rather than forcing a Solomon’s solution, this debate needs leadership to foster a creative and reinforcing synthesis among the alternatives.

Just as importantly, the need to provide more international dimensions for American higher education has not been elevated to the status of a national challenge. With the Cold War over and the lack of a perceived external threat, the sense that we have to gear up our educational resources to confront something beyond our borders is missing. No Sputnik lights up the sky to warn policymakers that educational institutions need to be ready to help the United States play its part in a global era. Funds earmarked by the federal government for international educational efforts have diminished dramatically, and there is no compelling lobby from the higher education community arguing for the restoration of funding. For example, when the Fulbright Program, the flagship of US-sponsored scholarly exchange programs, was cut by 20 percent several years ago, no hue and cry arose from the academic community. We need to define more carefully the role of the federal government in addressing the international challenge. What kind of partnership between higher education institutions and the government is desirable and appropriate in preparation for the global imperatives that face us? Neither party really seems to be dealing with these issues in a comprehensive fashion.

The lack of a national approach to international education may increasingly place the United States in an isolated position. Japan, more than a decade ago, committed itself to hosting 100,000 international students by the year 2000. This policy created a variety of initiatives at the national level as well as in many universities, and it stressed international education as a national goal. Even though Japan will likely fall short of its goal, the initiative put international education on the agenda. Through programs such as ERASMUS and SOCRATES, a variety of regulations aimed at “harmonizing” higher education arrangements among European Union members, and the investment of considerable funds, the EU has also stressed the internationalization of higher education as a policy. The United States has basically been silent on the national importance of internationalizing higher education. It is

noteworthy that our major trade treaty, NAFTA, has no stated education component. By contrast, European Union economic cooperation focuses considerable attention on education, science, and culture, and it provides the funds necessary to ensure that programs will be successful. The lack of national focus on international education as a priority could mean that the United States will fall behind its competition in this key area.

The weakness in policy and strategic decisions affecting higher education can be most readily discerned on issues involving students and faculty. For example, the role of international students on American college and university campuses is unclear. Some see them as “cash cows” who fill empty seats and help to balance precarious budgets. Others view these students as valuable resources for internationalizing the campus. Some universities actively recruit overseas, while others do not. Public colleges and universities charge international students “out-of-state” tuition rates, and many private institutions exclude international students from financial aid programs. The recent financial crisis in Asia and the hardship it has imposed on many Asian students studying in the United States should prompt a reexamination of the financial aid issue. At present 67 percent of international students are self- or family-supported. What are the implications of this statistic if we wish to have more international students on our campuses as part of a larger plan to internationalize our institutions?

National immigration policies further complicate this situation. The recent tightening of immigration regulations and the imposition of high fees for visas have created serious problems for international students. Such impediments do not bode well for the future of international students in the United States. Although the United States remains the largest host nation for international students, with 457,984 studying here in 1996/97, growth has slowed to under 1 percent. With the Asian economic crisis, the numbers will probably decline next year for the first time in a half century because well over half of the international students in the United States come from Asia. Large numbers come from countries hardest hit by the crisis—South Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia.

While the number of American students going abroad to study continues to increase—although at a more modest level this year—only 89,742 out of 14 million US students studied abroad in 1996/97, an infinitesimal .06 percent. Further, more than half studied abroad for a semester or less and only 12 percent for a full academic year. The majority, 65 percent, studied in Europe, while 15 percent studied in Latin America, 8 percent in Asia, and a scant 2 percent in Africa.

Clearly the number of students studying abroad and their distribution among the regions of the world do not support the proposition that we are internationalizing this aspect of American higher education. Nor do levels of foreign-language study at our colleges and universities give rise to such a claim. Enrollments have been in a continuing slump, although there has been growth in such languages as Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic—but from an extraordinarily low base. Very few students graduate with fluency in another language. Increasingly, students are permitted to study abroad with no language proficiency. This trend contributes to a growing image in many countries that American students are not there for studies but for extended tourism.

Students represent only a part of the problem. The faculty also lack both international consciousness and international involvement. A surprising finding from the 14-nation Carnegie Foundation study of the international academic profession was that American faculty, alone among the 14 countries, were largely uncommitted to internationalism. While 90 percent of the faculty in 13 countries believe that a scholar must read books and journals from abroad to keep up with scholarly developments, only 62 percent of Americans believe this. Upwards of 80 percent of the faculty in 13 countries value connections with scholars in other countries. A little over half the American professoriate is in agreement. American faculty are similarly indifferent about further internationalizing the curriculum, with only 45 percent agreeing that this should be done. The large majority of American faculty report no foreign trips for study or research in the last three years. Americans scored last among the 14 countries in overseas travel and research. By every possible measure, American faculty score below their foreign colleagues on internationalism.

There are many reasons for this phenomenon—among them the poor preparation of Americans in foreign languages and a feeling that the United States is in any case the world center of science and scholarship. American academics express a greater commitment to teaching than do faculty overseas, and, with the exception of faculty at the selective liberal arts colleges, professors with a teaching orientation tend to be less internationally minded, according to the Carnegie statistics. Structural factors also inhibit American faculty. Younger scholars sometimes refuse to take Fulbright grants because they believe that a stint overseas will harm their chances for tenure. Research-oriented senior professors fear that a year abroad will separate them from crucial developments in their field and will take them out of local academic politics. International concerns are often interdisciplinary in nature, and academics fear leaving the well-tread paths of the established dis-

ciplines and departments. With a few exceptions, academic leaders do not ease the path to international involvement for their faculty. Administrators at colleges and universities need to create incentives to encourage and reward more internationalism among faculty.

America's insularity manifests itself in a number of ways. American faculty may fall behind their colleagues from other countries in reaching out to the rest of the world but so do members of the United States Congress, one-third of whom do not even possess a passport. In an ironic way, tensions with the Soviet Union during the Cold War made policymakers more conscious of the rest of the world. Now that the conflict is over, one of the results for the United States may be that it has been lulled into a false sense of complacency.

American higher education may be a victim of its own success as well. The strength of higher education in this country is acclaimed throughout the world. Scholars make the academic pilgrimage to the United States based upon the international reputation of the quality of teaching and research in American colleges and universities. Last year, 62,000 scholars from other countries took the opportunity to pursue study and research in the United States. Emblematic of the migration is the fact that English is increasingly the international language of scholarship.

All of this has caused Americans to perceive themselves as being at the center of the academic universe. And to an extent, we are. But we ignore the rest of the world at our own peril. Not only can Americans learn much from research and scholarship taking place elsewhere, but it is mandatory for us to understand the languages, cultures, and ideas as well as the economies of the rest of the world if we are to work effectively in a complex and multipolar world. We can only do this if we study foreign cultures, interact with colleagues in other countries, send our students to study and learn firsthand about the rest of the world, and in the process build up not only expertise, but also goodwill and mutual understanding between the United States and the rest of the world.

American higher education can lead the way by expecting more from itself and becoming a more articulate and well-organized advocate with the US government on behalf of initiatives that join in partnership with colleges and universities to promote international programs and academic exchange. Doing so will be a clear acknowledgment of the importance of our global relationships as we enter a new century.

[With Patti McGill Peterson, Spring 1998]

Part 4
Research Universities

The Costs and Benefits of World-Class Universities

Everyone wants a world-class university. No country feels it can do without one. The problem is that no one knows what a world-class university is, and no one has figured out how to get one. Everyone, however, refers to the concept. A Google search, for example, produces thousands of references, and many institutions call themselves “world class”—from relatively modest academic universities in central Canada to a new college in the Persian Gulf. This is an age of academic hype, with universities of different kinds and in diverse countries claiming the exalted status of world class—generally with little justification. Those seeking to certify “world classness” usually do not know what they are talking about. For example, *Asiaweek*, a respected Hong Kong-based magazine produced a ranking of Asian universities for several years, until their efforts were so widely criticized that they stopped. This article attempts to undertake the impossible—to define a world-class university and then to argue that it is just as important for academic institutions to be “national” or “regional class” rather than to seek to emulate the wealthiest and in many ways most-elitist universities.

Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard for almost 40 years in the late 19th century, when asked by John D. Rockefeller what it would take to create the equivalent of a world-class university, responded that it would require \$50 million and 200 years. He was wrong. At the beginning of the 20th century, the University of Chicago became a world-class institution in two decades and slightly more than \$50 million—

donated at the time by Rockefeller himself. The price has ballooned, not only because of inflation but because academic institutions have become immensely more complex and expensive. The competition has also become much fiercer. Now, it might take more than \$500 million along with clever leadership and much good luck.

There are not many world-class universities. Higher education is stratified and differentiated. We are concerned here only with the tiny segment of elite institutions seeking to be at the top of national and international systems of higher education. In the United States, the number of top universities is small. The Association of American Universities, generally seen to be the club of the elite, has just over 50 member universities (many of which are not world class), a number that has grown only modestly since it was established in the early 20th century—out of a total of more than 3,500 academic institutions. Even in the United States, very few universities have managed to claw their way up to the top echelons. In other countries, the number of top-tier institutions is also limited, even when, as in Germany, all universities are basically treated the same in terms of budgets and mission by the government. The most elite universities are located in a small number of countries—in the mid-1980s, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* listed among the top 10 only 4 not in the United States (Cambridge and Oxford, Paris-Sorbonne, and Tokyo).

It is, of course, the judgment of others that carries a university into the rarified ranks of world-class institutions, and no one has figured out how to conduct an appropriate international evaluation. We do not provide such guidelines here, but this discussion may be the first step toward at least developing relevant criteria.

Definitions

Few have attempted to define a world-class university. The following characteristics are by no means agreed upon by teams of experts—this is an effort to create some benchmarks that will provide the basis for debate and analysis. The dictionary defines world class as “ranking among the foremost in the world; of an international standard of excellence.” Fair enough, but in higher education, who decides? We can at least point to some relevant characteristics necessary for world-class status.

Excellence in research underpins the idea of world class—research that is recognized by peers and pushes back the frontiers of knowledge. Such research can be measured and communicated. But if research is the central element, other aspects of a university are required to make outstanding research possible. Top-quality professors are, of course,

central. And to attract and retain the best academic staff, favorable working conditions must be available. These include arrangements for job security—many countries call it tenure—and appropriate salaries and benefits, although academics do not necessarily expect top salaries. The best professors see their work as a “calling”—something to which they are committed by intellectual interest and not just a job.

Academic freedom and an atmosphere of intellectual excitement is central to a world-class university. This means that professors and students must be free to pursue knowledge wherever it leads and to publish their work freely without fear of sanction by either academic or external authority. Some countries permit unfettered academic freedom in the nonpolitical hard sciences but place restrictions on it in the more sensitive social sciences and humanities. In most countries, academic freedom also extends to expression of opinions by members of the academic community on social and political issues as well as within the narrow confines of professional expertise.

The governance of the institution is also important. World-class universities have a significant measure of internal self-governance and an entrenched tradition, usually buttressed by statutes, ensuring that the academic community (usually professors, but sometimes including students) has control over the central elements of academic life—the admission of students, the curriculum, the criteria for the award of degrees, the selection of new members of the professoriate, and the basic direction of the academic work of the institution.

Adequate facilities for academic work are essential—the most advanced and creative research and the most innovative teaching require access to appropriate libraries and laboratories, as well as to the Internet and other electronic resources. With the increasing complexity and expansion of science and scholarship, the cost of providing full access becomes ever higher. While the Internet has meant some cost savings and has eased access to many kinds of knowledge, it is by no means a panacea. Facilities go beyond labs and libraries—staff and students must have adequate offices as well.

Finally, and central to the academic enterprise, adequate funding must be available to support the research and teaching as well as the other functions of the university. Not only is maintaining a complex academic institution expensive, support must be consistent and long term. The cost of maintaining a research university continues to grow because of the increasing complexity and cost of scientific research. Universities cannot benefit from many of the productivity increases due to automation—teaching and learning still generally require professors and students to be in direct contact. Funding is a special chal-

lenge in the present environment because governments are disinvesting in higher education in many countries. Academic institutions are everywhere asked to pay for an increasing part of their budgets through tuition and fees to students, generating funds by consulting and selling research-based products, and other revenue-generating activities. The fact is that public support is necessary for research universities everywhere. Only in the United States and to a lesser extent Japan do private research universities of the highest rank exist. And in the United States there are significant government subsidies through government research grants and access to loans and grants to students. The top private institutions have significant endowments as well. The American tax system, which provides for tax-free donations to nonprofit institutions such as universities, is a major factor in permitting the growth of world-class private universities. Research universities have the ability to generate significant funds through a variety of means, but there is no substitute for consistent and substantial public financial support. Without it, developing and sustaining world-class universities is impossible.

Caveats

A realistic and objective perspective is needed when thinking about world-class institutions of higher learning. For most countries, even large and relatively wealthy ones, only one or two world-class universities are possible or even desirable. For many countries, a world-class university is beyond the ability of the nation to support. Research universities are at the pinnacle of a differentiated academic system in a country—the rest of the system is just as important as its top.

Even the best universities are not the best in everything. Harvard does not rank at the top in engineering, for example. It might be more appropriate for many countries and institutions to focus on building world-class departments, institutes, or schools—especially in fields that are of special relevance to the national or regional economy or society. For example, Malaysia has focused on such disciplines as informatics and rubber technology, areas that are important to the local economy. A small number of highly ranked institutions are somewhat specialized. For example, the California Institute of Technology is a small university focusing almost exclusively on the sciences, yet it ranks fourth in the United States according to *U.S. News and World Report*. The Indian Institutes of Technology, which specialize in limited fields, are highly regarded in India and internationally. At the same time, these institutions provide educational opportunities in a wide range of disciplines, permitting students to choose and

ensuring the possibility of interdisciplinary work.

No one has figured out how to rank universities internationally, or even within countries in ways that are acceptable to the academic community or that can withstand serious critiques. There are many rankings of academic institutions—and these generally emphasize the characteristics relating to research university status. Yet, few of these have been conducted by official organizations or reputable research organizations. Newspapers or magazines have done most and, as noted, only a few are taken seriously. Thus, we have neither national rankings that make sense nor a widely accepted definition of world-class university to enable such an institution to be recognized or, for that matter, aspired to. It is not enough to quote what US Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart said about pornography, “I know it when I see it.”

Overemphasis

Overemphasizing attaining world-class status may harm an individual university or an academic system. It may divert energy and resources from more important—and perhaps realistic—goals. It may focus too much on building a research-oriented and necessarily elite university at the expense of expanding access or serving national needs. It may set up unrealistic expectations that harm faculty morale and performance.

The concept of a world-class university reflects the norms and values of the world’s dominant research-oriented academic institutions—especially the United States and the major Western European countries. The idea is based on the German research university that came to dominate academic thinking at the end of 19th century, especially with the acceptance of this model in the United States, Japan, and other countries. While all of the world’s universities are essentially in the Western tradition, the world-class ideal of the research university is a special variation of that tradition. The American sociologist David Riesman observed in the 1950s that US universities were missing out on diverse academic goals and ideas because of a “meandering procession” that almost all were following in an effort to become like Harvard, Berkeley, and a few other key research-oriented institutions. The same criticism can be made now, as universities around the world seem to be orienting themselves to this single academic ideal. Institutions, and nations, need to carefully assess their needs, resources, and long-term interests before launching into a campaign to build world-class institutions.

Universities operate in both national and global contexts. The world-class idea is in the global sphere. It assumes that the university is competing with the best academic institutions in the world and is aspiring

to reach the pinnacle of excellence and recognition. National and even regional realities may be different. They relate to the needs of the immediate society and economy and imply responsiveness to local communities. The nature of academic performance and roles may differ when relating to these different contexts. To label one world class while relegating the others to the nether regions of the academic hierarchy is perhaps inevitable, but nonetheless unfortunate. How to relate to these varying realities is not easy, but it is of central importance.

Perspectives

The debate about world-class higher education is important. Government and academic planners in countries such as China, where several top universities are self-consciously trying to transform themselves into world-class institutions are considering the topic. In other countries, such as South Korea, people are giving serious attention to the idea. Britain, traditionally the home of a number of top institutions, worries that it is losing its competitive edge.

The world-class debate has one important benefit: it is focusing attention on academic standards and improvement, the roles of universities in society, and how academic institutions can fit in a higher education system within a country and the global academic universe. Striving for excellence is not a bad thing, and competition may spark improvement. Yet, a sense of realism must be a part of the equation and sensitivity to the public good as well. The fuzziness of the concept of a world-class university combined with the impossibility, so far at least, of measuring academic quality and accomplishment make the struggle difficult. Indeed, it might well be the case that the innovative energies and resources of higher education should be focused on more realistic and perhaps more useful goals.

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The Dilemmas of Ranking

Rankings of academic institutions, programs, and departments are all the rage worldwide. National rankings are ubiquitous and at least two worldwide rankings exist. These operations are widely criticized for questionable or flawed methods as well as for the concept itself, but everyone uses them. When done well, they can be valuable to consumers, policymakers, and to academic institutions themselves as they compare themselves with peer institutions at home or abroad.

Rankings range from irresponsible musings by self-appointed experts and money-making schemes by commercial organizations to, at their best, serious efforts by academic or research organizations. Publications—including *U.S. News and World Report* in the United States, the *Times Higher Education Supplement (THES)* and the *Financial Times* in Britain, *Der Spiegel* in Germany, *Reforma* in Mexico, and *Asiaweek* (now defunct), and others—have sponsored rankings. A few outlets, such as *U.S. News* and *THES*, have achieved a degree of respectability. Rankings have achieved a degree of public legitimacy and an aura of credibility because respected research and policy organizations have sponsored some of them. The research and teaching assessments carried out by the funding councils in the United Kingdom, the rankings of disciplines done by the National Research Council in the United States, and some others are examples. This past year, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the *THES* have published worldwide university rankings.

The Rationale for Rankings

Rankings and league tables have been around for a long time, but there has been dramatic growth in the past several decades. The stakes are now much higher. Rankings serve a variety of purposes, good and bad. Rankings are also inevitable—in the era of massification, those who finance higher education and the public want to know which academic institutions are the best. Governments and funding authorities want to know how best to invest their resources and need to be able to differentiate among a large number of institutions. Mass higher education requires differentiation since institutions serve diverse purposes and students attend universities for many reasons. Rankings can help to define differentiated academic systems if they can be devised to capture a variety of metrics and thus make decision making easier.

Universities also try to legitimate their positions for reasons of prestige, student and staff recruitment, and other goals. There is increasing competition among universities and countries for funds, prestige, and the best and brightest students and staff. Intense competition also exists among students to study at the most prestigious schools. Faculty compete to be appointed at the best possible universities. Institutions compete for research grants and public support. Competition has long been a part of a small number of academic systems, such as the United States and, to some extent, Canada; but it is a new factor in most countries. Until recently, most countries had small and elite academic institutions, and it made little difference where a student matriculated. Ranking and competition did not exist.

Problems

The problem with ranking concerns the practice, not the principle. How is it possible to accurately measure a nation's academic system or, for that matter, the quality of a single institution? Or of academic institutions worldwide? Many rankings resemble "popularity contests"—asking groups in the academic community, especially administrators, their opinions about peer institutions. This method is especially popular among the many magazines and newspapers worldwide that rank institutions. Even the most sophisticated rankings include these peer opinions, although many more measures are also included.

Rankings count factors such as external funding, numbers of articles and books written by faculty members, library resources, proportion of faculty members with advanced degrees, and quality of students (measured by scores on admissions or other tests). These numbers are assumed to be a proxy for quality, which they are to a significant extent.

However, the number of articles published does not necessarily relate to the quality or impact of the articles. Institutions strong in the bio-medical sciences will usually have more external grant or contract funds than those with strength in the humanities or social sciences. Rankings generally do not include teaching quality. There are, in fact, no widely accepted methods for measuring teaching quality, and assessing the impact of education on students is so far an unexplored area as well.

Universities have different missions and goals, and ranking also tends to ignore these issues. The rankings generally emphasize the norms of the top research universities. The assumption is that “one size fits all” and that the norms of the research universities are the gold standard. Focusing on undergraduate teaching, stressing specific programs in limited professional fields, providing access to underserved populations, and other goals are not rewarded in most ranking schemes.

International Concerns

If rankings are problematical nationally, they present even more challenges globally. Publication counts often stress established refereed journals included in such databases as those of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI). These are mainly journals published in English and selected with the norms of the major academic systems of the United States and Britain in mind. While English is increasingly the language of science, it is not necessarily the central medium of communication in the humanities, law, and a number of other fields. Using international recognition such as Nobel Prizes as a proxy for excellence downplays the social sciences and humanities, fields in which Nobels are not awarded, and causes further disadvantages for developing countries and smaller universities around the world. Using citation counts as a way of measuring excellence also presents serious problems. Such counts emphasize material in English and journals that are readily available in the larger academic systems. It is well known, for example, that American scientists mainly cite other Americans and tend to ignore scholarship from other countries. This may artificially boost the ranking of US universities. The fact is that essentially all of the measures used to assess quality and construct rankings enhance the stature of the large universities in the major English-speaking centers of science and scholarship, especially the United States and the United Kingdom. It is also the case that universities with medical schools and strength in the hard sciences generally have a significant advantage because

these fields generate more external funding, and researchers in them publish more articles.

Conclusion

Rankings and league tables play a useful role. They focus attention on key aspects of academic achievement and may influence policymakers who might otherwise be content to slash budgets and maintain mediocrity. Everyone wants to be “number one,” and countries want to have top-ranking universities. They may stimulate the academic community to strive to improve quality and encourage competition and productivity. Rankings are benchmarks of excellence for the public. And they help to mark differences among academic institutions and in this way, which may lead to differentiated goals and missions in academic systems.

Yet, rankings often measure the wrong things, and they use flawed metrics to do the measurements. They privilege the already privileged and stress certain academic disciplines (mainly in the hard sciences) over others. Rankings ignore key academic roles such as teaching and do not look at all at how students are affected by their academic experience.

The solutions to these significant problems will be a difficult task. There are many conflicting interests at play in the “ranking game.” Creating generally agreed criteria that can be used to do the rankings may be a useful first step. Providing appropriate ways of measuring them is also necessary. Transparency throughout the process is central—many of the current rankers are notably unclear about both criteria and methods. Applying the norms and values of the major academic “powers” will not accurately measure quality worldwide, nor will it result in meaningful international rankings. In the competitive and market-oriented academic world of the 21st century, rankings are inevitable and probably necessary. The challenge is to ensure that they provide accurate and relevant assessments and measure the right things.

[Winter 2006]

A World-Class Country without World-Class Higher Education: India's 21st Century Dilemma

India is rushing headlong toward economic success and modernization, counting on high-tech industries such as information technology and biotechnology to propel the nation to prosperity. India's recent announcement that it would no longer produce unlicensed inexpensive generic pharmaceuticals bowed to the realities of the World Trade Organization while at the same time challenging the domestic drug industry to compete with the multinational firms. Unfortunately, India's weak higher education sector constitutes the Achilles' heel of this strategy. India's systematic disinvestment in higher education in recent years has yielded an academic system characterized by mediocrity, producing neither world-class research nor very many highly trained scholars, scientists, or managers to sustain high-tech development.

India's main competitors—especially China but also including Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea—are investing in large and differentiated higher education systems. They are providing access to large numbers of students at the bottom of the academic system while at the same time building some research-based universities able to compete with the world's best institutions. The recent London *Times Higher Education Supplement* ranking of the world's top 200 universities included three in China, three in Hong Kong, three in South Korea, one in Taiwan, and one in India (an Indian Institute of Technology, at number 41—but the specific campus was not specified).

These countries are positioning themselves for leadership in the knowledge-based economies of the coming era. There was a time when countries could achieve economic success with cheap labor and low-tech manufacturing. Low wages still help, but contemporary large-scale development requires a sophisticated and at least partly knowledge-based economy. India has chosen that path, but will find a major stumbling block in its generally poor university system.

Higher Education Realities

India has significant advantages in the 21st century knowledge race. It has a large higher education sector—the third-largest in the world in student numbers, after China and the United States. It uses English as a primary language of higher education and research. It has a long academic tradition. Academic freedom is respected. There are a small number of high-quality institutions, departments, and centers that can form the basis of a quality sector in higher education. The fact that the states, rather than the central government, exercise major responsibility for higher education creates a rather cumbersome structure, but the system allows for a variety of policies and approaches.

Yet, the weaknesses far outweigh the strengths. India educates approximately 10 percent of its young people in higher education, still a rather low number by international standards—compared to more than half in the major industrialized countries and 15 percent in China. India's academic system has an unusually small high-quality sector at the top—most of the academic system is of modest quality at best. Almost all of the world's academic systems resemble a pyramid, with a small top tier and a massive sector at the bottom. India has a tiny top tier. None of its universities occupy a solid position at the top. A few of the best universities have some excellent departments and centers, and there are a small number of outstanding undergraduate colleges. The University Grants Commission's recent major support of five universities to build on their recognized strength represents a step toward recognizing the importance of a differentiated academic system—and fostering excellence. At present, the world-class institutions are mainly limited to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), and perhaps a few others such as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. These institutions, combined, enroll well under 1 percent of the student population.

India's colleges and universities, with just a few exceptions, have become large, underfunded, and ungovernable institutions. At many of them, politics has intruded into campus life, influencing academic

appointments and decisions at all levels. Underinvestment in libraries, information technology, laboratories, and classrooms makes it very difficult to provide top-quality instruction or engage in cutting-edge research.

The rise in the number of part-time teachers and the freeze on new full-time appointments in many places have contributed to a decline in the commitment and morale of the academic profession. The lack of accountability at any level means that teaching and research performance is seldom measured. The system provides few incentives to perform at the highest standards. Bureaucratic inertia hampers change. Student unrest and faculty agitation sometimes disrupt normal operations, delay examinations, and foment tensions. Nevertheless, with a semblance of normalcy, faculty administrators are able to provide teaching, coordinate examinations, and award degrees.

Even the small top tier of higher education faces serious problems. Political pressures on the IITs to alter admissions and other policies have jeopardized the generally effective meritocracy that has characterized those institutions. Many IIT graduates, well trained in technology, have chosen not to contribute their skills to the burgeoning technology sector in India. Perhaps half leave the country immediately upon graduation to pursue advanced study abroad—and most do not return. A stunning 86 percent of students in science and technology fields from India who obtain degrees in the United States do not return home immediately following the completion of their years of study. Another significant group, which some estimates place as high as 30 percent, decide to earn MBAs in India because local salaries are higher—and are lost to science and technology. A corps of dedicated and able teachers work at the IITs and IIMs, but the lure of jobs abroad and in the private sector makes it increasingly difficult to attract the best and brightest to the academic profession.

Few in India are thinking creatively about higher education. There is no field of higher education research. Other countries with vibrant academic systems collect data and focus analytic attention on their universities. No independent research or policy centers focusing on higher education exist. Officials in government as well as academic leaders seem content to do the “same old thing.” Academic institutions and systems have become large and complex. They need good data, careful analysis, and creative ideas. In China, more than two dozen higher education research centers and several government agencies are involved in higher education policy.

Why Does This Matter?

India has survived with an increasingly mediocre higher education sys-

tem for decades. Now, as India strives to compete in a globalized economy in areas that require highly trained professionals, the quality of higher education becomes increasingly important. So far, India's large educated population base and its reservoir of at least moderately well-trained university graduates have permitted the country to move ahead. But the competition is fierce, with other countries rapidly upgrading their universities and research facilities. China in particular is heavily investing in improving its best universities with the aim of making a small group of them world class in the coming decade and developing a larger number of internationally competitive research universities. Other Asian countries are also upgrading higher education with the aim of building world-class universities. Taiwan, which is a major designer and producer of IT hardware, is considering merging several of its top technological universities to create an "Asian MIT."

To compete successfully in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century, India needs a sufficient number of universities that not only produce bright graduates for export but can also support sophisticated research in a number of scientific and scholarly fields and produce at least some of the knowledge and technology needed for an expanding economy. India's recent decision to stop producing generic pharmaceuticals to conform with WTO rules underscores the need for the country to have an independent research capacity to develop, manufacture, and market scientific products, including medicines.

Paths to Success

How can India build a higher education system that will permit it to join developed economies? The newly emerging private sector in higher education cannot spearhead academic growth. Several of the well-endowed and effectively managed private institutions maintain reasonably high standards, although it is not clear that these institutions will be able to sustain themselves in the long run. They can help produce well-qualified graduates in such fields as management, but they cannot form the basis for comprehensive research universities. This sector lacks the resources to build the facilities required for quality instruction and research in the sciences, nor can enough money be earned by providing instruction in the mainstream arts and sciences disciplines. Most of the private institutions do not focus on advanced training in the sciences.

Only public universities have the potential to be truly world-class institutions. Institutions and programs of national prominence have already been identified by the government. But these institutions have not been adequately or consistently supported. The top institutions

require sustained funding from public sources. Academic salaries must be high enough to attract excellent scientists and scholars. Fellowships and other grants should be available for bright students. An academic culture that is based on meritocratic norms and competition for advancement and research funds is a necessary component, as is a judicious mix of autonomy to do creative research and accountability to ensure productivity. A world-class university requires world-class professors and students—and a culture to sustain and stimulate them.

A clearly differentiated academic system has not been created in India—that is, a system where there are some clearly identified elite institutions that receive significantly greater resources than other universities. One of the main reasons that the University of California at Berkeley is so good is that other California universities receive much less support. India's elite universities require sustained state support—they require the recognition that they are indeed top institutions and deserve commensurate resources. But they also require effective management and an ethos of an academic meritocracy. Funding institutions that are incapable of managing resources is a wasteful investment. At present, the structures are not in place to permit building and sustaining top-quality programs even if resources are provided.

A combination of specific conditions and resources are needed to create outstanding universities:

- sustained financial support, with an appropriate mix of accountability and autonomy;
- development of a clearly differentiated academic system—including private institutions—in which academic institutions have different missions, resources, and purposes;
- managerial reforms and the introduction of effective administration; and
- truly meritocratic hiring and promotion policies for the academic profession and similarly rigorous and honest recruitment, selection, and instruction of students.

India cannot build internationally recognized research-oriented universities overnight, but the country has the key elements in place to begin and sustain the process. India will need to create a dozen or more universities that can compete internationally to fully participate in the new world economy. Without these universities, India is destined to remain a scientific backwater.

The Tyranny of Citations

The analysis of citations—examining what scholars and scientists publish for the purpose of assessing their productivity, impact, or prestige—has become a cottage industry in higher education. This approach has been taken to extremes both for the assessment of individuals and of the productivity and influence of entire universities or even academic systems. Pioneered in the 1950s in the United States, bibliometrics was invented as a tool for tracing research ideas, the progress of science, and the impact of scientific work. Developed for the hard sciences, it was expanded to the social sciences and humanities.

Citation analysis, relying mostly on the databases of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), is used worldwide. Increasingly sophisticated bibliometric methodologies permit ever more fine-grained analysis of the articles included in the ISI corpus of publications. The basic idea of bibliometrics is to examine the impact of scientific and scholarly work, not to measure quality. The somewhat questionable assumption is that if an article is widely cited, it has an impact and also is of high quality. Quantity of publications is not the main criterion. A researcher may have one widely cited article and be considered influential, while another scholar with many uncited works is seen as less prestigious.

Bibliometrics plays a role in the sociology of science, revealing how research ideas are communicated and how scientific discovery takes place. It can help to analyze how some ideas become accepted and others discarded. It can point to the most widely cited ideas and individuals, but the correlation between quality and citations is less clear.

An American Orientation

The bibliometric system was invented to serve American science and scholarship. Although the citation system is now used by an international audience, it remains largely American in focus and orientation. The system is exclusively in English—due in part to the predominance of scientific journals in English and in part because American scholars communicate exclusively in English. Researchers have noted that Americans largely cite the work of other Americans in US-based journals, while scholars in other parts of the world are more international in their research perspectives. American insularity further distorts the citation system in terms of both language and nationality.

The American orientation is not surprising. The United States dominates the world's R&D budget—around half of the world's R&D funds are still spent in the United States, although other countries are catching up, and a large percentage of the world's research universities are located in the United States. In the 2005 *Times Higher Education Supplement* ranking, 31 of the world's top 100 (research-focused) universities were located in the United States. A large proportion of internationally circulated scientific journals are edited in the United States, because of the size and strength of the American academic market, the predominance of English, and the overall productivity of the academic system. This high US profile enhances the academic and methodological norms of American academe in most scientific fields. While the hard sciences are probably less prone to an American orientation and are by their nature less insular, the social sciences and some other fields often demand that authors conform to the largely American methodological norms and orientations of journals in those fields.

A Small Subuniverse

The journals included in the databases used for citation analysis are a tiny subset of the total number of scientific journals worldwide. They are, for the most part, the mainstream English-medium journals in the disciplines. The ISI was established to examine the sciences, and it is not surprising that the hard sciences are overrepresented and the social sciences and humanities less prominent. Further, scientists tend to cite more material, thus boosting the numbers of citations of scientific articles and presumably their impact. The sciences produce some 350,000 new, cited references weekly, while the social sciences generate 50,000 and the humanities 15,000. This means that universities with strength in the hard sciences are deemed more influential and are seen to have a greater impact—as are individuals who work in these fields. The biomedical fields are especially overrepresented because of the numbers of

citations that they generate. All of this means that individuals and institutions in developing countries, where there is less strength in the hard sciences and less ability to build expensive laboratories and other facilities, are at a significant disadvantage.

The Use, and Misuse, of Citations

It is important to remember that the citation system was invented mainly to understand how scientific discoveries and innovations are communicated and how research functions. It was not, initially, seen as a tool for the evaluation of individual scientists or entire universities or academic systems. The citation system is useful for tracking how scientific ideas in certain disciplines are circulated among researchers at top universities in the industrialized countries, as well as how ideas and individual scientists use and communicate research findings.

A system invented for quite limited functions is used to fulfill purposes for which it was not intended. Citation analysis purports to measure the productivity of scholars and scientists—although productivity is defined narrowly in terms of published scientific articles cited in journals and, to some extent, books and other sources available to the ISI database. Scientists who are widely cited are deemed to be more productive and influential and presumably rewarded for their work. Hiring authorities, promotion committees, and salary-review officials use citations as a central part of the evaluation process. This approach overemphasizes the work of scientists—those with access to publishing in the key journals and those with the resources to do cutting-edge research in an increasingly expensive academic environment. Another problem is the extensive focus on academics in the hard sciences rather than those in the social sciences and, especially, the humanities. Academics in many countries are urged, or even forced, to publish their work in journals that are part of a citation system—the major English-language journals published in the United States and a few other countries. This forces them into the norms and paradigms of these journals and may well keep them from conducting research and analysis of topics directly relevant to their own countries.

Citation analysis, along with other measures, is used prominently to assess the quality of departments and universities around the world and is also employed to rank institutions and systems. This practice, too, creates significant distortions. Again, the developing countries and small industrialized nations that do not use English as the language of higher education are at a disadvantage. Universities strong in the sciences have an advantage in the rankings, as do those where faculty members publish in journals within the citation systems.

Conclusion

This article criticizes the unsophisticated use of citation analysis for the evaluation of individuals, departments, institutions, and systems. The misuse of citation analysis distorts the original reasons for creating bibliometric systems. Inappropriately stretching bibliometrics is grossly unfair to those being evaluated and ranked. The “have-nots” in the world scientific system are put at a major disadvantage. Much creative research in universities around the world is downplayed because of the control of the narrow paradigms of the citation analysis system. This system overemphasizes work written in English. The hard sciences are given too much attention, and the system is particularly hard on the humanities. Scholarship that might be published in “nonacademic” outlets, including books and popular journals, is ignored. Evaluators and rankers need go back to the drawing boards to think about a reliable system that can accurately measure the scientific and scholarly work of individuals and institutions. The unwieldy and inappropriate use of citation analysis and bibliometrics for evaluation and ranking does not serve higher education well—and it entrenches existing inequalities.

[Spring 2006]

Part 5

Economic Issues

Who Is Paying for Higher Education—and Why?

A key debate in the United States, as in other countries, relates to the cost of higher education, whether higher education is affordable, especially for students from lower-income families, and where the responsibility for funding postsecondary education should lie. Recently, the Lumina Foundation, a private research group, released a study claiming that the cost of college is skyrocketing. It is said that low-income students can no longer afford to attend college, that a growing number of graduates are saddled with massive debts after graduation, and that higher costs have led to a growing dropout problem and diminishing access. The implication is that colleges and universities are gouging students and their families. The reality is more complex than the headlines indicate, and it is not true that public colleges are overcharging. Lumina has highlighted a key reality of higher education in the new millennium—in America and much of the rest of the world, the cost of higher education has been shifted from the state to the student. It is not a surprise that costs have shot up. Indeed, it is part of a long-term and deliberate policy initiative by government at all levels.

There are three elements to this tectonic shift in public higher education policy over the past three decades. They can be summarized as public good vs. private good, high tuition and high aid, and sending the masses to the community colleges.

Public and Private Benefits

Public higher education was at one time based on the belief that college

and university degrees benefited society by enhancing the skills of the population and thereby improving the economy, increasing tax revenues, and in general adding to the “public good.” The more people who could attend college and benefit from advanced study, the better. The data are very clear that a college degree leads to higher income and greater civic participation. It is, without question, a good investment. Because of the clear social benefits of higher education, society, it was argued, should invest in it. There was general agreement in most states and at the federal level that government should provide most of the funding for public higher education. That commitment started to erode in the 1970s, when conservative economists began to argue that the benefits accruing with higher education went to individuals, and were therefore a “private good” for which individuals and their families should pay. An additional concomitant of the private good idea is that grants have been changed to loans—placing major burdens on many college graduates. This ideological shift, combined with growing pressures on public budgets, led to a dramatic change in thinking about public higher education. Most states have been slowly shifting the cost of public higher education from tax revenues to tuition paid by students. Many states now provide less than one-third the cost of public higher education, with students paying the rest.

High Tuition and High Aid

Another major public policy change in many states has been an effort to ensure that those who can afford to pay for public higher education are charged and those who need financial assistance receive it. In the old days, studies found that many students attending public universities came from families who could have afforded to pay a reasonably high tuition. The state was basically subsidizing the wealthy. Faced with fiscal shortfalls, tuition levels were raised and money put aside for needs-based scholarships and grant programs. The concept of high tuition and high aid makes sense in an era of limited public spending as it ensures access to those who cannot afford tuition. The problem is that in many states high tuition has remained but “high aid” has not been maintained—the result being that the poor are in some ways even worse off.

Community Colleges

Increasing numbers of students have been encouraged to attend two-year community colleges for the first part of undergraduate education, transferring to a four-year school for the completion of their studies. Community colleges typically charge lower tuition—and they are much

less costly for the states to operate than are four-year colleges. Thus, students save money through lower direct tuition and the states save by the lower operating costs. Students may also save on housing costs because they usually attend community colleges within commuting distance. Students, however, lose the experience of the campus environment and the curricular continuity and coherence of a four-year college education. Policymakers love the community college alternative simply because it saves money.

Other Examples

Other countries offer alternatives to American thinking. In Western Europe, tuition remains low or, in some cases, entirely free. There is still a commitment to the public-good argument. The European experience shows that modern postindustrial societies can support public higher education systems and provide access to growing numbers of students. In Australia, where there has been a US-style shift to the private-good idea, the funding system is based on a concept of a tax on the earnings of university graduates—degree holders pay back the cost of their higher education, over time, based on their incomes. There is less of an immediate burden on individuals and a greater degree of equity. These examples show that there are other ways to think about financing large higher education systems.

The Logic of the System

The unaffordability of public higher education that the Lumina Foundation highlights is no surprise. Indeed, it is a logical and inevitable result of the changes in public policy of the recent past. To make higher education more affordable will require another philosophical and ideological change—one that is unlikely to occur in today's political and economic climate.

[Spring 2002]

Let the Buyer Pay: International Trends in Funding for Higher Education

The announcement by Britain's Labour government that free tuition for higher education will be ended signals a revolution in Britain and is part of a worldwide trend. Increasingly, the cost of higher education is shifting from the public purse to the individual. By American standards, the \$1,600 that university students in Britain will be asked to pay seems modest enough, but it represents a massive change in ideas about who should pay and about the nature of a university education.

Worldwide, there are several patterns of funding university study. In Europe, the state typically still pays for the institutional costs of instruction; students pay little or no tuition, but are responsible for living costs; and most universities are public. In many Asian countries (such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines), most students attend private universities and colleges and pay the full cost of their education. Tuition is also charged in the small and relatively elite public higher education sector. In the United States, a mix of public and private institutions exists; 80 percent of students attend public colleges and universities, where they pay tuition amounting to something like a quarter or more of the actual cost of instruction, with public funds and other resources covering the rest. The remaining 20 percent study in private institutions, where students pay the bulk of the cost of education.

Some poor countries provide totally free higher education. For exam-

ple, most African countries today provide not only free tuition but virtually free room and board as well. The cost of supporting universities for the tiny proportion of the student-age population far exceeds the capability of governments facing severe economic difficulties. Until recently, China also provided free higher education but has moved to tuition-based arrangements. In countries in which most students attend private higher education institutions—some in Asia and a few in Latin America—students and their families pay for most of the cost of higher education. In countries dominated by the public sector, the state pays most of the bills.

The British decision signals the beginning of a major change throughout Europe. Discussions are under way in other European countries, and it seems only a matter of time until Europe's public universities charge tuition. This change is the result of a combination of demographic pressures, fiscal realities, and reinvigorated conservative ideas about public spending in Europe. These ideas are reflected worldwide, have been advocated by the World Bank, and are powerful in such diverse countries as the United States and China.

The demand for access to higher education is high everywhere. University degrees mean higher salaries after graduation, and today's high-tech workplace requires the skills gained by university study. Until recently, many European countries educated only a small portion of the relevant age group in universities, and expansion has been rapid as universities struggle to meet demand. The United States educates close to half of its college-age population. In Europe, the proportions until recently were 20 percent or less. Now, the participation rate is growing, placing tremendous pressures on academic institutions.

Sluggish economies and high rates of unemployment have restricted the money available for higher education, with the result that academic institutions have had to expand enrollments without adequate financial resources. In most European countries, universities have not been permitted to charge tuition, and there is no tradition of private philanthropy to higher education.

There has been a shift in attitudes toward public spending of all kinds. People in most countries are reluctant to pay higher taxes, and this has resulted in less money from government resources available for higher education. While the tradition of high tax rates and receiving more services from the state is entrenched on the European continent, "tax revolts" are occurring even there.

A public consensus is growing that higher education is a "private good" primarily benefiting the individual rather than a social investment necessary for a modern economy. This perspective implies that

the major cost of study at the postsecondary level should be borne by the individual rather than by society.

This powerful combination of forces is contributing to the current fiscal crisis of higher education. In the United States, we see the burden of funding higher education being shifted more and more to the individual—even the public universities are increasingly funded by nongovernmental sources, especially student tuition and fees, donations raised from alumni and others, and direct payment from businesses for services provided by the universities. Higher education is being asked to be more accountable for how its diminishing portion of public financial support is spent. Indeed, in many ways America's public colleges and universities are no longer public institutions, but rather “publicly assisted” nonprofit schools. Similar trends can be seen in Europe, but most countries are at the beginning of the transition to privatization of higher education.

Britain is leading the European change. Students will be charged a modest (by US standards) tuition, with loans available to low-income families. Further ideas include a “graduate tax” on university graduates, based on their incomes in the years following graduation, to provide further payment for higher education. This method of funding higher education is being tried in Australia and several other countries. Germany, whose rapidly growing higher education system is facing severe fiscal constraints, is also beginning to consider alternative methods of funding higher education. Most observers agree that standards have fallen in Germany's higher education system, and that an infusion of money is necessary to improve conditions. In all of these cases, the student will pay more for the privilege of studying.

Private higher education has expanded in many countries to provide access to large numbers without a rise in public funding. Privatization shifts the burden of paying for higher education to the student. Much of the expansion in Russia and in Central and Eastern Europe has been in the private sector. Latin America has also seen a dramatic growth in private institutions. The new institutions tend to be vocationally oriented and specialize in fields where the cost of offering instruction is fairly low and the demand is high, such as management studies or computer technology. The quality of many of these universities is, at best, untested, and at worst highly questionable. New private colleges and universities are absorbing the demand for higher education, with few questions asked.

All of these changes will have dramatic implications for higher education worldwide. In Europe, where public funding was the norm and universities were of similar quality, academic systems are becoming

more differentiated by quality and prestige. Since the 19th century, universities have been involved in basic research and have been responsible for much of the scientific progress of the past century. Research is expensive, and it is not clear how it will be funded in the future. Without question, the “buyers” (students) will be paying more for higher education. How quality will be assured in these expanded and increasingly independent academic systems has yet to be determined. We are on the verge of profound international changes in patterns of funding, assessment, and access.

[Fall 1997]

Part 6
Private Higher Education

The Rise of the Pseudouniversity

An array of institutions, agencies, corporations, and other businesses are calling themselves universities these days. It is time to call for a halt to this trend, which is debasing the nomenclature of knowledge and scholarship. Just as important, these institutions are, in many cases, providing “degrees” to people who have not studied at a university and have not earned the academic titles. I refer here to a wide variety of organizations—including the University of Phoenix, which is now America's largest private “university” and is accredited to offer academic degrees; Jones International University, the first US-based Internet-only “university,” also accredited; Cardean University, a company with links to Stanford, Columbia, and other major universities and that “packages” courses for Internet delivery and offers degrees in several professional fields; Motorola University, which is owned by a major corporation and offers training to employees as well as outsiders; and a variety of others. These examples are all in the for-profit sector, as are most of the new pseudouniversities, but the issue of for-profit versus nonprofit status is not the critical factor here.

These new pseudouniversities are not universities. They may offer valuable training in fields that appeal to eager customers. They may provide this training in “classes” taught by teachers in a “site-based” traditional format, offer instruction through the Internet or other new distance arrangements, or perhaps use a combination of modes of delivery. They may employ well-qualified instructors, although seldom on a full-time basis. But they do not fit the definition of a university and should not bear this title. The time has come to scrutinize the role of this new phenomenon in the universe of postsecondary education. The

issue here is not the value or usefulness of the new providers of training but rather protecting one of society's most valuable institutions—the university.

What Is a University?

Defining a university is not an easy task, especially in this era of differentiation in higher education, with new and diverse institutions emerging everywhere. However, we can probably agree on a set of common functions and values. Universities, from their medieval beginnings, have been teaching institutions, encompassing most of the disciplines known at the time. Universities have been imbued with a sense of responsibility for the public good—be it preserving books in libraries, sponsoring art museums, or providing service to local communities—and have seen themselves as independent places of teaching, research, and social commentary. For almost two centuries, research, especially basic research, has been a key function of a university. Professors—often, but not always, with long-term or permanent appointments—have been at the heart of the university, exercising control over the curriculum, the admission of students, and the awarding of degrees. Universities are normally expected to offer undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees in a variety of disciplines and fields.

Contemporary universities are themselves varied. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology does not call itself a university but is one in every sense of the word. Boston College, despite its name, is a university because it offers graduate and professional degrees in many fields. Rockefeller University, a small institution that specializes in graduate training and research in the biomedical fields, calls itself a university but might be too specialized to warrant the title, despite its quality and reputation. Universities can be publicly owned and receive their funds largely from the government, or they can be privately controlled and responsible for their own budgets. Some are managed by religious organizations. In some countries, universities are managed by families. There are also a small number of for-profit universities—for example, in the Philippines.

The Pseudouniversities

In the past several decades, an entirely new model of a postsecondary institution has arrived on the scene. These new institutions do not fit the description of universities but, instead, offer specialized training in a variety of areas that are in demand.

For the most part, these institutions are for-profit entities, seeking to earn money for the owners or shareholders. Many are now corpora-

tions listed on the stock exchange. Some companies—such as the Apollo Group, which owns the University of Phoenix, and Sylvan Learning Systems [currently, Laureate Education]—are mainly in the education business. Others, including IBM and the multinational publisher Elsevier (which now owns part of Harcourt General) are large media conglomerates or technology companies with an interest in education. Some have done quite well in the stock markets. Unlike universities, these new institutions have as their primary goal earning a profit.

The pseudouniversities are highly specialized institutions. They do not offer programs in a wide range of subjects but rather focus on targeted, market-driven fields and have the ability to shift their focus, based on student demand. So far, management and business studies, information technology, and some areas of teacher training and educational administration have been the most appealing fields. The chosen areas are those in which low-cost instruction can be offered without the need for expensive laboratory equipment. The curriculum is also subject to change. If demand falls off in one area, another can quickly be substituted.

The pseudouniversities have no permanent faculty and are staffed by managers who make decisions about both the business and the curricular aspects of the institution. Instructors are hired to provide instruction, develop web-based modules, and ensure that customers are served. Costs are kept low by hiring instructors to teach specific courses. Benefits are generally not available, and there is no commitment by the institution to those offering the instruction. Instructors lack academic freedom in the traditional sense of that term—they are hired to teach a specific content and cannot stray from it. There is absolutely no protection for teachers who might express divergent views, object to institutional directions, or disagree with management decisions.

In the traditional universities, the concept of shared governance means the academic staff have a significant role in decision making about the institution. In pseudouniversities, there is no shared governance at all but simply management. Managers make the key decisions, with subject matter specialists brought in to develop degree structures. Power is entirely in the hands of management.

Pseudouniversities have no interest in research. Indeed, research would detract from the profit-oriented mission of the institution. It would be impossible to foster research activity with part-time instructors, scant library or laboratory resources, and no sense of academic autonomy. These institutions have no commitment to the broader public interest or the idea of service to society. Traditional universities have

stressed service as a key responsibility, and both the institutions and their faculty members engage in many different kinds of pro bono work. The pseudouniversities are specialized profit-making machines.

Is There a Problem?

Our purpose is not to advocate the abolition of this trend in higher education. The for-profit education sector, well established in the United States and in many other countries, is simply taking advantage of the increasingly competitive nature of education markets and the demand for specialized training in knowledge-based societies. It is, however, necessary to label these institutions correctly—not just to ensure “truth in packaging,” but more importantly to protect the traditional universities and their critically central functions in modern society. This is no mere semantic quibble—it goes to the heart of the future of higher education.

Institutions that are not universities should not call themselves universities. They should not be permitted to offer what purport to be academic degrees. They should be accredited but not by the accrediting agencies responsible for traditional universities. In other words, these institutions should be in a clearly defined category of training institutions, clearly labeled and delineated. Customers, formerly called students, should be aware that when attending colleges and universities they are studying at institutions with a set of understood norms and values; but that when they purchase a specialized training course, they are studying at an entirely different kind of institution. The qualifications earned at the new-style institutions should not be called degrees, but rather given other designations such as certificates of competency.

At the same time, traditional universities must think carefully about their own missions and programs in the competitive environment of the 21st century. In urgent need of examination is the tendency of academic institutions to “spin off” for-profit subsidiaries, join consortia aimed at producing a profit, or focus increasingly on applied research aimed at bringing revenues rather than contributing to the advancement of knowledge.

For a start, let’s call a rose by its proper name. The new for-profit “universities” should be forced to change their names to something more appropriate. For example, the University of Phoenix should be called the Phoenix Specialized Training Institute (PSTI), offering a range of “professional competency certificates.” Motorola University should be the Motorola Corporate Training Institute. An entirely new accrediting structure should be set up to ensure that quality is offered to customers. If these steps are taken, universities will remain univer-

sities. Their focus on teaching, research, and service will remain intact. If we allow the pseudouniversities to proliferate willy-nilly, higher education will be debased and subject to ever-increasing competitive pressures that will inevitably destroy one of society's most valuable institutions.

[Fall 2001]

The Anatomy of Private Higher Education

The worldwide patterns of private higher education tell us much about the growth and development of this increasingly important branch of postsecondary education. Private higher education, in many countries, will be the growth area for the first part of the 21st century. Private universities are expanding at a more rapid rate than public institutions, and they are serving ever-larger segments of the population. In such countries as South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines, private universities educate the large majority of those going on to postsecondary education—80 percent overall. In Latin America, the private sector is growing quickly in many countries; more than half the enrollments in Brazil, Chile, and Colombia are in private universities. If the nonuniversity postsecondary institutions are also included, the proportions increase and other countries can be added. In 1997, half of the total postsecondary enrollments in Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela were in private institutions. Private universities and other postsecondary institutions are developing rapidly in Central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, with growth at all levels of the academic system. This expansion is in general unplanned and unregulated.

The private sector in higher education is diverse. Some of the world's best universities are private. In Latin America, many of the most prestigious universities are private, and many of these are affiliated with the Catholic Church. In Asia, prestigious private universities such as Yonsei in Korea, Waseda in Japan, and De La Salle and the

Ateneo de Manila in the Philippines have long stood alongside well-regarded public universities. Although 80 percent of American students study at public universities and colleges, many of the most prestigious universities are private—such institutions as Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Chicago, and others. These universities are stable and firmly entrenched at the top of the academic hierarchy. In general, they have more in common with other top universities in the public sector than with lower-prestige institutions in the private sector.

At the other end of the spectrum, private institutions increasingly dominate the bottom of the system—those “demand-absorbing” schools that offer postsecondary degrees of questionable quality and uncertain usefulness in the marketplace. In Latin America, India, some countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and elsewhere, private institutions dominate the nonuniversity sector of trade schools, professional academies, and the like. In many countries, these nonuniversity institutions are not officially recognized by government agencies or accrediting bodies, and do not offer degrees. Their certificates or diplomas have an uncertain value in the marketplace. These schools are often completely unregulated. Some offer applied training in fields such as computer technology or business studies that is much in demand in the employment market. Many others provide training in fields that is less useful or is of low quality. In the United States, the “proprietary sector” of private postsecondary trade schools, in general profit making, has been in existence for decades. Quality is mixed, and accreditation and accountability of these schools have always been problematic. This large sector of private postsecondary education is largely unexamined and often unregulated. It is caveat emptor with a vengeance.

In some countries, private “universities” have been set up to offer “academic degrees” without much study or evaluation of students. These institutions are basically diploma mills established to make a quick profit for their owners. They are generally unrecognized, and frequently shut down by government authorities when discovered. As accreditation and evaluation agencies are established to control the expanding private higher education marketplace, these institutions will be more difficult to set up. At the present time, however, they are a problem in more than a few countries.

Private higher education is seldom totally private. The private sector is intertwined with the state in many ways. Increasingly, accrediting and evaluation bodies are established by state authorities to provide some standards and controls over the expanding private sector. In some places, government agencies are responsible for accrediting and evalu-

ation, while elsewhere, as in the United States, consortia of academic institutions have responsibility for accrediting, and their decisions are recognized by government authorities. In most countries, public funds are available to the private sector through a variety of mechanisms. In the United States and other countries, students at private institutions are eligible for government-subsidized loans and sometimes grants regardless of whether they study at public or private universities or colleges. Private universities can in general receive government funds for research. In India, which has one of the largest private higher education sectors in the world, government funding is available to both public and private colleges (all of the universities are public), although a minority of private colleges are fully funded by student tuition payments. The Philippines also has a government-funded program to assist private higher education. In general, when private institutions accept state funds, they must comply with state regulations concerning student admissions, faculty qualifications, conditions of study, and the like.

With a few exceptions, private universities depend on student tuition for the large proportion of their income. A few prestigious institutions in the United States have large endowment funds that free them from direct dependence on students, but this is quite rare among private institutions, even in the United States. This dependence is a defining characteristic of private higher education worldwide, and means that private institutions must be sensitive to student interests, the employment market for graduates, and patterns of pricing. The reality is that private universities must ensure that a sufficient number of students matriculate to provide the needed income. In some countries, such as India and South Korea, tuition levels are controlled by state authorities and institutions cannot determine their own tuition levels, but in most countries private universities are free to determine tuition.

The rapidly expanding world of private higher education is quite diverse. While academic institutions tend to copy from one another and seek to emulate the most prestigious schools, there is great diversity among private institutions, within national systems and worldwide. As new private universities and other postsecondary institutions seek to establish a niche in a highly competitive and expanding marketplace, there is likely to be more diversity. Private institutions now exist at all levels of the academic hierarchy, although most growth seems to be at the bottom of the academic hierarchy. The private sector is, with only a few exceptions, the growth area worldwide. It is important to understand the complexities of the new reality of private higher education.

Private Higher Education: Themes and Variations in Comparative Perspective

Private higher education has been thrust into the limelight at the end of the 20th century, largely because of the decline of the state sector. Governments are reluctant to spend public funds on postsecondary education while at the same time demands for access and skilled personnel remain high. Private institutions are providing both access and the skills needed for the economy of the 21st century. Public institutions are being “privatized” as public funds shrink and universities are forced to find alternative sources of support. Public universities increasingly resemble private institutions in funding patterns. The idea of an academic degree as a “private good” that benefits the individual rather than a “public good” for society is gaining acceptance. The logic of today's market economies and an ideology of privatization have contributed to the resurgence of private higher education, and the establishment of private institutions where none existed before. In the former Soviet Union and in Central and Eastern Europe, private universities and specialized postsecondary institutions are the fastest-growing part of postsecondary education. Even China and Vietnam, which retain Communist regimes, are encouraging the growth of private postsecondary institutions.

The nature and scope of private colleges and universities vary worldwide. In much of Europe, postsecondary education is almost exclusively state supported, with only a very limited private sector—mainly com-

prised of religious institutions that provide theological education. Tuition is nominal, with virtually the whole higher education budget coming from the state. In East Asia—specifically, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan—the private sector dominates higher education, enrolling 80 percent of the student population. Private institutions depend largely on tuition, and some, especially in the Philippines, are profit making. The most prestigious universities tend to be public, although a few top schools are private. In the United States, the balance between public and private has gradually shifted so that now 80 percent of students attend public universities and colleges. US private universities are included among the most prestigious and most substantially endowed institutions. Nevertheless, a majority of US private schools remain fully dependent on tuition for survival. In Latin America, the oldest universities are the private institutions founded by the Catholic Church, but the public sector has grown in the 20th century and dominates higher education in nearly all countries in the region. Africa has few private universities, and public institutions educate virtually all students.

The dispersion of private higher education institutions worldwide is impressive. In some countries, private institutions are the most prestigious, while in others they occupy the lower tiers of the hierarchy. Today they represent the fastest-growing segment of higher education. Although not widely recognized, private institutions dominate higher education in much of Asia. Recently, private universities have become a significant part of the academic systems of Latin America and now enroll a growing proportion of the student population. It is mainly in Western Europe and Africa that private institutions are relatively rare. In Western Europe, there is no significant trend toward the expansion of private universities, whereas in Central and Eastern Europe, private initiatives are showing the largest growth. While Africa has not experienced much expansion of the private higher education sector, it is likely that the World Bank and other multilateral agencies will stress privatization as a means of absorbing demands for access to postsecondary education.

Private colleges and universities are often small and face severe financial, enrollment, and other problems—related in part to their size. These institutions are for the most part ignored in the literature. We know little about their quality, their students, or their role in the wider system of higher education. An entirely new class of vocational private postsecondary institutions has emerged in many countries. Some of these institutions have official recognition, and some do not. This rapidly expanding sector deserves attention—particularly those institu-

tions newly established in countries (such as Russia) that have only recently permitted private universities. What role do these institutions play in the higher education system? What are their missions and standards?

Financially, private colleges and universities depend for the most part on the students who pay tuition. But there are some variations: in some countries, private institutions receive financial support from the government. In India, for example, most undergraduates study in private colleges, which receive significant financial support from state governments via the universities to which the private colleges are affiliated. Private universities in Japan, the United States, and some other countries are eligible for various kinds of government support—in the US system through student loans and support for research. Private schools also may have other sources of income. In the United States, the prestigious private universities and colleges have large endowments that provide income.

In most countries, private colleges and universities are nonprofit entities, although in some places profit-making academic institutions exist. In the United States and some other countries, such institutions are limited to the largely vocational “proprietary” sector—these schools are not usually evaluated by the postsecondary accrediting agencies. In a few countries, such as the Philippines, large universities can be listed on the stock exchange. Even in the United States, the new University of Phoenix, an entrepreneurial private university, is listed on the stock exchange as a profit-making corporation and is at the same time accredited by the regional postsecondary accrediting authorities. The financial stability of private higher education varies tremendously—extending from Harvard University, perhaps the wealthiest university in the world, with its \$6 billion endowment, to many financially struggling small institutions constantly on the verge of bankruptcy. Indeed, private academic institutions regularly fail in many countries. Patterns of financial management, ownership, support, and corporate arrangements also show many differences.

Although there is much change now taking place, most private universities have nonprofit status worldwide. They are sponsored by religious organizations, philanthropic societies, or other kinds of service organizations. In some countries, including the United States, private colleges and universities operate under a nonprofit charter given by the state, which regulates the terms and conditions of this status. Such institutions are exempt from taxes and enjoy other privileges. In these cases, nonprofit universities are expected to serve broad educational and cultural goals. The ideals of service, education, and research lie at

the heart of the nonprofit mission for higher education. Religious organizations may be concerned with providing a religious environment for education. Most older private universities are nonprofit institutions with a strong tradition of service to society.

Private universities are at the same time independent and autonomous, while also being subject to a variety of external controls. They are largely responsible for their own funding, and the consequences of poor financial management are immediate and serious. They have considerable autonomy over academic programs, majors, markets, and standards. Yet they are also accountable to external authorities, ranging from accrediting agencies in the United States to much stricter governmental regulation in such nations as Korea, Japan, and India.

In the United States, private colleges and universities are subject to a variety of external controls. If they accept any funds from government sources—in the form of student loans, research grants, contracts, and the like—they are subject not only to a variety of government regulations relating to the specific funding arrangements but also to a large number of other reporting and regulatory requirements. Private institutions are also accredited—a “voluntary” process coordinated by self-managed regional agencies that review and accredit all postsecondary institutions on a regular basis. Professional societies also accredit degree programs—from law and medicine to teacher education—as part of a separate review process.

Regulatory regimes are much more stringent in other parts of the world, especially in some Asian nations. In Korea, government agencies control academic salaries and other conditions of work in private universities. Private universities are also subject to control in matters of tuition charges, institutional expansion, and enrollments in specific departments and programs. Even when these regulations are imposed, the government does not necessarily provide significant funding for private higher education. Similarly, Indian universities—to which all private colleges must be affiliated—conduct end-of-term examinations, determine the outlines of the curriculum for most courses, dictate faculty salary levels, set minimum standards for student entry, and supervise libraries and other physical facilities of the affiliated colleges. Perhaps most important, the universities award all degrees. In the Indian case, a considerable portion of the budget of private colleges comes from government grants.

In most other countries, private institutions are subject to less control than is the case in Korea or India. Indeed, in countries where the private sector has only recently expanded, controls are, not surprising-

ly, poorly developed. This often means that private institutions vary greatly in quality, orientation, and financial stability. This is especially the case in Central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, where private institutions have proliferated in an environment characterized by a decline of public universities and a lack of supervision of the new private institutions.

Private higher education is very much influenced by the market. Even the prestigious private universities in the United States and Japan must concern themselves with their reputation and their place among the other universities, both nationally and internationally. Less prestigious and newer private institutions must be even more concerned about market forces, competition from other educational institutions, trends in the employment market, and other factors. Serious miscalculation can jeopardize institutional survival.

The market for education is exceedingly imperfect. It is hard to predict trends in employment, and even harder to ensure that institutional programs are relevant to these trends. Vocationally oriented private institutions are directly involved in predicting labor markets and the specific needs for specialists. Private universities that focus on the traditional arts and science fields are more insulated from the direct labor market, but they are competing with other academic institutions, and are dependent on the market for university graduates.

The discipline of the market shapes private universities. At the end of the 1990s, with an increased emphasis on education market forces generally, the ethos of private colleges and universities is spreading throughout the systems of all countries. There are, of course, costs and benefits to a purely market orientation in education. Traditionally, the university has provided education in a range of subjects and disciplines, not all of which might appeal to the market. The question of how basic research, which may not yield immediate results in the marketplace, will be supported remains to be answered if the academic system continues to move toward a stronger market orientation.

Private higher education, precisely because of its rapid expansion and more central role in the world's higher education systems, faces special challenges and responsibilities. The following questions need to be explored as the private sector moves to the center.

- What are the elements that make up private higher education? What kinds of institutions exist? What roles do they play in the higher education systems of their nations?
- Private higher education is largely market driven. To what extent should the market control developments? Should restraints be imposed? How do restraints work in countries where they exist?

- How should the older, established, and often high-status private universities relate to newer, less-well-endowed institutions? Do the former have a special responsibility to assist or monitor emerging universities?
- What is the appropriate balance of accountability and autonomy in the private sector of higher education?
- How should private higher education be accredited?
- What is the appropriate role for government in private higher education? How should public and private institutions relate to each other? Should private higher education be funded by public sources?
- What should the role of the new vocational postsecondary institutions be in the higher education system?
- In Latin America especially, but in other parts of the world as well, what role should the Roman Catholic Church and other religious organizations play in higher education? What responsibilities do religious universities have to the broader higher education system?

Private higher education is emerging as one of the most dynamic segments of postsecondary education at the turn of the 21st century. Its prominence is linked with the ideology of privatization that is so influential at present and with the trend worldwide to cut public spending. While private higher education has a long historical tradition, and in some countries is a dominant force, its new influence has caught the world of postsecondary education unprepared. This is an opportune time to focus attention on private higher education.

[Winter 1998]

The Private Sector in Asian Higher Education

Privatization is one of the main trends in higher education worldwide. New private institutions are rapidly expanding, especially in developing countries and in nations of the former Soviet bloc. When the state is unable or unwilling to provide the necessary support for an expanding postsecondary sector, privatization fills the gap. A central reality of massification is increased reliance on private higher education institutions. Private higher education is the fastest-growing segment of postsecondary education worldwide. While many look to America's impressive private higher education sector, it is more useful to draw on the Asian experience. Only 20 percent of US enrollments are at private colleges and universities, whereas in several Asian countries 80 percent study at private institutions. Asia's private institutions face problems that are typical of the regions in which private higher education is most rapidly expanding.

In Asia, private institutions have long been a central part of higher education provision. In Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Indonesia, private universities enroll the majority of students—as mentioned, in some cases upwards of 80 percent. The large majority of Indian students attend private colleges, although these institutions are heavily subsidized by government funds. The private sector is also a growing force in parts of Asia where it has thus far not been active—such as China, Vietnam, and the central Asian republics.

In general, private universities are found at the lower end of the prestige hierarchy in Asia. There are a few examples of high-quality,

private universities—such as Waseda and Keio (among others) in Japan, De La Salle and the Ateneo de Manila in the Philippines, Yonsei in Korea, and Santa Dharma in Indonesia. Generally, private institutions rely on tuition payments, receive little funding from public sources (although in Japan and several other countries limited government funding is available to the private sector), and have no tradition of private philanthropy, and as a result are unable to compete for the best students. However, the private sector plays a central role by providing access to students who would otherwise be unable to obtain academic degrees.

It is useful to disaggregate the Asian private higher education sector because of the significant differences among institutions and the divergent roles they play in society. As noted, there are a few very prestigious private universities in the countries in which a private sector operates. In some cases, these institutions are sponsored or founded by religious groups—largely, but not exclusively, Christian. Sophia and Doshisha in Japan, Yonsei and Sogang in South Korea, Santa Dharma in Indonesia, and De La Salle and Ateneo de Manila in the Philippines are examples. These universities are typically among the oldest in their countries and have a long tradition of training elite groups. Another category is the newer private institutions, often specializing in fields such as management or technology, that were established with the aim of offering a key but limited market high-quality academic degrees. The Asian Institute of Technology in the Philippines and its sister institution in Thailand are such schools. These prestigious private universities have been able to maintain their positions over time and rely largely on tuition payments for survival. Semiprivate, specialized business schools are being established in Singapore in collaboration with prestigious management schools in the United States and Europe.

Most Asian private universities serve the mass higher education market and tend to be relatively nonselective. The majority of these private universities are small, although there are some quite large institutions—such as the Far Eastern University in the Philippines, which has a massive enrollment and was for a time listed on the Manila stock exchange. Some are sponsored by private nonprofit organizations, religious societies, ethnic organizations, or other groups. Many are owned by individuals or families, sometimes with a formal management that masks the controlling elements of the school's governance structure. This pattern of family-run academic institutions has received little if any attention from analysts, although it is a phenomenon of growing importance worldwide—even in countries that do not encourage the establishment of for-profit higher education institutions.

One of the most interesting private higher education developments worldwide is the rise of *min ban* (people-run) private institutions in China. There are already more than 1,000 *min ban* institutions, about 100 of which are accredited by the government. A new law regulating this sector will soon be implemented. The government is convinced that the new private sector is necessary to provide access to students who, largely because of low test scores, cannot qualify for the public universities. So far, most of the *min ban* schools offer vocational education and do not award bachelor's degrees.

Many Asian countries have had considerable experience in managing large private higher education sectors, while others are still seeking to establish appropriate structures. These countries face the challenge of granting the private sector the autonomy and freedom to establish and manage institutions and compete in a differentiated educational marketplace while at the same time ensuring that the national interest is served. In India, where the large majority of undergraduate students attend private colleges, these schools are largely funded by the state governments and are closely controlled by the universities to which most are affiliated. University authorities, for example, design and administer examinations, award academic degrees, set the minimum qualifications for entry, and supervise the hiring of academic staff. The universities are all public institutions, and they have key administrative and academic control over the privately owned undergraduate colleges. India's pattern of public-private management and control is unique and worth studying.

Japan and South Korea have a long tradition of rigidly controlling private institutions—going to the extent of stipulating the salaries of academic staff, the numbers of students who can be enrolled, approving the establishment of new departments or programs, and supervising the appointment of trustees. In the recent past, these two countries have moved toward allowing private institutions more autonomy and freedom. Other countries have imposed less strict supervision.

As in other parts of the world, private higher education is expanding throughout Asia, and countries that are moving toward a large private sector would be well advised to look at the experience in Asia for guidance. China has a dramatically growing private sector, with more than 500 private postsecondary institutions, most of which are neither accredited nor approved by the government. Vietnam and Cambodia also have rapidly growing private sectors, as do the central Asian nations that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. These countries face the considerable challenge of ensuring that the emerging private sector is effective, well managed, and serving national

goals. Asia shows a variety of patterns of sponsorship, management, ownership, and state supervision.

[Fall 2002]

Part 7
The Dilemma of Corruption

Academic Corruption: The Continuing Challenge

If the spate of news reports about corruption in higher education indicates the scope of the problem, the world is seeing a dramatic increase in the phenomenon. Not only is corruption undermining the core values of higher education in some parts of the world, it is creating problems of credibility as societies link universities with unsavory practices. After all, higher education's bedrock mission consists of the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Universities worldwide have long claimed special privileges of autonomy, academic freedom and support by society precisely because of their devotion to the public good and their reputations for probity. They have long enjoyed high social prestige precisely for these commitments. If universities lose their standing in society as special institutions, they will suffer unparalleled damage.

Stories of Corruption

Here is a sampling of current press reports on academic corruption. These stories provide a sense of the scope and variety of the problem worldwide.

Russia is introducing a national entrance test for university admissions, in considerable part because of perceived corruption in the traditional entrance system. Russian families pay about \$300 million annually to ensure acceptance to universities and another \$700 million once students are enrolled. A former deputy prime minister put the amount spent on academic bribes at between \$2 and \$5 billion a year. Family and political connections account for further corruption in the entry

process. The test, it is hoped, will eliminate subjectivity in admissions, allowing meritocratic decisions and also better access for applicants from outside the major cities. The point here is that corruption is seen as so endemic to the system that a major reform had to be implemented in an effort to curb the practices.

The admissions process involves a lot of corruption because of the coveted nature of access to higher education, especially to the most prestigious universities. With its long history of competitive and highly regarded national examinations for admission to many of its universities, China recently suffered an admissions scandal covered in the national media. University officials demanded a payment of \$12,000 from a student whose test score qualified him for admission to a prestigious university. One critic noted, "Over the past few years, we have been trying to marketize higher education and turn it into an industry . . . but whenever money is involved in anything, there will be problems." The press reported that this case is "just the tip of the iceberg."

The University of Port Harcourt, in southern Nigeria, recently revoked the degrees of 7,254 of its graduates in a crackdown on academic fraud. The head of the university charged students stripped of their degrees with either cheating on examinations or falsifying their academic records, in cases going back to 1966. He characterized Nigerian universities as rife with corruption, with many students being admitted with false secondary school certificates. A report by the Exams Ethics Project, a nongovernmental organization, noted that, "Academic fraud and corruption is a big business in Nigeria."

In South Korea, the government demanded that three private universities fire 68 faculty members and administrators, on charges of embezzlement, mismanagement of funds, and bribery. Investigators found that one school diverted \$4.9 million to personal use and illegally redirected another \$4.6 million.

Why Now?

The current focus on corruption in higher education indicates the prevalence of the problem—although the phenomenon is by no means unprecedented in history. While we have no way of knowing if academic corruption is in fact more widespread than in earlier times, it is certainly attracting more attention. One can pose several hypotheses as to why there seems to be more corruption.

The greater scrutiny of academic institutions relates to higher education's high profile for providing social mobility. A successful career requires an academic degree, even if obtained fraudulently or from a "degree mill." As a result, academe attracts more attention, and more

criticism, from the mass media. And it is under greater pressure to provide both the access and the certification that are essential for success.

Furthermore, as higher education has “marketized,” it adopted more and more commercial values, including a greater predilection for corruption and a greater distance from traditional academic values.

A related phenomenon is the massification of higher education. Many newer mass higher education providers, not only universities but also commercial enterprises offering postsecondary qualifications, also have only marginal connections to core academic values.

The deterioration of the idea of higher education as a “common good” has created unprecedented pressures on academe. Around the world, the state has withdrawn support from higher education. Even the most prestigious universities have had to be more concerned with the “bottom line.” Commercial considerations loom ever larger in academic affairs. Few institutions know how to ensure adequate income in this new environment, and some have been lured into engaging in corrupt practices.

Professors and administrators, faced with deteriorating salaries and working conditions, in some cases are taking part in corruption. A growing number of part-time and poorly trained regular faculty are especially prone to corruption. They lack an understanding of the meaning of the traditional university as well as the means to support themselves from their academic salaries.

New providers of higher education, including business enterprises and some for-profit academic institutions, have little understanding of academic values. They are in the higher education business exclusively to earn money. As traditional universities with inadequate management skills partner with these new providers, there is a clash of cultures and possible corruption.

The Internet, another area of potential problems, constitutes an untamed frontier filled with all kinds of academic offerings, from worthless degrees that can be purchased and unregulated academic programs from a diverse range of providers to a few thoughtfully designed programs offered by respected universities. There is great latitude for shady practices.

Corruption and related ethical problems present an unprecedented threat to higher education. The loss of higher education’s objectivity, honesty, and high ethical standards would remove the central rationale for public support. The growing number of bad apples in the barrel is threatening the entire academic enterprise.

The Question of Corruption in Academe

Corruption in higher education is not a topic much discussed in academic circles. Academic institutions see themselves as somehow above the baser motivations and lower instincts of other elements of society. And society generally believes that universities are somehow special institutions imbued with the virtues of integrity. Yet, corruption in various manifestations is an element of higher education in many parts of the world. It is time to open a discussion of the meaning and scope of corruption since it seems to be an expanding phenomenon, especially in parts of the world facing severe economic hardships. Academic institutions in these countries come under extreme pressure to provide access and degrees to ensure success in difficult economic circumstances.

The dictionary definition of corruption will suffice well for academe—"impairment of integrity, virtue, or moral principle." It goes on to say—"inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means." Although there are global guides for societal transparency and democratic government, no one has developed a worldwide academic corruption index. Yet, we know from limited research and news reports that countries and some academic institutions are prone to corrupt practices of various kinds. Hardly any academic system is completely immune from at least some elements of corruption. Scandals in intercollegiate athletics, including such problems as admitting unqualified students who can play football and allowing cheating on exams to ensure athletes' eligibility to play, are common in the United States,

and occasional lapses in academic honor codes have occurred. There have been cases of corporate interference with research projects or financial shenanigans by members of boards of trustees, senior administrators, or professors. Oral examination arrangements at some European universities have occasionally been unfairly manipulated. But when such malfeasance is detected, it is usually publicly exposed and the perpetrators disciplined. The academic system itself is not corrupt, and efforts are made to cleanse the institutions. The key point is that the traditional values of the university are honored and deviations from them are seen as aberrations and as unacceptable behavior.

This is in sharp contrast to academic systems that allow significant and persistent institutional as well as individual corruption at many levels and, more importantly, where academic norms of honesty and meritocratic values are pushed to the side. The litany of problems is unfortunately long and disturbing. A few examples will suffice. Admission to universities is for sale in some parts of the world. Well-connected applicants, those who bribe or otherwise influence the academic authorities responsible for admissions, or those who can manipulate the admissions process gain entry regardless of their academic qualifications. In such situations, graduation is a virtual certainty, whether or not a student completes the required academic work. Admission is tantamount to graduation—and the process is sometimes smoothed by further bribery or influence peddling. Professors may offer “tutorial” sessions to applicants to the university or those already enrolled that often require considerable payments that serve as bribes for entry or success.

Professorial Corruption

Academic posts are often “sold” in the sense that those seeking appointments to lectureships or professorships must curry favor with selection committees through gifts or other emoluments. In some cases, academic posts are awarded on the basis of ethnic or religious backgrounds. Research and publications may be corrupted. Plagiarism in publications can be found in every academic system, but in some it is widespread and tacitly accepted—at least no one asks many questions; and the penalties for detection are few, if any. Research results or even entire research projects can be falsified. Corruption may also involve the promotion process. Candidates can bribe or otherwise sway promotion committees, or outside pressure may be brought to bear in the process. In universities with a rigid academic hierarchy, senior academics often promote their friends or perhaps colleagues without regard to the qualifications of the candidates.

Examinations

The examination system, which is central to the meritocratic core of the university, is a common site for corruption. In India, for example, cheating is so well established in some parts of the country that when universities try to crack down, students protest and demand their traditional “right” to cheat. The litany of means used to cheat on examinations is long and, in a perverse way, an indication of the inventiveness of a corrupt system. Examination proctors (invigilators) are sometimes beaten or even killed by students for conscientiously doing their jobs. In some places, professors or administrators collude with students by selling them examination papers in advance or by “fixing” the results. In others, students manage to steal examinations and sell them in advance to others. In the United States, Internet-based firms are now selling research papers to undergraduate students, who then sometimes submit the papers as their own. Recent American surveys indicate that a significant proportion of students admit to cheating on examinations from time to time. In countries where oral examinations are common, there are further possibilities for corruption.

Causes and Effects

The many reasons behind academic corruption can be complicated. There is a clear correlation between economic factors and corruption. Where academic institutions are congenitally short of money and thus under great pressure to admit students, there is an increased likelihood for corruption. Faculty and administrators may be looking for ways to supplement woefully inadequate salaries in societies lacking other opportunities for employment. External pressures to admit and promote students are immense as well. While not all underfunded academic systems are corrupt—indeed most universities now face difficult financial circumstances—institutions that experience “permanent poverty” in societies that offer few options for the highly educated are more exposed to the lures of academic corruption. There are strong links, of course, between societal corruption and corruption in academe. Indeed, since universities in reality are not Ivory Towers, they are greatly affected by societal norms—and corruption is an element of social and economic life in many countries. Societies that do not have well-developed meritocratic norms are often prone to academic corruption—the idea that someone can be promoted or can receive an academic degree because he or she is from a particular group or has certain familial links is seen as acceptable.

The traditions of higher education also play a role. Universities everywhere have European roots and organizational patterns—they may

not be well suited to some non-Western societies. This historical disjunction may make it easier for corruption to take hold. Further, in many developing countries, universities were part of a colonial system, and the values of subservience were to some extent put into place by the colonial powers. Countries without deep academic traditions may also have looser ties to the traditional values of academe.

Academic systems that are politicized and in which nonacademic norms of many kinds impinge on universities may also be more prone to corruption. Political parties may be active on campus, seeking to dominate academic governance bodies and to put their followers into positions of influence. Students may be involved in activist movements that have little regard to the universities or the norms of academic life. Government or other external agencies may be working to shape academic decisions. Weak academic leadership may also be responsible for permitting corruption to entrench itself in the university. Sometimes, the organization of the university prevents strong leadership from emerging.

The effects of corruption on campus are extensive. Corruption destroys the very core of the university—the concept of meritocracy and the dominance of honest academic inquiry and excellence in teaching and research. The effects can be seen in things large and small. Corrupt admissions arrangements mean that the best students may not be admitted. Corrupt promotion policies mean that the best minds are not rewarded and that many will not even wish to be part of the academic community. Funds are misused, and the result is that libraries and laboratories do not have the support they need.

Conclusion

Universities require an effective civil society as much as nations do. The academic system needs basic financial support so that it is possible to provide effective teaching and engage in creative research. Universities need to be permitted the autonomy required to build and support academic culture and values. Perhaps most importantly, the academic community itself must understand that without integrity and meritocracy there can be no true university. The reality of corruption in higher education must be recognized as a central problem to be analyzed, understood, and rooted out. A first step is to recognize its nature and scope.

[Winter 2004]

Part 8
The Academic Profession

The Deteriorating Guru: The Crisis of the Professoriate

Universities worldwide are becoming marketized, privatized, differentiated, and otherwise changed to meet the demands of an academic environment that stresses accountability and mass access. Higher education is increasingly seen as a “private good”—a commodity that should be subject to the logic of the market. These changes have had a profoundly negative impact on the academic profession—the heart of any academic enterprise. Working conditions and career paths for the academic profession are deteriorating. Universities often cannot attract the “best and brightest” and may even have problems luring the “reasonably intelligent and above average.”

The real crisis will be how to maintain an academic environment that will attract able scholars and scientists to the universities and at the same time recognize the challenges of mass higher education and the financial realities of the 21st century. At present, academic systems are damaging the core of the university by ignoring the needs of the professoriate. Those responsible for decision making (e. g., senior administrators, boards of trustees, and government officials) are ignoring the academic profession as they grapple with increasingly difficult problems facing higher education. It should be recognized that without a strong, committed academic profession, higher education cannot provide effective teaching or top-quality research. In knowledge-based economies, universities must have academic staff who are well qualified, well trained, and committed to academic work.

Traditional Realities

Not long ago, in the more successful academic systems, academics could plan on a career that was reasonably secure and offered the satisfactions of teaching and some research. Many saw university teaching as a “calling” and were attracted to the life of the mind. In the United States, most were appointed to tenure-track positions that led to secure jobs once the rigorous review process for promotion to tenure was completed. In much of Europe, academics had appointments to the civil service and the job security and status that came along with that status. Salaries were not high and did not match the incomes of other professionals with similar qualifications, but they permitted a middle-class lifestyle. There was little serious evaluation of academic performance, but a general conviction existed that almost all academics were doing a decent job. Academics enjoyed a high degree of autonomy as well as fairly secure academic freedom. The few research “stars” were rewarded mainly with high status rather than large salaries, and most were teachers who did little research. Even in many developing countries—such as India, China, Nigeria and others—academe was an honorable profession that, even if ill paid, provided high social status and job security.

Some would argue that it is high time for professors to be forced to compete and be subjected to the same pressures as in other occupations. Accountability and evaluation will, it is argued, get rid of unproductive “deadwood.” It is not so simple as that. The traditional culture of academe worked reasonably well, even in the context of mass higher education. Academics had a degree of autonomy, and the academic community decided on such matters as curriculum, the organization of studies, and the like. In a few places, such as Italy, the structural problems of the academic system and the conservatism of the professoriate created problems. But generally, the academic system provided acceptable quality of teaching and produced research. The conditions of academic work, even without high salaries, were generally acceptable. The academic profession attracted bright scholars who appreciated the special circumstances of university life. The combination of intellectual freedom, autonomy, and a relative lack of day-to-day accountability created an environment in which creative work could be accomplished.

New Circumstances

Much has changed almost everywhere in the past several decades. Universities have responded to societal pressures by changing the nature of academic work dramatically. Academic salaries have not kept up either with inflation or with remuneration in other professional

fields. In many countries, there is no longer the expectation of a secure career. In the United States, fewer than half of new academic appointments are tenure track and full time. Many are part time while others are a new category of full-time, limited-term positions. A decline in the number of full-time jobs means greater competition, and this has led to some unemployment of new PhD graduates. Many of the most able PhDs are taking jobs in other fields, including government and business where salaries are better and there is better chance for a secure future. A growing divide exists between the minority of tenured faculty and the rest, creating a kind of two-tier academic profession.

In other countries, the situation is similarly grim. The traditional employment security of the academic profession is being weakened by moving academics from the civil service. In Britain, tenure was abolished as part of a major university reform aimed at making the entire academic system more competitive. In Germany, most new academic appointments do not permit promotion, forcing many academics to compete for new positions at other universities. In Central Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union, the traditional academic profession has been greatly weakened by changes in working conditions, deteriorating salaries, and loss of status. It is common in developing countries for academic salaries to be so poor that even full-time professors must hold more than one job. In Latin America, traditional reliance on part-time teachers has prevented the emergence of an effective professoriate.

Everywhere, increased accountability has subjected academics to bureaucratic controls and has weakened academic autonomy. As universities have become more oriented to student interests and market demands, traditional academic values have been undermined. The rise of the private sector in higher education—the fastest growing segment worldwide—has meant further deterioration of the profession because private institutions seldom provide full-time positions nor do they provide much security of tenure. A profession that thrived on autonomy and a certain detachment from direct competition is now exposed to the vicissitudes of the market.

Consequences

The future of the academic profession is uncertain, which is a problem for the success of the academic enterprise generally. What will attract bright young people to study for the doctorate when the careers—and salaries—available are marginal at best? Will academic work continue to be organized in a way that supports and rewards basic research? How will the traditional links between teaching and research be main-

tained so that those responsible mainly for teaching will keep abreast of current developments in their fields? Universities depend on a full-time professoriate—not only to teach but also to participate in governance and curriculum development. New patterns of managerial control vitiate traditional patterns of collegial governance and further weaken both the morale and the commitment of the academic profession. Academic morale is deteriorating in many countries, and many have noted declines in both the abilities and the numbers of those pursuing doctoral study with the aim of joining the professoriate.

The Future

Without an able and committed professoriate, universities will fail in their major mission—to provide high-quality teaching and engage in research. Without a doubt, there must be adjustments in academic work and in the organization of universities to meet the needs of mass higher education and of the knowledge economies. Further differentiation in professorial roles, most extensive measurement of academic performance, and greater flexibility in appointments are probably necessary. If the academic profession continues to decline, higher education may continue to produce graduates, but the intellectual quality of those graduates and their ability to participate in society will be placed in question. Just as important, the basic research that universities have produced will be less innovative and valuable. The future of the university lies in the hands of the professoriate.

[Summer 2004]

Academic Salaries, Academic Corruption, and the Academic Career

If the academic profession does not maintain adequate income levels, academic performance throughout the system inevitably suffers. Academics must receive sufficient remuneration to live an appropriate middle-class lifestyle—not that they must be paid according to the highest international standards, local levels are generally adequate. In many, perhaps most, countries salary levels have not kept up with inflation and the academic profession has lost ground to other professional occupations. In many countries, especially in the developing world and the middle-income nations of the former Soviet Union, academic salaries are entirely inadequate to live on. In such circumstances, academic performance deteriorates, the normal life of universities becomes difficult or impossible, and the temptation of corruption lures many academics. The harsh reality is that academics must find other sources of income.

Worldwide, the design of the academic career, built up over centuries, is under threat—indeed, it is being systematically dismantled in many countries. The traditional view of academic work sees it as more than a job—instead as something of a calling. The idea that professors are devoted to “the life of the mind” is part of professional identity. These goals may seem quaint and romantic in the market-oriented 21st century, but the concept of the university as an intellectual institution and something more than a degree granting machine underlies them. If academics are allowed to pursue their traditional job of teaching and (for some but by no means all cases) research, universities can perform

their traditional duties of educating the next generation of professionals, providing general learning, and creating new knowledge. For this to be sustained, however, the conditions for a “normal” academic career must survive—adequate remuneration, a realistic career path offering the likelihood of promotion and stability of employment, academic freedom to pursue teaching and research, at least a modicum of autonomy and participation in institutional governance, and the respect of society.

This does not mean that professors equal mandarins who are free of accountability and create their own Ivory Tower utopias. The realities of mass higher education make this impossible. The professoriate must be differentiated by function and role, with most academics performing mainly teaching and only a minority involved in research. Accountability for academic work is necessary and appropriate. Some who work in universities are part time, and others have limited-term appointments. The argument here is that the core academic profession in every country must receive payment from the university adequate to sustain middle-class life. A substantial full-time cadre of university teachers and researchers can maintain the essential teaching, research, and governance functions of any university.

An Egyptian Example

A recent example from Egypt exemplifies the inevitable consequences of inadequate academic salaries. According to an article in the *Egyptian Gazette*, “university professors in Egypt have been accused of violating their code of ethics by greedily demanding large sums of money from their students.” The article provides examples. Professors profit from selling, at high prices, their textbooks and lectures notes. These purchases are mandatory for students, since examinations are based on the books, and classes are often too crowded for students to attend. The texts are changed each year to prevent re-sale of the books. Students are also forced to pay extra to attend off-campus classes offered by professors—where the real information is provided. Sometimes theaters or even conference rooms in five-star hotels are rented to hold these off-campus tutoring sessions. One dean describes private tutoring as an “infectious disease that is gnawing away at the flesh of society.” Academic staff interviewed for the article pointed out that they could not live on their academic salaries even though salaries were recently increased—an assistant professor in a public university earns around US\$260 per month—hardly enough to support a family.

Other Activities

While little in-depth research has been produced on academic corruption, throughout the world newspapers and other news media are replete with examples of it. Our concern here is with professorial practices that stray from standard academic ethics. Professors in some countries routinely demand bribes to help with admissions, to raise exam grades, or to permit student cheating. Money is paid to obtain academic appointments or promotions. Decisions concerning the purchase of equipment or supplies are sometimes influenced by payoffs, and selling scientific equipment occurs. Corrupt practices of many kinds take place so that academics can supplement inadequate salaries.

Causes and Effects

It is, of course, difficult to pinpoint the causes of academic corruption. In some societies, ingrained corrupt practices at all levels influence the universities, and inadequate salaries may be just part of a larger problem. Universities cannot be insulated from societal corruption. But the root cause in many developing and middle-income countries is related to academic salaries. If that problem were solved, it would be possible to deal with professorial corruption.

In most instances, universities are not corrupt institutions. They have strong traditions of meritocracy and shared academic values. But they cannot survive systematic starvation without ethics being damaged. Providing a living wage for the academic profession, as well as maintaining the core idea of the academic career, is a necessary prerequisite for an ethical academic culture.

Adequate salaries are, however, not enough. Well-paid professors are not always productive. A culture of productive academic work necessarily includes accountability, an internal ethic of hard work, a system of evaluation that includes an objective assessment of all kinds of academic work, and a merit-based system of promotion and salary allocation. Promoting academic staff on the basis of seniority alone, the practice in many countries, works against productivity.

The case of India is illustrative. Academic salaries for full-time staff were increased several years ago to levels able to minimally support middle-class life, although at the same time salaries for highly skilled professionals outside of the universities increased much faster. However, little was done to ensure productivity or accountability on campus. As a result, the campus culture in many universities and colleges of modest productivity, favoritism in appointments and promotions, and a lack of high academic standards remains despite salary improvements.

Conclusion

The current practice in many countries of asking academics to become entrepreneurs—by teaching in for-profit parallel programs, consulting, creating private companies, or focusing on contract research—in order to enhance their salaries may immediately solve funding shortfalls but damage the long-term health of the university. Overreliance on part-time staffing means that there will be no one on campus who takes responsibility for the institution—there is no stability and no institutional commitment. These, and other, practices lead directly to academic corruption, not only forcing professors to enhance their incomes “by any means necessary” but also by jettisoning the traditional values and orientations of the university. The simple reality is that a healthy academic institution is an organic whole that requires adequate financial support, rigorous enforcement of traditional academic values, and at its core an academic profession committed to these values. Without this, corruption is likely to flourish and academic quality will inevitably suffer.

[Summer 2006]

Contradictions of Academic Development: Exploiting the Professoriate and Weakening the University

Efforts to save money on higher education, especially in developing countries, are resulting in severe damage to the most central element of teaching and learning—the professoriate. The pressures of mass higher education combined with an unwillingness or inability of the state to support academe adequately, the rise of the private sector and the privatization of public universities, and an increasing differentiation of the academic system all contribute to confusion about the roles and functions of universities in a new environment. Developing countries, particularly, are caught in the contradiction. Faced with demands to enroll ever-greater numbers of students, and at the same time wanting to create high-quality universities, the pressures for mass access always trump quality. This discussion focuses on the small number of “flagship” research-oriented universities, almost always public institutions, that exist in developing countries and the challenges they face to build quality in a difficult environment. These universities, although small in number, are essential to the future of higher education as well as to the long-term success of many developing economies.

The professoriate is the most important resource for building quality, and it is being squeezed from all directions. Faculty members are

asked to be more productive, which usually requires a greater teaching load. Administration is being “rationalized,” usually weakening the autonomy of the academic profession and its role in governance. Remuneration, usually inadequate, seldom keeps up with inflation, leading to the need for faculty members to supplement their incomes by additional employment. Given these circumstances, it is impossible to improve the basic work of the university—teaching and learning. No amount of administrative efficiency or private initiative can substitute for the full commitment of a talented faculty.

An African Example

Makerere University, Uganda’s flagship academic institution and formerly one of the best in sub-Saharan Africa, has undertaken major reforms that seem, on the surface, rational and appropriate but that in fact are undermining the academic profession at the institution and destroying its research role. In a nutshell, the university has been forced to generate more of its income due to government budget cut-backs. At the same time, the university has come under pressure to enroll more students so as to provide opportunities for study to larger numbers. Private higher education has also undergone dramatic growth in Uganda—as in many countries—and the new private institutions have struggled to find people to teach.

Makerere responded to this situation rationally, and some would say effectively. Faculty members have been encouraged to do consulting and generate funds for themselves and the institution. Some professors have been successful in working for international organizations, and a few have built relationships with the private sector. Other faculty members teach part time in the new private institutions in order to earn additional income. These new schools are often set up near the main campus to facilitate “commuting.” In Uganda, as in most countries, the new private sector depends heavily on professors at the established public universities. In this way, the public sector is subsidizing the private sector by providing institutions with teachers they could not otherwise afford to hire.

Makerere has also set up a new teaching program as a way of generating income and supplementing the inadequate state funding. Students who did not qualify for “regular” admission or simply could not be accommodated because of limited enrollment capacity have been offered admission to a new academic track. This new track, which operates mainly in the evening, charges a relatively high tuition fee, and the university keeps the income. Classes are taught by regular Makerere faculty who receive extra payments. It is a kind of “on-cam-

pus moonlighting.” The university now has two degree tracks: one inexpensive and state supported, admitting the “cream of the crop”; and the other income generating and admitting students who either could not otherwise be accommodated or admitted. This program has been highly successful, generating considerable income and permitting the university to supplement the incomes of those teaching, and adding greatly needed funds to the institutional coffers.

Implications

What does all of this mean? On the positive side, participating academics are able to earn enough income to live. Additional students are given access to study, either in the new private institutions or in the “dual track” at Makerere. Consulting has brought in additional income and has in some cases linked the university to emerging enterprises in society. Makerere earns additional funds that can be used to purchase equipment, maintain facilities, and support other important aspects not covered in the state budget. Many in Uganda and elsewhere have hailed the university’s income-generating strategies as a great success.

The costs, however, are substantial. Academic staff no longer have time to conduct research—being simply too busy with their other responsibilities. The culture of the institution will inevitably shift from teaching and research to entrepreneurial zeal—both on the part of individual academics and the university itself. Generating income will count more than research, teaching, and scholarship. Those who are adept at entrepreneurship will be rewarded. The traditional markers of academic accomplishment—publication in quality journals, focusing on research topics related to a professor’s own scientific interests, competing for grants relevant to these interests—become much less relevant. Faculty increasingly have neither the time nor the motivation to publish articles or engage in sustained research.

Fiscal necessity and accommodation to the market will inevitably change the nature of Makerere University. It will no longer be a university in the traditional sense of the term but will instead be a market-driven, income-maximizing institution providing credentials to larger numbers of students. Professors will no longer fulfill their traditional roles. Makerere has traditionally been seen as the flagship university for Uganda, aspiring to relate to the best universities in the world. Many Makerere academics participate in the international scientific community, attending scientific conferences and working with colleagues elsewhere. In the new market-driven environment, such participation will become increasingly rare as local academics focus on income-generating activities.

The challenges discussed here are common in Africa and throughout the developing world. Makerere is a particularly good example of this trend precisely because it has been so successful in building alternative sources of income and support. If academic institutions in developing countries aspire to participate in the international scientific community and provide their students with high academic quality, the new entrepreneurial spirit will make this very difficult. Budget cutting and marketization have consequences—among them a profound change in the role of the academic profession.

[Spring 2005]

The American Academic Profession: Future Challenges

The academic profession worldwide is faced with significant problems as we approach the 21st century. In our view, the following issues constitute some of the major challenges facing the American professoriate in the coming period. Similar factors affect other countries as well.

ECONOMIC SHIFTS. The United States is moving from an industrial to an information-based economy and finds itself now competing in global markets. This has placed a premium on the preparation of a competitive workforce; and colleges and universities and their faculties will find it increasingly necessary to orient their work, especially their teaching, to these objectives.

TECHNOLOGICAL SHIFTS. The past five years in particular have witnessed a revolution in the dominant technology of academic work. Scholars increasingly rely on digital technology for accessing information and for communicating with colleagues and students. Teaching practices have historically proven extremely resistant to change, but indications are that new technologies are gaining acceptance in the classroom as well. For example, in the early 1990s, barely 10 percent of the professoriate used digital technology in their teaching; by 1995 that figure had jumped to 30 percent.

In the last quarter century, then, the vast majority of American faculty faced a bewildering mix of external forces that are already beginning to change the rules governing academic careers and the expecta-

tions regarding academic work. Thus, while American academics continue by and large to be satisfied with their careers and the intrinsic qualities of academic work, factors such as a move to regulate workloads, tenure reviews, static salary growth, and a declining job market have all affected morale, and have generated a growing list of complaints.

Current Challenges and Future Trends

Unquestionably, the post–World War II “golden age” of the professoriate is at an end, and general conditions for the profession are changing in ways we do not yet fully understand. The following elements are part of the equation:

ACCOUNTABILITY. The increase in accountability means that professors—once granted considerable autonomy to shape their research, teaching, and career options—will be more constrained by the priorities of employing institutions and subject to the measurement of output. Academic labor will be more carefully monitored and controlled.

TEACHING. There will be a greater emphasis on teaching, although research productivity will remain the “gold standard.” There has been a strong demand to reconfigure the system of academic rewards and to “open up” the system. The quality of teaching will be emphasized more, and it is likely that most faculty will do more teaching. Average teaching loads will increase.

TENURE. While the tenure system will not be abolished, it may be circumvented for many entering the profession. It is interesting that as the demands for the abolition of tenure that were common in the 1970s have abated, and a significant proportion of the full-time professoriate is tenured—an artifact of the aging of the profession—“tenure track” positions are becoming less of the norm. There has been rapid expansion of part-time faculty who have no possibility of regular appointments. Alternative career paths are being proposed and even implemented. Renewable contracts and long-term non-tenure-track positions are increasingly common. It is likely that these trends will increase as institutions strive for more flexibility in resource allocation in the face of continued financial difficulties. The proportion of full-time, tenure-track, and tenured faculty will drop.

EXTERNAL FUNDING. Pressures to generate external funding will continue to increase, mainly in the research university sector. Academics have been asked to obtain funds through consulting, service to local industry and commerce, research, and other revenue-generating schemes. As academic institutions, especially in the public sector, find their budgets constrained, they seek other funding sources; this will inevitably involve the professoriate. The demand for “university-indus-

try linkages,” common in higher education, is a part of this trend.

RESEARCH FUNDING. The changes in research funding are not only indicative of other changes in the fiscal reality for higher education but of other changes as well. Basic research is less emphasized as government funding diminishes and as the quest for “results” and immediate payoff takes precedent. For a half century or more, universities were seen as the home of basic research—scientific research that would yield results in the long term but might have little immediate benefit. Funders are now less willing to support this kind of research. Accountability for research results is an increasing part of the pattern.

FACULTY DISADVANTAGES. The academic profession will increasingly lose power in the context of accountability and budgetary difficulties. In a difficult job market with limited mobility at the upper levels of the profession, academics are simply at a disadvantage. Those who have control over the budget will gain the upper hand—senior administrators will inevitably wield more authority, and the faculty will have less control over the university. One of the implications of this trend will be a lessening of autonomy.

SEGMENTED SYSTEM. The differentiation between the “haves” and the “have-nots” among institutions and in the academic profession, will continue, and perhaps even become exacerbated. The “research cadre”—senior professors located mainly at the top 50 to 75 American universities, with a strong commitment to research, access to external funding, and low teaching loads—will find that their working conditions may deteriorate modestly, but that they will be able to continue functioning with minimal deterioration. The significant declines will occur at the second-tier institutions. It is likely that the system will be further segmented by the expansion in the number of “non-tenure-track” full-time, limited-term faculty hired mainly to teach, and of the continued growth of part-time faculty, creating a “three-class” professoriate.

COMMUNITY. The sense of community, on the decline since the 1950s, will further deteriorate as the professoriate is divided demographically and by competing interests, increasingly differentiated institutions, and other forces.

These factors do not constitute a revolution in the academic profession, and we foresee academic life in the American university continuing on largely as before. Yet, the pressures on the academic profession will be unprecedented and significant change will inevitably take place. The new realities will affect different segments of the profession in different ways—but there is no doubt that we are in a period of challenge.

[With Martin J. Finkelstein, Spring 1996]

Cosmopolitanism Run Amok: Work and Rewards in Asia's Universities

The policymakers who run Hong Kong's higher education system, in an effort to ensure that academic staff are both productive and measure up to their colleagues in other countries, have placed Hong Kong's scholars and scientists in an unfortunate straitjacket. They are strongly encouraged to publish their work mainly in recognized international journals and with "gold standard" international publishers. Work published locally does not count for much in the increasingly competitive world of academe, where assessment and accountability are the slogans of the day and everything must be measured to ensure productivity.

The idea is that Hong Kong scholars and scientists should be competing with their colleagues overseas in such intellectual centers as the United States and Britain. Just as Hong Kong competes with the rest of the world economically, it should likewise be able to compete intellectually. There is also an underlying assumption that local journals and publishers cannot meet international standards. For example, it is charged that publications are not "refereed"—anonymously evaluated by peers in the field—or that even if they are subject to peer review, standards are somehow inadequate. The local academic community is not trusted to adequately judge quality, and foreign experts must play a role in evaluating scholarship.

International validation of academe has deep roots in Hong Kong, as

well as in other Asian university systems. Foreigners serve as members of Hong Kong's University Grants Committee along with local people, and are frequently involved in the evaluation of academic programs. It is assumed that Hong Kong's small and relatively new higher education system needs external review, and that local people do not have the skills necessary for this task. Only one institution, the University of Hong Kong, is more than a half century old. The seven university-level institutions do not have deep roots. Part of the logic of external evaluation stems from the colonial tradition, which is predicated on the idea of external control. It is also assumed that what exists in the metropole is better. It is assumed that local academic standards cannot be trusted even in the heartland of the tradition of Confucian meritocracy, with its devotion to examinations.

The goal of international validation is laudable, but the result is in the long run very damaging to the academic community, intellectual life, and scientific research in Hong Kong. There are many unintended results. Perhaps most important, the development of indigenous academic infrastructures of journals, publishers, and even of ideas is stifled. Local scholars seek to publish their work abroad. They look to the methodological and substantive interests of the international scientific community, thus ignoring local topics and needs. Everyone is looking abroad because they are forced to conform to international scientific norms.

Many Hong Kong scholars find it difficult to publish in the major international journals. Those whose first language is not English face challenges in writing for journals in the United States or Britain. Topics relevant to Hong Kong may not appeal to journal editors in the West. In many fields, Hong Kong scholars may find it difficult to conform to the current international methodological or ideological fads. The fact is that the Hong Kong academic community has many reasons to follow the scientific canons of the dominant Western trends in various fields—from postmodernism to particle physics. This situation presents problems especially in the social sciences and humanities, but also to some extent in the natural sciences as well.

The Western knowledge distribution system is highly competitive and largely unsympathetic to non-Western concerns. The most prestigious journals reject more than 80 percent of the articles submitted to them. With only a few exceptions, they publish articles that conform to the interests of the scientific establishment in the United States or Britain. A recent survey of academics in major countries found American and British scholars and scientists to be the least internationally minded. In short, it is quite difficult for researchers in other parts

of the world to gain acceptance in the competitive and in some ways insular world of Western science.

The current system focuses academic attention on the traditional centers of academe in North America and Europe. Asia and the region, while recognized as important, somehow seem less central. There is an interesting contradiction here. Research relating to Hong Kong and the region is given some emphasis by funding agencies and evaluators. At the same time, local or regional publications are considered less prestigious. Emerging academic centers of excellence in Japan, Taiwan, and Singapore are considered peripheral. China has only recently emerged as a focus of concern. It is, of course, easiest to measure what is already legitimized and easiest to evaluate. The most prestigious journals and publishers are in the West. Concentration on Western sources ignores publications that may be relevant to Hong Kong and to Asia, but which might be more difficult to evaluate.

Hong Kong is not alone in its slavish obeisance to Western ideas and institutions. Throughout the region, people look outside Asia, and especially to the academic power centers in the United States and Britain for respectability. Universities throughout the region encourage their faculty members to publish in Western journals, take sabbatical and research leaves in the West, and generally follow the leadership of American and British academe. In Taiwan, for example, an article published in English in a Western journal, even a journal of lesser status, is valued more highly than a local publication.

The increasing use of English for scientific and scholarly communication in the region makes it easier for an Asian academic community to emerge. Journals in English exist in Taiwan, Japan, and of course in Hong Kong and Singapore. Even China now publishes scientific journals in English. There is also room for scholarship in indigenous languages. In Japan, scientific communication goes on in Japanese and in English.

There is an urgent need for change. For this to occur, it is not necessary to reject international standards of scholarship or to turn inward. The fact is that Asian academic systems have grown in quality and sophistication. The infrastructures of scholarship are emerging—journals, book publishers, databases, and the like. Local and regional scholarship should be recognized as legitimate and worthy of positive evaluation. Once publication in local journals becomes accepted for academic promotion, those journals will improve. Indeed, with positive leadership, it is possible to instill in local journals high academic standards, a reviewing system that will protect quality, and an overall commitment to excellence. Reviewers from the region and the West can be used, but

with the terms of reference determined by Asian editors rather than Westerners. The circulation of local journals will grow, and such journals will achieve recognition throughout the region, and eventually in the current centers in Europe and North America.

As another equally positive result—Hong Kong, and Asian, scholarship will be legitimized by these developments. Research on important local topics will expand and receive recognition, increasing the available knowledge base. Local scholars will cease to feel constrained by the topical and methodological interests of the West, and will be free to pursue locally relevant research. The time has come for Hong Kong, and Asia, to declare intellectual independence from the West. This does not mean jettisoning the ideals of quality scholarship and objective evaluation but rather applying those standards locally and recognizing and encouraging excellence at home.

[March 1997]

Evaluating and Rewarding Professors: Mexican Style

Evaluating professors is a hot topic worldwide. Assessment, accountability, and differential rewards are on the agendas of universities and governments. In most countries, however, little real evaluation of academic work occurs and only modest levels of accountability exist. Academic staff are rewarded based on rank and length of service rather than on their individual performance. Indeed, such an evaluation process flies in the face of tradition and sometimes of established labor-management practices.

For at least a segment of the Mexican academic profession, a complex set of evaluative mechanisms exists, tied directly to salary and remuneration. It is worth taking a look at Mexican practices, which might have relevance elsewhere. The focus is on two important public universities—the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), perhaps the world's largest university with 245,000 students, and the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM), a large prestigious public university with 46,200 students. Both are located in Mexico City. The practices discussed here resemble those at many other public universities, but not in Mexico's growing private higher education sector.

This discussion relates mainly to professors with full-time appointments; they comprise just one-third of the teaching staff at UNAM. The rest are part-time staff who receive a modest payment for each course they teach and participate only to a minor extent in the governance of the university. UNAM is similar to most other Mexican universities in

this respect. UAM is exceptional in that a majority of its teaching staff have full-time appointments. It should be noted that “full-time” staff may also teach courses at other, usually private, universities or do consulting or other kinds of work to supplement their incomes.

Prior to 1990, Mexican universities, in common with most academic institutions worldwide, did little or no evaluation of faculty performance in determining salary levels. Professors were paid by rank and length of service, with few variations by discipline to take account of market factors. This system precluded any way of rewarding highly productive faculty—or giving a negative message to underachieving faculty. Further, the base salary of Mexican academics is quite low—too low to sustain a middle-class lifestyle or to retain the best people in the universities. The academic system needed to introduce both accountability and differentiation, and to reward the most productive professors. The goal of the new evaluation schemes was to improve the quality and performance of Mexican academics, and it was for this reason that the government provided funds to create the new programs. There was also recognition by academic leaders that remuneration had to be increased. There is a certain contradiction in these two goals—increasing salaries and introducing evaluation—and this has had implications for implementation.

The Internal Reward System

Currently UNAM and UAM offer a complicated set of income supplements on top of salary, based on performance and other criteria. This set of arrangements has produced a differentiated income structure. The system that has developed over the last decade has gotten quite complex and, many argue, nonfunctional in parts. Some academics refuse to participate in the numerous evaluation committees and boards, claiming that the reviews use up time and money that, they say, could be better spent in support of research. The criteria for rewarding professors are criticized as being too narrow. Another charge is that politics and favoritism toward members of particular factions has become part of the evaluation process in some fields and institutions. Some have argued that this evaluation system promotes the “survival of the fittest,” stimulating unhealthy competition and discouraging collaborative research, and is, these critics say, the crassest form of privatization of academic work. UAM is currently engaged in a major review of the structure of academic appointments and remuneration.

As noted, everyone receives a base salary that is not related to performance—and is quite low. Many universities have established their own set of monetary rewards and “top up” payments to faculty mem-

bers. Criteria for assigning salary increments were originally designed to reward productivity, mainly in research, but these rewards have to some extent become entitlements given out to all but the weakest. Other persons denied these monetary rewards include faculty members who have fallen out of favor with senior administrators, with the political or academic factions in charge of the department or institution, or with the evaluation committee. Productivity was usually measured by the number of articles or books published, with a premium placed on publishing in international journals: a locally published article was worth much less than one published abroad in English. Innovative teaching methods were not taken into account, nor was "outreach" such as publications aimed at a mass audience or public service. The omission of teaching from performance reviews is due in part to the difficulty of measuring effective teaching. Satisfactory tools for evaluating teaching do not exist anywhere, and developing useful criteria might be especially difficult in Mexico's bureaucratic environment.

The university's internal reward system, instituted with the intention of providing a more adequate income to the professoriate, in part achieved its goals. However, the system has been subverted by non-merit-based criteria and an overly narrow scope of measurement. Once on the "merit" list, a person was seldom removed. If productivity was judged deficient in an evaluation period, an increment might be omitted, but participation in the system continued. What started as a merit-based reward arrangement became just part of the remuneration package.

CONACYT and SNI

Another and more important source of salary for a small group of Mexican academics is the system to promote national scientific productivity organized by the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), a government-funded organization. CONACYT has its own national system of researchers (SNI), a network of the most highly productive scholars and researchers in all of the disciplines who are given significant remuneration supplements in recognition of their work. Only a small proportion of Mexican academics, 3 percent of the total number and about 10 percent of the full-time faculty (for example, 2,352 at UNAM and 410 at UAM) are part of the SNI system. Selection occurs through a peer review system, and maintaining membership is based on continuing productivity. Membership in the SNI system confers prestige in addition to providing more income. One of the reasons for the establishment of the SNI system was to encourage the best

Mexican academics to remain in Mexico. CONACYT recognizes research productivity—focusing mainly on publications but also on external grants. As with internal evaluations, teaching at the undergraduate level and service are not considered to be relevant criteria to measure productivity. The SNI system seems to work reasonably well. The awards are recognized as based on merit (however narrowly defined), and the members of the national network are viewed as among the best scholars and researchers working in Mexican higher education.

Conclusion

These reward arrangements have created a partially merit-based system for academic remuneration in a segment of Mexico's universities. The arrangements show that it is possible, in a highly bureaucratic academic system resistant to basic structural change, to implement a reform that had two goals—to raise salaries for the most productive professors and to provide a way to measure productivity. Unfortunately, the system itself has become rather rigid and, at least at the university level, no longer provides evaluation based on merit. It is just a standard way to supplement the inadequate basic salaries. The criteria for evaluation, both internally in the universities and in CONACYT, are overly narrow in scope and fail to recognize all aspects of meritorious and relevant academic work. Academic salaries, woefully inadequate, have been raised in many instances. For a few of the most productive faculty, salaries have been significantly improved. The idea of remuneration based on merit has been widely recognized—a significant achievement in a bureaucratized academic system.

UAM is currently rethinking its reward structures. Perhaps these discussions will lead to the creation of a system that works better and provides a more effective merit-based reward system. Mexico is an example of a country that has taken evaluation seriously, creating a very complex set of arrangements that provide at least some of the necessary elements of evaluation in the context of a highly politicized and bureaucratic academic system. In context, it is not a small achievement. Other countries can look at Mexico's interesting experiment with merit-based salaries through the back door. There are lessons, both positive and negative, to be learned.

[Spring 2003]

Part 9
Academic Freedom

Academic Freedom: International Warning Signs

Academic freedom is a core value of higher education everywhere. Without it, quality teaching and research are constrained. Societies depend on free expression in academe to provide a valuable independent voice for social analysis and criticism and to strengthen civil society. Academic freedom is so much a part of the lifeblood of the university that it is today taken for granted. It is time to reinvigorate a debate about academic freedom because it is now under attack. Not since before the end of the Cold War, when freedoms were restored to the universities of the former Soviet bloc, have there been so many threats to academic freedom. We are faced with a mounting crisis that few have noticed and fewer protested.

Just in the past few weeks, Russia has reimposed many of the controls of the Soviet era, ordering academics to report contacts with foreigners and restricting international travel. China has stepped up harassment of non-Chinese researchers, as well as imposing further limits on local scholars and researchers. In Egypt, a well-known scholar and social critic is on trial for subversion. Researchers in such Southeast Asian countries as Malaysia and Singapore face routine restrictions on what they can research, publish, and teach. In the United States and other industrialized countries, the problems are more subtle but nonetheless troubling. The increasing corporatization of research funding in universities has placed restrictions on the reporting of results and the use of knowledge. The ownership of courses and other expression on the Internet is also an area of contestation.

In short, academic freedom is being tested as the 21st century begins.

Actually, academic freedom is especially important in the knowledge-based society of the 21st century. This is because the universities are a key engine of the knowledge society and are most effective when there is academic freedom. Researchers do their best work in an atmosphere free from constraints. Teaching benefits from a frank exchange of ideas. University-based intellectuals are often influential social analysts, commentators, and at times critics. In modern societies, where so many knowledge workers are centered in universities, academic freedom becomes critically important to the creation of a healthy civil society and the development of intellectual life.

A few definitions and a little bit of history are in order. There are two basic elements of academic freedom. The most basic element was codified in the 19th century by Wilhelm von Humboldt during the reform of the German university. Academic freedom meant the freedom of the professor to teach, do research, and publish without fetters in his field of expertise. This definition of academic freedom was limited to the classroom and the laboratory. It did not extend to the public sphere nor did it give professors the right to speak out on topics outside of their scholarly specialization. Socialists, for example, were prevented from teaching in the German universities of the Wilhelminian era, and this was not considered a violation of academic freedom. The Americans, in the early 20th century, expanded the concept of academic freedom to the public sphere. Professors were protected not only with regard to teaching and research in the classroom and laboratory but also enjoyed the right to speak out on any topic in any forum and to publish their views without any restriction. Gradually, academic freedom came to include both of these concepts.

However, academic freedom has always been contested terrain. Professors sought, with limited success, to carve out a sphere of academic freedom in the medieval universities, struggling against both church and state from time to time. Galileo's problems notwithstanding, the academic community slowly gained for itself a considerable degree of freedom of teaching within the walls of the universities. When universities became national institutions after the Protestant Reformation, additional struggles for academic freedom ensued. In the modern period, academic freedom has not had an easy time. In Germany, Hitler destroyed academic freedom—and ultimately the universities—during the Nazi period, and did it with the agreement of a large majority of the academic community. Lenin and Stalin similarly eliminated academic freedom from the universities of the Soviet Union. In the United States, academic freedom came under threat dur-

ing the First World War and again during the anticommunist hysteria of the McCarthy period in the 1950s.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, considerable progress was made and complacency set in. As mentioned earlier, academic freedom was restored in the former Soviet bloc and a half century of restriction was largely removed. While the universities in Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union have faced many problems, academic freedom was to a considerable degree observed. The situation in Central and Eastern Europe was, and remains, even more favorable. Even China, where restrictions remained and were tightened after the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989, loosened up by the end of the century.

Thus it may come as a surprise to learn that academic freedom is under attack in many parts of the world. The doors that were opening in the communist and formerly communist world show signs of closing. Most disturbing are the recently announced restrictions in Russia, reflecting the harsher atmosphere of the Putin administration. The restrictions on academic contacts with foreigners and foreign travel are a reimposition of rules from the Soviet era. Whether these actions presage further restrictions is not clear, although if the academic community in Russia and elsewhere accepts them, it is more likely than not that additional curbs will be put into effect. Academic freedom is also weakening and deteriorating in other countries of the former Soviet Union, most notably Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Slow and tentative liberalization of academic life in Cuba may be coming to an end given the recently implemented restrictions on independent libraries. Academic freedom in China is under increased threat as a number of foreign researchers, mostly ethnic Chinese from other countries have been arrested and charged with various crimes, including espionage. It is likely that these arrests are intended to warn Chinese academics and students to limit their foreign contacts, and they serve as an indication of increased government scrutiny of academe.

Africa exhibits several contradictory trends. On the positive side, the end of apartheid in South Africa resulted in the reestablishment of academic freedom in Africa's best developed academic system. Likewise, the end of the repressive Abacha military regime in Nigeria opened the way for a strengthening of academic freedom. On the negative side, government repression of student demonstrations in Ethiopia in the spring of 2001 resulted in many deaths, the jailing of students and professors, and severe restrictions of academic freedom. Even before the recent unrest, a number of professors had been summarily fired by the government. Zimbabwe's impressive tradition of academic freedom

has been undermined as the Mugabe regime seeks to retain power and places ever greater restrictions on the universities. In Africa, with a few exceptions, academic freedom seems only as strong as the stability of the particular regime in power.

Limited academic freedom exists in Malaysia and Singapore. These countries exemplify a pattern of restriction that is not unique but not much discussed. The universities are in general of excellent quality and well supported by government. In many fields, teaching and research face few if any restrictions. However, in areas considered sensitive by government authorities, academic freedom is severely curtailed, especially in the social sciences. Subjects such as ethnic relations, poverty, social inequality, and religion are considered to be controversial and both research and teaching in these areas must conform to the government's views. Academics who work on these subjects must in some cases obtain approval to publish their work and may be sanctioned if they speak or write from a critical perspective. Academics know that they are accountable for what they write, but are never completely aware of what is permitted or not permitted. Self-censorship is very much on the minds of social scientists and some others.

In the United States and other major industrialized nations, threats to academic freedom are much more subtle. There are few overt restrictions on teaching, research, or public expression. However, new patterns of communication, mainly through the Internet, and current research funding arrangements raise questions relevant to academic freedom. Who owns knowledge, including lectures and course materials, when the Internet is the means of communication? Does the professor control what is said in the classroom when the classroom may be the World Wide Web? Should the university "own" the intellectual content of a course and control its delivery? Such issues, largely moot in the traditional classroom, are looming large in distance education.

Research has become problematic as well. The established norm that research results stemming from university-based work should be available to the scientific community and subject to peer review is increasingly violated when university research is sponsored by corporations that insist on controlling results that may yield profits. The implications for academic freedom of these new patterns of university work are both unclear and controversial. In general, academic freedom is being whittled away by the pressures of the marketplace and technology in a rapidly changing environment.

The time has come to pay careful attention to academic freedom in order to ensure that one of the most central values of the university is not diminished. The external pressures are great—from governments

seeking to stifle dissent and suppress potentially embarrassing research and from the increasingly powerful forces of the market. The academic community has been slow to realize the nature of the crisis and to respond to it.

[Summer 2001]

Academic Freedom in Hong Kong- Threats Inside and Out

In July 2000, academic freedom became front-page news in Hong Kong when Professor Robert Chung of Hong Kong University, a prominent pollster, accused the university's vice chancellor of pressuring him to stop conducting public opinion polls concerning the territory's chief executive. A special commission has been appointed to look into the charges and into academic freedom generally; and Hong Kong's academics, insecure following the accession to China in 1997, are feeling even more unhappy.

It may be useful to look at this crisis from an international perspective, since many of the issues facing Hong Kong's universities are common elsewhere. Hong Kong is in an unusual position. It is precariously balanced between the norms and values of the international academic community, where academic freedom is a central conviction, and the complex reality of its special "one country, two systems" status as a part of China. China has no commitment to academic freedom, and many in Hong Kong see Chinese political and cultural norms as gradually taking over.

Colonial Influences

Hong Kong University has its roots as a colonial institution. Established in 1911 by the British, its structures and values were from the beginning British. Until relatively recently, academic power was in the hands of expatriate senior professors. British authorities, especially in the latter period of colonial rule, permitted the university academic

freedom and considerable autonomy; but the institution looked to Britain rather than to Hong Kong, or to Asia, for guidance. Even today, there is a complex relationship between the university and Hong Kong society.

Hong Kong academics are especially attuned to violations of academic freedom precisely because of their special political and societal circumstances. It is admirable that the academic community remains committed to the core values of the university. These very circumstances may, however, obscure other realities affecting higher education in Hong Kong—and worldwide.

Trends Affecting Higher Education

Many trends threaten not only the traditional values of academe, but may also be problematical for academic freedom. It is useful to discuss some of them, if only to show that Hong Kong is not the only place where the ideals of the university are in jeopardy.

Managerialism

Worldwide, the traditional control of the central elements of the university by the faculty is being diminished. In the name of efficiency and accountability, business practices imported from the corporate sector are coming to dominate the universities. Governance, the traditional term used to describe the uniquely participatory way that universities work, is being replaced by management. The academic staff has had essential responsibility for the curriculum, the admission of students and the award of degrees and for the hiring and promotion of professors and usually dominated the decision-making bodies of the university. Increasingly, managers are taking control of the levers of power. This does not make the professors happy and may, in the long run, create academic institutions that have no core academic values.

Accountability and Autonomy

Simply stated, traditional faculty autonomy (the ability to control the classroom, the curriculum, and the overall conditions of academic work) is being severely constrained by accountability (the idea that those paying the costs of higher education should have the right to determine how funds should be spent). This often extends to research—professors once were able to determine their own research priorities and often to obtain funding for them. Now, funds are increasingly allocated by corporations that demand specific results. This creates problems not only for the future of basic research (which does not

yield immediately usable products) but for the academic freedom to pursue research topics.

Diminishing Power

The academic profession is, simply put, losing its once dominating power over the university. Managers are making more decisions; and external agencies, from the University Grants Committee to legislatures, are taking on roles that the professoriate once had.

Fiscal Constraints

Worldwide, universities are facing financial problems. Governments have cut back on funding for higher education, and students and their families have been asked to pay more of the cost. This has resulted in deteriorating academic salaries and declining conditions of academic work. In Hong Kong, these pressures are much less severe than elsewhere.

These, and other, trends are not happy ones for the academic profession at the outset of the new millennium. Yet, they are realities with which the professoriate everywhere must contend. An outsider might argue that academics in Hong Kong enjoy comparatively good conditions. Hong Kong academic salaries are reputed to be among the highest in the world, especially when one takes into account tax rates. Working conditions, despite problems, remain comparatively good. Academic facilities, including libraries and laboratories, especially in the top institutions, remain “world class”—or close to it. When compared to their counterparts in other Asian countries, including Japan, most Hong Kong academics enjoy favorable conditions.

Why, then, the protests and the general feeling of malaise among Hong Kong academics? Part of the problem is a lack of confidence in the political future of the territory—a factor that no doubt exacerbates every perceived threat to academic freedom. The unfamiliarity of the ruling elite in Hong Kong with the norms and values of a university and the lack of constraints for violating these norms may also contribute. The fact that Hong Kong academic institutions are probably more “Western” than “Asian” makes them more sensitive to external factors than similar institutions in other Asian countries.

In a sense, Hong Kong’s academics are swimming against two powerful currents—the current of worldwide managerialism and academic bureaucratism, and the current of Asian state domination of academe. It is all the more impressive that the academic community has stood up to these powerful pressures and that the civil society in Hong Kong has made their cause a topic of concern and struggle.

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Part 10
Current Issues

The Tyranny of Names: How Universities Sow Confusion and Cheapen Academe

For the past several decades, “naming rights” have proliferated in American higher education. While by no means a new phenomenon, the tyranny of names is going to extraordinary lengths. In this, academe is accompanying trends in society in the era of the Fleet Center and Gillette Stadium, in Boston. Anything to eke out an extra dollar from donors is fair game. Far be it from me to criticize needed efforts to raise funds at a time of fiscal constraints, but things have gotten a bit out of hand.

Universities and colleges have long been named after donors—think of Harvard, Yale, Brown, and many others. By today's standards, John Harvard would hardly get a bench named after him given the modesty of his gift of books for the library back in the 17th century. At least one institution, Rowan University of New Jersey, changed its name when someone made a large donation—the old title was Glassboro State College. Buildings have traditionally been named after people—distinguished scholars, visionary academic leaders, and, recently, big donors.

“Old Main” and Bascom Hall are indicative of a bygone age when place and merit were recognized. Now we have the Gloria and Jake Smith Administration Pavilion and the McGinty Family Chemistry Center. Many schools give donor names to class and seminar rooms. More than one institution of higher education puts names on its chairs—the kind that one sits in rather than endowed professorships.

Professorships have long been named for donors of endowments; but some of the donors who have put their names on chairs raise eyebrows—the FedEx chair and many others. No doubt there is an Enron chair still out there somewhere.

A major trend is naming colleges and schools within universities. We have long had the Wharton School, the nationally known business school of the University of Pennsylvania; Boalt Hall, the law school of the University of California at Berkeley; and the JFK School of Government at Harvard. These schools have, over time, achieved an image of their own, separate from the universities at which they are located. They are “name brands.” Now we have the Rossier, Steinhart, and Warner schools and hundreds of others—these happen to be the education faculties at the University of Southern California, New York University, and the University of Rochester, respectively. These schools are not recognized on their own, and they are unlikely to be in the future. Yet, staff at many of these institutions are encouraged to use the brand names (e.g., the “Rossier School”), without referring to the function or the home institution. Beyond a block from the campus, few would know anything about it.

Branding and Confusing

Why is all of this happening now? The main motivation for the naming boom is, of course, to raise money. Donors love to have their names, or the names of parents or other relatives, on buildings, schools, institutions, professorships, and the like. Increasingly, corporations and other businesses also like to benefit from having their names on educational facilities. At one time, there were limits on what could be named; today, there seem to be none at all. If something does not have a name, it is up for grabs—a staircase, a pond, or a parking garage. Once all of the major facilities have titles, lesser things go onto the naming auction block. Development offices no doubt have long lists of campus assets that can be named for various sums. Colleges and universities, public and private, are all under increased pressure to raise money; and naming brings in cash.

Naming is also about branding—and in the case of corporate naming, it is also about product placement. Corporations feel that they will benefit by having their names on an academic building or attached to a prestigious professorship. On campus, many feel that giving the business school or the college of agriculture a name will enhance its prestige and visibility. It is believed by academic decision makers that if people see that a donor has given enough to get such a school named, it must be very good. Top students will be attracted, and other generous

patrons will be lured.

In the era of “each tub on its own bottom,” where increasingly faculties and schools within universities are responsible for their own budgets, there is a tendency for the school to operate independently—and to seek to create its own identity separate from the university. A well-known case is the Darden School (of business at the University of Virginia), which asked for, and received, considerable autonomy from the university in return for being responsible for its own budget. It even found donations to construct a new building—nicer than the usual state funded facilities. In a few cases, where professional schools have established reputations, wealthy alumni, and entrepreneurial leadership, it is possible to build an identity and reputation separate from the university. But for most, even at excellent universities, such recognition is difficult or impossible to achieve.

Separate branding weakens the focus, mission, and perhaps even the broader reputation of the institution as a whole. It confuses the public, and perhaps potential students. The tactic feeds the idea that the 21st century university is simply a confederation of independent entrepreneurial fiefdoms. Branding also strengthens the professional schools and ignores the core arts and sciences disciplines, where separate identities do not work. And except for a few schools at the very top of the hierarchy, the naming strategy will not produce schools with separate reputations and drawing power in any case.

The Future

The trends we see now in the United States, and perhaps tomorrow in other countries, will inevitably weaken the concept of the university as an institution that is devoted to the search for truth and the transmission of knowledge, of an institution with almost a millennium of history. The naming obsession is symbolic of the commercialization, bifurcation, and entrepreneurialism of the contemporary university.

[Summer 2005]

Students: Politics and Revolution

In July, university students in Iran came close to overthrowing the regime. They failed when conservatives within the government mobilized counterdemonstrators and mounted their own street demonstrations. It is worth recalling that the downfall of the Shah two decades ago was precipitated by students from Tehran University. Less than a year ago, Indonesian students took to the streets and, after protracted demonstrations that resulted in major riots and deaths, forced the resignation of President Suharto and paved the way for recently concluded elections. These are but two examples of the power student movements have to influence politics and cause social unrest.

Students have played a pivotal role in the political and cultural history of many countries. They were central players in the independence movements that brought freedom to many developing countries. Campus social and political movements have been harbingers of change in many societies, from the pro-Nazi student fraternities in pre-Hitler Germany to the US civil rights and antiwar movements in the 1960s. Student political movements might be compared to the proverbial canary in the coal mine—they may be a sign of a social explosion to come or of a building political crisis.

Yet not all student movements signal impending social crisis, and they are by no means always successful. If a regime is stable and has a modicum of legitimacy, it can usually survive. The government can sometimes use overwhelming repression to put down student revolts. This can be dangerous, since it can easily backfire. This occurred on the streets of Jakarta, when troops killed students at one of Indonesia's most prestigious universities, inflaming campus opinion and causing

the mass media to turn against the government. In contrast, the Chinese authorities were able to use massive force to end the demonstrations at Tiananmen Square in 1989 by moving decisively and keeping control of the mass media. Further, the Chinese regime had better control over the security apparatus and greater legitimacy than President Suharto.

Student movements can topple governments only when the political system is already weakened and the regime has lost much of its legitimacy. Students have never caused the government of an industrialized country to fall. This is because the political systems are relatively stable and there are many competing political interests, organizations, and movements—from labor unions to political parties and the media. Only in the volatile 1960s did students cause significant unrest in Western countries. In France, President DeGaulle was forced to flee to a French military base in Germany and the survival of the government seemed precarious. In America, the anti-Vietnam War movement, led by students, forced President Lyndon Johnson not to run for reelection although it did not threaten the political system. In West Germany, radical students were a potent political force. The reasons for the power of students at this time were similar in each country—society was polarized and the established political parties were not functioning effectively. In the United States, Pres. Johnson's pledge to scale back in Vietnam was not honored, and the war escalated; in France, DeGaulle had weakened Parliament; and in Germany, the "grand coalition" of the two major parties left the country without an effective opposition; and the students stepped in with an "extraparliamentary opposition" that expressed the views of a growing sector of German opinion.

Many developing countries have poorly institutionalized political systems and a weak public sphere. Their "civil society"—the web of voluntary organizations, the press and publishers, unions, political parties, and the like—is inadequate. There are many reasons for this. In some cases, the legacy of colonialism stunted the growth of institutions. The Congo, for example, had only a handful of university graduates at the time of independence. Poverty and illiteracy also hampered the establishment of civic institutions and stable governments. University students are among the few groups in society that possess the knowledge and the freedom to undertake political activism. And in many developing countries, a tradition of student political involvement dates back to the struggles against colonialism. In contrast, student politics is considered an illegitimate activity in the West—students are expected to attend university to study and not to engage in revolutionary activity. Not only do Western students have to contend with a rich

mixture of competing organizations and movements, but their activism is not respected by most of the public. In developing countries, students are often seen as the “conscience of the nation.”

The recent cases of Iran and Indonesia are illustrative. Iran's clerical establishment seems to have survived the current outbreak of student-led demonstrations. In both countries, political opposition has for many years been stifled, with a strictly controlled media. Academic freedom in the universities was restricted. There were few outlets for people to express their opposition to those in power, and in any case political expression courted arrest. Yet, both Iran and Indonesia have active middle classes and fairly high literacy rates, the basis for a civil society.

Students in these countries, and in many other Third World nations, were the only group in society able to express dissenting views. Students, after all, come from relatively affluent and urbanized families in developing countries. They are relatively easy to organize since they are on campus. The academic atmosphere, even in repressive societies such as Iran and Indonesia, is more free than in the surrounding society. Perhaps most important, higher education encourages inquiry and the questioning of established practices and institutions. It is not at all surprising that critical opinion will be expressed first among students.

In both countries, unrest spread quickly from the major universities in the capitals and attracted the support of significant parts of the urban population. In Indonesia, the rot in the regime was sufficiently deep and social discontent, stimulated by the expanding economic crisis, strong enough to make repression impossible. Suharto was eventually forced to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis and to resign. The students did not achieve their intended goal—the ouster of the entire regime; since Suharto's successor, Habibie, was part of the old regime, and elections did not take place for a year.

In Iran, the conservative leadership was able to bring its own supporters out onto the streets and to dominate the mass media. The regime, through moderate levels of repression and the mobilization of its own supporters, proved that it retained a wellspring of support in society. In both countries, events are still evolving, and students may again play a central role.

Students precipitated the crisis, yet were unable to control events. This too is a common characteristic of student activism. Students have neither the power nor the organizational sophistication to maintain their movement and impose their will on society. Once the crisis takes place, other forces emerge. Often, the military seizes power, or political coalitions are able to cobble together a regime. In Indonesia, the polit-

ical parties are slowly moving toward creating a government following recent elections. In Iran, the conservative Islamic clerics have, at least for the present, kept power.

University students are a powerful force in many countries. They both shape and express public opinion and cultural attitudes. Often at the forefront of political and social change, they deserve to be understood—and respected.

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The University of Buenos Aires Model for the Future of Higher Education: A Neglected Perspective

The University of Buenos Aires (UBA), Argentina's largest and most prestigious institution of higher education has put into place an educational model that, in a perverse way, has lessons for higher education policy worldwide. UBA is an institution of more than 180,000 students. It has been shaped by the educational ideas of the 1918 Cordoba reform, and these have calcified into rigid policy. Study at UBA is based on the Darwinian principle of survival of the fittest. Everyone can enter, but only a small minority of the students who enroll eventually earn degrees, and they do this often by sheer persistence.

The UBA model should appeal to World Bank planners and other budget cutters since it provides both access to many and a decent education to a few. The cost per graduate may be high but the expenditure per student is very low in most faculties. The infrastructure is terrible (poor libraries and laboratories), but large numbers are processed through the institution.

Key Characteristics of the UBA Model

- The University has totally open enrollment. Any high school graduate may enroll in any faculty without restriction—even in medicine or architecture. Unlike most European countries with similar open systems, Argentina has no rigorous high school

completion exam and imposes no restrictions on fields such as medicine, where unlimited numbers directly affect quality of instruction.

- UBA is completely free, with no tuition or fees for study at any level.
- Most professors work part time, teaching a course or two per term for a token payment. In most of the faculties, fewer than 20 percent are full-time professors. Moreover, full time does not really mean a full-time commitment to the university, since professorial salaries are low—averaging around \$24,000 per year for the senior faculty. This means that even full-time professors must hold other jobs. There are few restrictions on such extra employment.
- There is no tenure system or security of employment. Full-time faculty members are reevaluated every seven years in an open “contest” with others who may apply for their jobs, and they must compete with all applicants.
- Facilities are completely inadequate for students and faculty. Part-time staff have no place to meet students or prepare for class. Many full-time faculty are without offices of their own. Campus computing and other facilities are minimal. Libraries are woefully inadequate. Laboratories are similarly poorly equipped. Both students and faculty must rely on their own resources for books and Internet access.
- The dropout rate is very high and those students who complete their studies take a long time to do so. Most students hold jobs while studying, and few devote their full attention to the university. In some faculties, such as medicine, the dropout rate approaches 90 percent. Other faculties graduate somewhat higher proportions of students.
- There is a one-year sequence of a kind of general education (*ciclo basico comun*, CBC) for entering students. The courses are overcrowded, taught by part-time staff, and by all accounts not appealing to most students. Sixty percent of those who start the CBC either drop out or do not pass the examinations, and are as a result not permitted to enter one of the faculties. Most students have virtually no contact with professors until late in their academic program, if then.
- UBA remains the most prestigious university in the nation, and although it is losing ground to several of the new private institutions, graduates earn considerable status by holding a degree from the university. Even those who study there without actually

completing a degree are held in some esteem. The fact is that UBA graduates are both bright and have accomplished a great deal by surviving in a difficult academic environment and obtaining their degrees.

Implications

The UBA “model” has a number of implications. The minority of full-time staff must submit to the “contest” every seven years (although somehow most faculty manage to keep their jobs), and they must report on their research activities every other year. They are also expected to teach courses at all levels, advise master's students, and direct research programs. There is little intellectual community because of the difficult working conditions, and the pressured environment in which many professors work. Despite these problems, most of Argentina's internationally visible faculty teach at UBA—although there is now some exodus to several of the new private universities. Part-time staff are happy to teach a course or two because of the prestige of holding an “appointment” at UBA.

The university cares little about its students. It has no control over how many students enter each year. And it cannot control the quality of its entering students. Its only power is to eliminate students through examinations, attrition, or inattention. The students who do well tend to be those from well-off families. In this way, the university contributes to social inequality even though it has an ideology of egalitarianism. The Argentine educational system, in general, works against the poor. Half of those who enter the schools do not complete their studies. And the large majority of those who enter UBA do not finish.

Those students who do complete their studies are both bright and persistent; they have to be to survive in the Darwinian system. When I expressed concern about the quality of Argentine medical doctors produced by such an unselective medical education system, I was told not to worry. The tiny minority who eventually graduate from the medical faculty are intelligent, highly motivated, and well trained. They are the survivors who are taken in hand by the professors toward the end of their course of study. The situation in other faculties is similar although perhaps not quite as egregious.

The government spends little on public higher education and is especially harsh on UBA. Argentine higher education is highly politicized, and UBA is traditionally loyal to the Radical Party, currently in the opposition. The ruling Peronists are naturally not inclined to support their political enemies. Elections are coming up in 1999, and the situation may change, although overall levels of support for public

higher education are certain to remain low. Not only are many of the public universities identified by their party loyalties, but the governance system that was put in place by the reform movement of 1918 further politicized academe. The reform enshrined the participation of students and nonacademic university employees in the structures of governance of UBA and all of public higher education. Students, secretaries, and other employees, and professors all vote for the rector (president) and other key officeholders. Often, candidates for high university office fight for positions based on their political affiliations.

Does It Work?

Yet, in a strange way, this is an academic system that works. It offers access to many and a quality education to a few. Those who drop out before finishing their degrees do not seem to resent either the university or the government. UBA acts as a mass “parking lot” for young people who would otherwise have problems finding jobs in Argentina’s difficult employment market. The university “absorbs demand” at the same time that it dampens potential social unrest.

UBA keeps costs down. While it is true that the university goes against international trends by providing free tuition, it is fairly cost-effective in terms of providing access to large numbers cheaply. It does this by providing minimal services to the students, by paying full-time faculty salaries that are inadequate, and exploiting large numbers of part-time teachers who are happy to have a UBA affiliation. Money is saved by not investing in libraries, laboratories, or information technology. At UBA, “distance education” means that students and staff travel long distances to sit in crowded lecture halls.

The status quo at UBA is reinforced by a combination of powerful forces that make change difficult. The traditions, some of which are enshrined in university regulations or in the Argentine legal system, remain strong. Among these are open access, free tuition, no job security for professors, and the idea of “autonomy.” In Argentina, and in much of Latin America, autonomy means that the university has legal protection from direct governmental interference in many of its activities. Until recently, there was no accountability to anyone. A new accrediting and evaluation system, run by the government, will introduce some accountability.

The relationship between UBA and the government is influenced both by the ideology of autonomy and by the politicization of the university. UBA is traditionally linked to one of the political parties, and partisan politics infuses both campus decision making and the relations between the university and the government. Since the govern-

ment provides all of the funding for the university, less than cordial relations create major problems. The Peronist government has cut UBA's budget, causing further deterioration in the quality of education at the university.

Despite all of these problems, in some ways the University of Buenos Aires does offer a range of academic programs to large numbers of students. It has an inefficient yet effective "selection" process that works by letting everyone in and weeding out those who are not highly motivated. The university invests little in terms of salaries for teachers, libraries, or infrastructure. Thus, for those who preach the gospel of low-cost postsecondary education in order to provide access to the maximum numbers, the University of Buenos Aires may provide a useful model. Indeed, for governments seeking to maximize access without regard to quality, UBA is also worth studying. The UBA model would be even more appealing to the budget cutters if tuition could be charged. Darwin would be proud of the University of Buenos Aires.

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About the Author

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