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Foreign Study: Changing Patterns and Competitive Challenges
Philip G. Altbach

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 travelling 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, expediters, 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 financial cost 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 U.S.$11 billion to the U.S. economy in 2000, much of it coming from 73 percent of international students who have non-U.S. 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 (U.S.$2.6 billion) more profitable than beef or wool and considerable emphasis is being placed 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 U.K. (or EU) students.

Patterns of Financial Flows
International students are increasingly seen as income earners by the host countries. Worldwide financial cut-backs 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 includes such major host countries as France and Germany, which rank as number three and four 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. U.S. 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. 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 numbers 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 U.S. students studying abroad, and EU programs have boosted European numbers although not by as much as anticipated by planners.

Although U.S. 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. U.K. 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 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 U.S. 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 of the U.S. 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 regional area 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 off-shore 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 the 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 what direction change will take—and how the public good can be served in the new global higher education marketplace.

Corporate Universities and the Redefinition of a Medieval Brand

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Recent debates on the nature of international higher education and the “pseudouniversity” are central to understanding a new managerial initiative, the corporate university. High-profile initiatives such as Motorola University in the United States, Barclays University in the United Kingdom, and the Shell Open University on mainland Europe are all examples of a significant innovation recognizable to both educational
analysts and management scholars. Reliable estimates are elusive as to the number of these pseudouniversities, but without doubt a discourse on corporate university (CU) initiatives is gaining in visibility and popularity.

The aim of this article is to bring together insights from previous work on the corporate classroom, and to report on initial findings from our own three-year research project into CU initiatives in the United Kingdom and Europe. Defining a CU has been somewhat problematic. Previously well-drawn boundaries between education and business, and between universities and other educational institutions, are becoming increasingly blurred. Indeed, the rise of CUs may be seen as part of this process, since they are designed to increase exchange between the corporate world and education and to serve as leaders of the initiatives. Our research proceeds from two basic factors: that a CU is owned (and controlled) by a single corporation and that a CU draws the majority of its students from within the corporation. In addition, the use of language from the educational world to label the initiative is for us a crucial aspect of CU construction.

Practitioner accounts of managing corporate training and development through CUs abound, yet extended, empirically informed analysis is rare. Despite an increase in attention to both human resource development at work and the governance of established state-accredited universities, neither educationalists nor management researchers have explored the nature and meaning of CUs in any depth. The field is thus left open to “insider accounts” relating the positive effects of CUs in developmental terms and in relation to business benefits, justifying the appropriation of higher education terminology and symbolism along the way; or to consultants with an interest in portraying CU initiatives as positive and worthwhile, retelling and retailing success stories.

The Corporate Classroom
Despite the freshness of their label (first noted in the early 1980s), CU initiatives are by no means the first time that business and education have come together. From the beginnings of the industrial era in the United States, capital owners sought to influence the nature of the “products” supplied by educational systems. As the skills required for employees changed in the mid-19th century, factory managers found that new recruits were not arriving at the workplace with the desired vocational skills—so they began to found company-owned schools. Earlier writers suggest that such schools had the additional function of introducing prospective employees to the discipline of new industrial work organizations, an issue that is reinforced in the CUs known as “corporate boot camps.”

This corporate response to educational “failings” continued to stimulate educational initiatives throughout the 20th century. One of the first CUs, Motorola University, was in part established to provide basic literacy and numeracy training to lower-level employees who had escaped the state education system without these skills. Other CUs, such as that of British Telecom in the United States, focus on retraining in order to meet changing demands placed on employees as technologies are replaced and working practices redefined. Still others emphasize a role as “broker” or “gatekeeper” in explaining the types of training and development available to large corporations, filtering the possible options. Yet others, such as the CUs of Gemini Ernst & Young or Boeing, are seen as strategic centers for the organization, a free space within which senior managers and high-flying potential leaders can come together in a luxuriously appointed and protected space to debate and define corporate goals.

Higher Education Symbolism and Practice
For some people, the term corporate university translates as little more than a hollow shell or “Trojan Horse.” CUs are seen as the products of adoption and adaptation of a prestigious label by managers to lend legitimacy to essentially in-house training activity focused only on corporate aims. For others, the central tenets of higher education, as encapsulated in the idea of the university, stand in contrast to operations within CUs. Critics conclude that the nature of the corporate product is inferior to the reality and philosophy of the university as it has developed over 500 years. For example, the concept of academic freedom to do research and publish without institutional interference is fundamental to higher education, whereas neither self-directed research nor publication of findings are key aspects of corporate university activity. Further, the norm of independent critical analysis may be seen as essential to individual and institutional identity in the academy; these are also not traits that are valued in the corporate context.
Beyond these definitional issues, our research focused on what were perceived as the key question raised by CU activity: what motivates managers to talk about and set up institutions that draw on the symbolism and practice of higher education (and what do corporations gain)? This question may be considered from two perspectives: from inside the corporation and from inside the academy. The second viewpoint is easier to locate, through published criticism of CUs. There has been considerable academic resistance to corporate use of terms such as university, institute, academy, or college. Indeed, some countries (such as the United Kingdom) have placed legislative constraints on the use of these terms since they fall into the category of “protected business names.” Moreover, academics have questioned the commitment of corporations with CU initiatives to uphold educational standards or norms. Two arguments are emerging: first, as outlined above, that CUs are not committed to any of the tenets that make up the idea of the university; second, that the term university (and therefore any cultural capital accruing to it) will be debased if large corporations are free to apply it to any managerial initiative.

**The importance of the corporate market to higher education is easy to overlook**

Managers in our study, however, express little interest in these issues. The use of educational symbols and terms is seen as having two purposes. First, training and development (traditionally known as a “Cinderella” activity in companies, bullied by the ugly sisters of financial constraints and production imperatives) are being raised in status and legitimated through relabeling. Second, the visible commitment that a high-profile CU initiative constitutes enables senior managers to stake claims for a place at the educational policy table, rendering them better able to voice corporate perspectives in state education debates.

**Mutual (In)comprehension**

It has been suggested that any institution that is not an established university should be relabeled as a specialized training institute or a corporate training institute, and provided with their own accrediting bodies and award structures. These steps would return the symbolism (and value) of academia, so long in the making, back to the academy, and therefore protect it. This straightforward solution is challenged, however, by the actions of academics at established universities who have enthusiastically responded to corporate requests for greater flexibility in the boundaries between the academy and corporations. In short, “the university” may be a less unique label than we assume.

The importance of the corporate market to higher education is easy to overlook. People may not notice students being quietly funded by their employers and research projects and academic posts being funded by multinationals. Higher education, it is argued, has been getting progressively closer to corporations, and the potential threat this poses to academic freedom is well documented. Less expected, perhaps, is the intrusion of large corporations into the world of higher education as emulators or competitors, and this is largely the way that corporate universities have been perceived to date. More research and thought are needed before we can claim to understand corporate universities. Our research to date certainly indicates that CUs in the United Kingdom and Europe are more complex and meaningful initiatives than academic commentators have assumed so far. Beyond the symbolism and badging lies an important and far-reaching shift in corporate practice. Perhaps through seeking to understand what a corporate university is (for), we might come to better understand what higher education is (for).

This article is summarized from Corporate Universities: Historical Development, Conceptual Analysis, and Relations with Public-Sector Higher Education (London: Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2002). Additional information is available from OBHE, 36 Gordon Sq., London WC1H, OPF, UK. Website: www.obhe.ac.uk.

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**E-learning: Expanding the Bottle to Fit the Genie**

**Simon Marginson**

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Electronic distance learning poses a new and difficult set of problems for educators and governments, problems both political and pedagogical. The mystery deepens when we contemplate electronic learning across international borders. While there has been much hype about the Internet as a learning medium, its educational and social potential is as yet unclear. Equally unclear is the global policy framework in which e-learning will be
developed and regulated, which is the issue discussed in this article.

Should it be left to the commercial sector to shape the new educational prototypes and play out the patterns of global influence on the basis of free trade? Does this mean that we must accept any and every e-mail operator who offers “prestigious unaccredited degrees” in exchange for a credit card number or uses the weak links in the national and international structure of accreditation in order to gain legitimacy as a bona fide educational institution with the right to trade everywhere? Or should cross-border e-learning—like conventional delivery—be subject to national and provincial government policies and the academic processes of accreditation and quality assurance?

If so, what regulatory mechanisms are needed to manage what is an essentially global form of education, in a world in which policy and regulation continue to be predominantly national in character and in which, nevertheless, direct institution-to-institution dealings are increasing, facilitated by electronic communications?

**Should cross-border e-learning—like conventional delivery—be subject to national and provincial government policies and the academic processes of accreditation and quality assurance?**

The Difficulty of Regulating E-learning
The higher education communities of the world have been curiously slow to tackle cross-border e-learning. In the GATS negotiations, the United States, Australia, and some other countries have sought to retain “national character” protection in relation to their public institutions while at the same time exempting e-learning from those constraints, giving the fledgling commercial industry a free hand in that part of the sector. Thus, on the one hand, it is argued that e-learning is pedagogically equivalent to face-to-face learning, in order to support a commercially motivated claim for equal status; while, on the other hand, it is argued that e-learning should be subject to a distinct and more laissez-faire mode of regulation. Such a double standard threatens to create all kinds of future problems for institutions and national education policies, the more so if even half the claims about the transformative potential of e-learning turn out to be correct.

Why is regulating e-learning proving to be so problematic? First, e-learning is still new, and though large-scale distance education in broadcast mode is well established, Internet degrees have yet to become established on an equivalent basis. Second, because regulation is predominantly national, global systems relatively undeveloped, and e-learning readily crosses borders, regulating it requires unprecedented international cooperation. Third, the potential of the technologies is open-ended. There is genuine uncertainty about how to define the field—the more so because persons with regulatory power are rarely at the forefront of technological change—coupled with a reluctance to be prescriptive, given that many interests (tertiary institutions and companies) have staked a claim. Fourth, policies on educational internationalization are rarely integrated with policies on distance learning and on educational technologies.

A further difficulty is that debate about the regulation of e-learning is polarized in an unhelpful way. The advocates of an “e-revolution,” are excited about the potential of technology, but with a narrow and often purely commercial take on the policy issues, and are predisposed in favor of market solutions. However, the skeptics about the e-learning hype focus on a broader set of educational and policy issues but without grasping the technological potential. This polarization readily becomes aligned with the all-too-familiar split between education as a private good and education as a public good (market freedom versus political democracy) as exemplified in the GATS debate. In between are innovators attempting to reconcile technology, pedagogy, efficiency, learner empowerment, greater access, global awareness, and national development.

**A further difficulty is that debate about the regulation of e-learning is polarized in an unhelpful way.**

Can E-learning Be Regulated at All?
Distance learning takes a wide variety of forms, in which distance-based communication via the post, broadcast, or computer screen is combined with on-site learning centers or shorter periods of face-to-face classes. While face-to-face learning programs often draw on “distance” techniques such as printed reading materials, e-mail, and chat-rooms, an irreducible distinction exists between programs that are predominantly face-to-face and conducted in “bricks and mortar” institutions with staff and buildings and programs that are predominantly distance based. It is important to emphasize that, pedagogically, e-learning is a distinct, exciting, and in many respects
unknown mode of learning. As such, it needs to be subjected to forms of pedagogical development and quality assurance that recognize its distinct character and potentials, not treated as the “same” as face-to-face learning.

The ultimate challenge that e-learning creates for regulators is that it is technically possible to conduct an e-learning operation over the Internet without maintaining a corporeal educational institution.

The ultimate challenge that e-learning creates for regulators is that it is technically possible to conduct an e-learning operation over the Internet without maintaining a corporeal educational institution. Bricks-and-mortar institutions can be subjected to national controls based on territorial sovereignty. So far, the Internet has eluded such controls, except for extreme and counterproductive controls such as blocking Internet messages or refusing to facilitate its development. Given that face-to-face tertiary education retains dominant status, as numerous studies of student views attest, this problem is not as significant as often suggested (though the potential of Internet-based operators to fleece unsuspecting customers is a concern). The larger problem is that in the absence of an agreed international framework of accreditation and quality assurance, governments and accreditation agencies in one country cannot readily control Internet communications coming from bona fide institutions in another country.

In the absence of an international regulatory framework, e-learning enables First World operators to make developing countries a cultural offer they cannot refuse. Rather than treating e-learning as equivalent to face-to-face learning for the technical purposes of quality assurance, while exempting it from international regulation, we would be better to do the opposite on both—regarding e-learning as distinct for the techniques of quality assurance, treating it as a separate mode, but subjecting it to the same regulatory requirements for mutual recognition and accreditation as are applied to face-to-face learning. It should not be left to evolve independently of policy. This will require national governments and independent accreditation authorities (depending on the regulatory regime in the country concerned) to regulate the educational activities of their own nationals that operate abroad, including electronic operations.

This article is based on the author’s address to the 2002 International Symposium of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
E-Learning in Asia: Supply and Demand

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Few data are available on the demand for electronically delivered higher education, or e-higher education. Market research findings tend to be held tightly by market researchers and their clients. Data are available in the public domain about demand for higher education, and its supply, enabling a less direct exploration of demand for e-higher education.

Global Demand for Higher Education

In 1995, IDP Education Australia modeled the global demand for higher education. Changes in population and in participation rates are the two drivers of growth in demand. Looking ahead to 2025, growth in participation rates is the major contributor to growth in demand. As per capita incomes increase, so do participation rates: as incomes rise, demand for higher education grows. Global demand for higher education was projected to grow over the years 1990 to 2025, at the unsurprising rate of 3.5 percent per year.

Demand was forecast to grow from 48 million enrollments in 1990 to 159 million enrollments in 2025. Demand from Africa was expected to grow from 2 million to 15 million and demand from Asia from 17 million to 87 million. Of the increase of 111 million, 70 million would occur in Asia. The 1995 figures now look conservative. More recent modeling suggests that by 2020 China will be unable to supply the 20 million university places needed to meet the demands of its developing economy, and that in the long term the demand for international education in China will far exceed the capacity of the global education industry to provide enrollments. Similarly, in 2015 India will be unable to supply 9 million university places.

These bleak forecasts of unmet demand have been made at a time of growing reluctance on the part of governments globally to fund the increasing demand for higher education.

Supply of Higher Education On-line

On-line delivery ought to be able to supply higher education to meet much of this unmet global demand. However, a number of barriers exist: cost, access to technology, mismatch of levels, and the lack of a quality assurance framework. How can these barriers be addressed?

In terms of cost, a new generation of distance education has the potential to deliver a quantum leap in economies of scale and associated cost-effectiveness, and to increase access to learning opportunities on a global scale.

As described at the University of Southern Queensland, in Australia, the Intelligent Flexible Learning Model provides interactive multimedia on-line, involves Internet-based access to www resources, uses automated response systems for computer-mediated communication and offers campus portal access to institutional processes and resources. The model scans the text of incoming electronic queries and responds intelligently. It is flexible with respect to time, place, and pace. Critically, institutional variable costs approach zero.
adults.

In terms of mismatch of levels, debate about unmet demand focuses on undergraduate places, yet much of the supply of international on-line higher education involves postgraduate courses. Presumably, market research shows that it is students seeking postgraduate courses who have the ability to pay.

At the UK e-University, a newly established initiative, the first courses will be at the postgraduate level. The continuous market research by Universitas Global appears to be pointing to a business model involving postgraduate courses.

Similarly, a national survey at Australian universities in 2001 found that 90 percent of “fully on-line” courses were postgraduate. Yet this does not reflect the shape of flexible provision in Australia. In 2000, 64 percent of the Australian students in flexible learning programs and 59 percent of the international students in these programs were undergraduates.

With convergence of modes of delivery, flexible learning is being used to enable a university to teach its standard profile. Once enough universities offer their standard profiles on-line, the dominance of postgraduate on-line course offerings will be seen as an aberration.

With regard to the lack of a quality assurance framework, the yearning is for an international quality framework to ensure that foreign students can be confident that they are getting a quality higher education.

Responsibility for quality assurance must be on the provider to ensure that the on-line program is at least equivalent in standard to the same program at the home institution.

Conclusion
Universities see new technologies as providing delivery to any student, anywhere, at any time. Flexible delivery is being used as much to solve on-campus problems as to provide off-campus access. Face-to-face, distance, and open learning modes of delivery are converging, and the boundaries between these modes are blurring. The demand for e-higher education is seen as a subset of demand for higher education. Perhaps more accurately, on-line delivery is a mode for supplying higher education. In this context, there is logic in the extent to which e-learning is being supply driven by institutions.

This article is based on the report E-Learning in Asia: Supply and Demand, prepared by Alan Olsen for the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, www.obhe.ac.uk.

Cost Sharing and Higher Education Access in Southern and Eastern Africa

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A 10-nation conference, “Financing Higher Education in Eastern and Southern Africa: Diversifying Revenue and Expanding Accessibility,” was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in March 2002, cohosted by the University of Dar es Salaam and the International Comparative Higher Education Finance and Accessibility Project of the State University of New York at Buffalo. The conference was funded by the Ford Foundation. The full report of the conference is available on the website of the University at Buffalo Project at: http://www.gse.buffalo.edu/org/IntHigherEdFinance/. The following article is based on this conference.
The policy of cost sharing in higher education distributes the burden of funding among governments (or taxpayers), parents, students, and donors. Businesses may be viewed as an additional party to cost sharing, but because business’s share is generally just passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices, the incidence, or ultimate burden, of a so-called business share becomes rather hard to distinguish from a general sales tax—or even from the inflationary incidence of deficit spending. Most, but not all, of the world is moving in the direction of greater cost sharing, in the form of an increase in the shares borne by parents and/or students and a relative reduction in the shares borne by government (or by taxpayers and consumers). Moving toward greater cost sharing can take the form of introducing tuition or increasing existing tuition rates, imposing almost “break-even” charges for student dining and lodging, reducing non-means-tested student stipends (and improving repayment collection on student loans), and encouraging a tuition-dependent private sector.

Cost sharing is also more acceptable in the presence of programs for means-tested grants and student loans.

Participants at the Dar es Salaam conference generally agreed that cost sharing in some form is imperative for African higher education. The handful of African universities—including the University of Dar es Salaam and Uganda’s Makerere University—that have introduced cost sharing measures seem to be recovering from the catastrophic defunding of higher education in most of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Tuition fees may be considered equitable when higher education is partaken of by a minority—and disproportionately by the children of more affluent parents. An even more compelling—and less ideologically contestable—rationale for tuition fees was identified as the sheer need for revenue, stemming from the enormous and rapidly increasing demand (and need) for higher education and from the likely inability of the taxpayers to meet the expanding revenue needs. This is so not only because of the difficulty of taxation, but even more because of competing public demands on the same scarce public revenue.

The Necessity of Cost Sharing

Conferees stressed that the principal source of higher education funding must continue to be the government, or taxpayers, and that cost sharing must be seen as a way to supplement this revenue. The principal beneficiaries of cost sharing must be future students (and therefore the society), rather than the universities, university leaders, or university faculty. Likewise, university budgets must be transparent and generally perceived to be “appropriate” for the introduction of cost sharing to be politically acceptable. Stakeholders—especially students and their families—need to see that the university has cut costs, become as efficient as possible, and has taken steps to “distribute the pain” of the inevitable shortfall in revenues. Opposition to cost sharing is most vocal in a climate of underlying mistrust of government and university leadership.

Means Testing

Cost sharing is also more acceptable in the presence of programs for means-tested grants and student loans. Means testing is difficult in the absence of verifiable measures of family income and family assets—a situation that characterizes nearly all of sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, estimates of “family financial means” and “family financial need” will probably have to be used—with sufficient auditing and penalties for misreporting, to yield acceptable levels of compliance. Such estimates might include the parents’ occupations and education levels and whether the family owns a car or is entitled through a job to a car and driver, has running water, is from a remote region, or belongs to a linguistic, ethnic, or other historically disadvantaged population. Countries are presently experimenting with such measures. Communicating experiences will help policymakers arrive at and share fair and cost-effective methods of judging “family financial need.”

In any move toward greater cost sharing, special attention must be shown to the family’s willingness to support the higher education expenses of daughters as well as sons. More study is needed on the extent and nature of the problem, and care should be taken not to encourage or sanctify a tradition of lesser support for
daughters. However, some compensation may be called for in the form of a higher means-tested grant for daughters than for sons.

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**Student loan programs can advance the general aim of cost sharing (as opposed to the aim merely of getting money to students with little concern for its recovery).**

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**Problems of Student Loan Programs**

While acknowledging the poor record of student loan programs around the world, including many failed or poorly performing programs in Africa, such programs (or graduate taxes and other ways of deferring student financial contributions) are essential for a program of cost sharing that includes students. Student loan programs can advance the general aim of cost sharing (as opposed to the aim merely of getting money to students with little concern for its recovery). To do so—that is, to shift a portion of higher education costs to students—the loan programs must provide for cost recovery, measured in the discounted present value of the stream of repayments, in an amount nearly equal to (or at least not a great deal less than) the sum loaned or advanced to the student in the first place.

Most “failed” student loan programs throughout the world, as well as in Africa, have failed because of insufficient capital (i.e., lack of savings) to make loans at reasonable rates of interest, insufficient policies and procedures for servicing and collecting the loans (and thus high administrative expenses and default rates), excessive built-in subsidies (generally through overly low rates of interest charged to borrowers). These problems seem mainly solvable, and the conference participants thus looked forward to more success with future student loan programs in the African context.

As elsewhere, there is interest in Africa in the concept of income contingent loans (or their variant, so-called “graduate taxes”), in which the repayment obligation is expressed as a percentage of future earnings rather than as a schedule of fixed repayments (e.g., as in the Australian Higher Education Contribution Scheme). However, income contingent loans require a means of verifying all (or at least most of) borrowers’ incomes for their working lifetimes. Such loan schemes can work in a society and an economy where most borrowers work predominantly at one job at a time, in the formal economy, and where their earnings will be known to and monitored by the government along with their income tax and pension contribution obligations. In societies and economies where many of the borrowers will derive much of their income from the informal economy, or “on the side” from second and third jobs, or will likely leave the country where the loan was originated for much or all of their earning lifetimes—which is the case in most sub-Saharan African countries—full incomes will be hard to verify and may not be legally capturable. In such cases, income contingent loans will probably not work.

According to the students who spoke at the conference, the essence of a student loan program is sufficiency—that is, providing enough money to support the costs of living and any tuition fees. The next most important features, in order, were a sufficiently long repayment period to keep monthly (or annual) repayments “manageably low,” a low rate of interest, and the absence of a need for a co-signatory.

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**Funding and Regulating Lithuanian Higher Education**

**Liudvika Leisyte**

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Lithuania’s higher education system is in a state of constant flux, facing major challenges of expansion, diversification of funding, and changing regulations. The transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-led one has caused Lithuania to restructure the social sector, including higher education. The practice of higher education governance through state control engrained during the Soviet period has been shifting to one of state supervision. Tendencies toward deregulation have been apparent in the policy debates on higher education, starting with the law on science and higher education (1991), the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (1992), and the law on higher education (2000).

As in most Central and Eastern European countries, both public and private higher education institutions in Lithuania expanded—going from 12 in 1990 to 35 in 2002. A number of former technicums and vocational schools opted to participate in a competition to become fully fledged higher education institutions granting bachelor’s degrees. Individuals or religious organizations created 13 new private higher education institutions. The Ministry of Education and Science tightly controlled their establishment though licensing and quality assurance, which slowed the process of expanding private-sector
higher education, when compared to that of other countries in the region.

As a result, a binary higher education system was established. In the same period, student numbers increased from 59,000 in 1996–1997 to 96,000 in 2000–2001. However, public funding has been decreasing quite dramatically at the same time as demands for efficiency and quality have been growing. Subsequently, regulation and funding of the expanding higher education sector have become key topics in the current policy debate in Lithuania. How does the decreasing funding challenge the higher education sector in Lithuania, and is this drop in funds an opportunity for higher education to become more efficient?

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Major Transformations in Funding

After 1999 funding started to decrease from U.S.$148,700 in 1999 to U.S.$129,500 in 2000. Higher education institutions have faced serious difficulties in financing wages, heating, electricity, and building maintenance. Moreover, they have had to tackle the state bureaucracy’s complicated system of accountability and control. This led many institutions facing financial crisis to search for alternative sources of funding. The most immediate target to obtain extra funding was the students. Tuition and fees were introduced, although these were not covered by the 1991 law on science and higher education. This lack of regulation allowed for a huge discrepancy in student fees among different institutions. Students, parents, and lobbyist groups started intense public debates on the accessibility and the efficiency of higher education under the new conditions.

The Lithuanian government brought up the question of tuition payment by students. The 2000 law on higher education and other by-laws have introduced more output-based funding formulas, and they have regulated student fees contracts between the Ministry of Science and Education and higher education institutions by subject. It is interesting to speculate whether these tighter regulations will allow for wider participation, keeping in mind that as of October 1, 2000, nearly one-third of the total student population in public higher education establishments was self-financed. Moreover, the increased student fees did not offset the increasing costs and the decreasing state funding. This situation has forced higher education institutions to establish contracts with businesses, industry, and communities. For instance, Kaunas University of Technology is a pioneer in this respect, receiving nearly 27 percent of its income from the nonpublic sector. Their partners are local enterprises, firms, and institutions for research, design, and small-scale manufacturing.

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Changes in Higher Education Regulation

Thus, other stakeholders are becoming more important in the regulation of higher education in Lithuania. Lobbyists for the so-called academic oligarchy—by which I mean the group of academics influencing decision making on the national level—increased their impact through participation in buffer organizations, such as the the Science Council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, and the Conferences of Universities, Colleges and Research Institutes’ Rectors. Student participation in governance has been growing through student unions and nongovernmental youth organizations. For example, after passing the by-law on the new funding mechanism, a number of conferences were organized by academic lobbyists to attract attention to the critical situation in higher education funding.

Academic associations have expressed discontent with inconsistencies in funding policy. A new formula of resource allocation intimidates institutions with new efficiency demands. Moreover, some members of the above-mentioned academic oligarchy fear that the 2000 law on long-term funding of science and education, with its 2001 by-law on the new order of accountability, might discourage institutions from becoming more efficient. The latter regulation requires higher education institutions to transfer their independently generated income to the state budget for auditing and subsequently for earmarking. The Ministry of Finance still has an important say in the higher education funding process in Lithuania, since it is involved in the resource distribution mechanism of both public and nonpublic income of public higher education institutions.

Future Prospects

As seen from the above examples, the contradiction between policy discourse and the existing bureaucracy in state institutions still hinders the implementation of
higher education reform. Though the state agreed on lump-sum allocations to higher education institutions in the 1991 law on science and higher education, the accountability remained strict and the real funding mechanism has not changed. However, one must admit that, until recently, higher education has not been a top priority of the state. Thus, it might take time to develop and implement a homogeneous strategy and coherent policies, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up monitoring. The changing role of different stakeholders and the more aggressive participation of higher education institutions in the policymaking process might be a new impetus for further developments in the sector.

The Journal of Higher Education in Africa

In recognition of the growing importance of higher education in Africa and the need for research and analysis of higher education in an African context, the new *Journal of Higher Education in Africa* (JHEA) has recently been launched as a joint initiative of the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) at Boston College and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

The JHEA grew out of a desire to foster research, analysis, and discussion on African higher education. As the only Africa-wide journal on higher education, the JHEA will help to create and sustain a community of researchers and policymakers concerned with the issues facing African higher education institutions.

The JHEA will be devoted to all aspects of higher education in Africa. The JHEA strives to be a central element in the “invisible college” of researchers, policymakers, and others who have an interest in higher education. The JHEA will help stimulate additional research on higher education in Africa—work that will have relevance to other developing regions as well.

Inquires and submissions should be sent to: Dr. Damtew Teferra, Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, Center for International Higher Education, Lynch School of Education, Campion Hall 207D, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA; tel.: (617) 552-4413; fax: (617) 552-8422; e-mail: jhea@bc.edu; or Dr. Adebayo O. Olukoshi, Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), P.O. Box 3304, Dakar, SENEGAL; tel.: (221) 825 98 22/23; fax: (221) 824 12 89; e-mail: jhea@codesria.sn.

Further information is available at the websites of CIHE (http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/Center.html) and CODESRIA (http://www.codesria.org).

The initiative is being funded by the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
On October 17 and 18, 2002, some 120 people from more than 30 countries gathered in Paris at a meeting of UNESCO’s Global Forum on Quality Assurance, Accreditation, and the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education. The purpose was to address the challenges facing quality assurance of higher education in a global setting. UNESCO provided a comprehensive agenda that included sessions on accreditation and quality assurance, quality standards, access and equity, higher education and the public good, borderless higher education, for-profit higher education, public and private higher education, and degrees and qualifications.

Driving Themes
Several themes emerged repeatedly during the two days of discussion. These included the growing dominance of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the current round of negotiations under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) with regard to higher education and quality assurance in an international setting, the interest in establishing a framework by which national quality assurance professionals in various countries can position themselves to assure quality internationally, and the issue of addressing fundamental values in quality review, in a sector such as higher education that serves the public good and the public interest.

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WTO and GATS
The current GATS negotiations are intended to liberalize trade in services among the 144 WTO member countries. Some WTO members may wish to offer higher education and quality assurance programs, while others may wish to set conditions for such services. While some groups in higher education and quality assurance support the efforts of the WTO to ease restrictions on the import and export of higher education and attendant services, others have raised serious concerns about the danger of treating higher education and quality assurance as items of trade like other services such as insurance, computers, or banks.

What of the future and the emerging dominance of the WTO and GATS?

What are higher education and quality assurance doing in a trade agreement? Why (using an example from GATS) does a supranational organization of countries care about the number of cosmetology schools in the state of Kentucky in the United States? A technical answer would refer to the fact that higher education and quality assurance fall within the broad definition of “services” used in negotiations: to paraphrase the language of GATS, human activity to satisfy a human need and not a tangible commodity. A political answer would point to the fact that importing and exporting higher education involves billions of dollars. There are many groups seeking to expand this market in the hope of gaining even greater profits. Those parts of the higher education and quality assurance sector that support the GATS provide another answer: that the presence of quality assurance sectors in the negotiations can enhance access, equity, and student mobility.

Although only one session of the meeting was formally devoted to GATS, the subject came up in session after session, rapidly becoming an influential and sometimes defining presence in talks about quality assurance and higher education on an international scale. Sometime, this pattern took the form of suggestions that decisions about quality assurance in an international setting required subordination to determinations made under GATS. At other times, the issue of GATS evoked expressions of concern, sometimes combined with articulations of helplessness because the GATS negotiations are not open to the public. There were frequent comments such as “Well, what about GATS?” and “We have to deal with GATS.”
the appropriateness of negotiating the quality of higher education as an item of trade, these negotiations will likely drive at least some of the international conversation about quality assurance in higher education.

Establishing an International Framework
A second theme driving the discussions at the UNESCO meeting was “What framework, structure, or mechanisms do we need to assure the quality of higher education?” It was largely accepted that higher education and quality assurance assume additional responsibilities in the international sphere, although how this should be accomplished has become the subject of much debate.

Of the key leaders in quality assurance and accreditation in various countries, some prefer quality review structured around a single set of international quality standards, whether for institutions, programs, or quality assurance agencies. International standards can build common understanding and form the basis for agreement about quality.

Others believe that assuring quality in an international setting should build on the capacity of existing national quality review procedures to establish relationships, broker agreements, share information, and assure communication about quality review practices among countries. Those focused on a nation-based framework remain committed to national models for higher education and quality assurance, arguing that judgments and expectations of education and quality are inseparable from the cultural and social contexts in which they develop.

Fundamental Values
During the two days of the Global Forum, values questions about international quality review were raised repeatedly—including “How can we assure that quality review in an international setting is about more than market forces?” “What is our commitment to the public good?” “What is the ‘public interest’ in an international setting?” “What are the potential good and potential harm of the ‘market’ in an international higher education context?” The discussions have focused on access and equity for students as well as the relationships between developed and developing countries.

“How can we assure that quality review in an international setting is about more than market forces?”

The values discussions also examined the issue of establishing frameworks that allow higher education and quality assurance to reflect the culture and values of a single society while operating in an international environment.

Perhaps the conversation on public good issues will result in the identification of values held in common across countries, accompanied by fresh notions of the “public interest” that are not confined to nations but encompass the international sphere. Progress in this area may alleviate some of the tension between a policy of upholding nation-based values and culture that have defined higher education and a consideration of international standards of quality.

Continuing Conversations
The UNESCO meeting demonstrated the key themes in the ongoing conversations concerning higher education and quality assurance. It will be necessary to address the many questions associated with establishing a framework within which national, regional, and international structures and standards of quality can be developed and implemented. These conversations will proceed against the backdrop of a worldwide commitment to rearrange both opportunities for and barriers to trade among nations—including, for better or worse, higher education and quality assurance.
Accreditation in the Gulf: The Case of Qatar

By Amy Kirle Lezberg

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In 1999, impelled by a worldwide initiative of UNESCO, the six states of the Gulf Cooperating Council (GCC)—Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—began formal consideration concerning establishing a regional accrediting agency. Although the recommendations were positive, it was clear that several years would pass before the agency (if it became a reality) would begin to function, and therefore several of the individual countries decided to start the process internally. Qatar, which had no separate ministry of higher education and only one national university, was well positioned to adopt the U.S. model, establishing a system that would depend on peer review by institutional faculty and administrators, rather than the government-driven model frequently found in Western Europe, and could directly involve representatives of many constituencies outside the national government.

It was determined that the standards for Qatar should build upon those used by the NEASC and that the university as a whole (rather than just its individual programs) should be evaluated.

As part of an effort to establish standards and implement self-evaluation and institutional improvement, the president of the University of Qatar, Dr. Abdulla Al-Khulaifi, empowered the academic vice president to set up and chair a committee with representatives from each of the six colleges comprising the institution. Assisted by a former staff member of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the committee undertook what was the nation’s first participative process that would establish regular, written procedures to assess the current status of the institution and suggest improvements. After a review of the standards at the Quality Assurance Agency of the United Kingdom and at several U.S. regional accreditors, it was determined that the standards for Qatar should build upon those used by the NEASC and that the university as a whole (rather than just its individual programs) should be evaluated. In addition, the committee decided to have its findings validated through a visit by the Quality Assurance Agency of the United Kingdom, which would indicate how the university was conforming to its own standards as well as how conforming to those standards would position it in terms of international standards of excellence in higher education.

Throughout the two-year process of establishing standards and assessing compliance, the University Evaluation Committee, as it was called, determined that its most pressing issues were, first, credibility—that is, there had been too many attempts at writing reports on the university’s status that read more like public relations documents than serious self-studies. A number of complaints had been brought by faculty and others (often reported in the local press) that were extremely critical of the university. Many faculty believed that, absent meaningful follow-up, the effort required to establish standards would scarcely be worth their time and energy. Second, a cultural centralization and authoritarianism meant that most evaluations were carried out at the behest of the administration with little or no participation by the nonadministrative faculty who were actually carrying out the university’s mission. Third, the committee cited the long tradition of teacher-centered education and called for a substitution of credentialing and rote memorization of material with student-centered learning that would allow knowledge to be applied in new and challenging situations. In addition, the State of Qatar was engaged in importing highly reputable institutions (e.g., Cornell Medical School, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Art and Design) with the standards enforced by outside agencies, without reference to internal personal or political considerations and with no provision for collaborating with the university to establish joint projects as models of excellence.

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The earliest task of the committee was to confront, rather than ignore, these obstacles to its success: first, as always in accreditation, the description of the university’s performance in each area was accompanied by an analysis of whether the university met the standard as well as a realistic projection of what the university
needed to do in order to remedy its deficiencies. More importantly, and in order to lend the study credibility by presenting a balanced picture, the discussion of each standard had to be followed by a list of the university’s five greatest strengths and five greatest weaknesses relating to that standard. The committee’s insistence that for each of the areas under consideration—mission, faculty, programs, library, governance, planning and evaluation, research, physical and financial facilities, and student services, etc.—there be a balanced view of each facet of the institution was very different from previous reports. The existence of these lists, which were widely distributed, made it equally difficult for administrators and faculty to discount the study’s findings as obviously biased toward one side or the other.

Impelled by the needs of the global marketplace as well as the concern of the government, the university has developed learning objectives for all its programs and is mapping places in the curriculum where the outcomes for these objectives can be found as well as the various ways of assessing their degree of achievement. Several of the best and most innovative teachers at the institution have begun to experiment with alternative ways of teaching and assessing their students; later this year a series of workshops will be held at which these instructors will describe their experiences and model the ways in which their approach can be generalized.

The university community realizes that the road to complete implementation is long and that, in fact, the cycle of assessment, analysis, and revision is a never-ending search for excellence. Nevertheless, as the GCC moves toward establishing a regional accrediting agency, the University of Qatar is well positioned to assume a leadership role in overcoming entrenched obstacles (some of them cultural) to develop into a university whose graduates will be able to move effortlessly into the world of work as it evolves into new and as yet unknown fields. The three-year activity in establishing and beginning to implement American-style accreditation has, therefore, more than validated the psychological and physical energy expended.

International Linkages in Malaysian Private Higher Education

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IHE devotes a column in each issue to a contribution from PROPHE, the Program for Research on Private Higher Education, headquartered at the University at Albany. PROPHE and the CIHE are partners in a cooperative effort supported by the Ford Foundation to build and disseminate information about private higher education globally. See http://www.albany.edu/~prophe.

In many parts of the world, the need for increased access to higher education has led governments and educators to look for alternative sources of financing as well as cheaper and innovative modes of delivery. Private-sector higher education and transnational education constitute recent developments in many higher education systems. In Malaysia, private higher education has expanded tremendously since the 1980s. Malaysia offers a case in which the response for cheap, innovative access has largely involved foreign linkage programs.
The Impetus for International Linkages

Private colleges in Malaysia are not allowed to confer degrees, and many private universities lacked the expertise to design their own curricula when they were first established in the mid-1990s. Yet demand remains strong for degree programs and professional courses in the education market. Therefore, many private higher education institutions established formal arrangements with foreign universities to offer educational programs ranging from certificate courses to postgraduate programs.

The impetus to form international linkages can be viewed from the perspective of the foreign as well as the local institutions. Ongoing budget cuts for higher education in countries like Australia have made universities there keen to “export” their educational programs to secure additional revenue. For local institutions, international linkages represent a means of acquiring and delivering an additional or new course at minimal cost. Furthermore, they provide local institutions with the opportunity to enhance staff development in new fields of study. Moreover, if a particular program is popular, it then translates into an additional source of income for all parties concerned.

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Accredited Programs

Under the validation and accreditation arrangement, a local institution conducts a program on behalf of a foreign institution, consortium, or professional body. The curricula, syllabi, and examinations are set by the foreign institution, and the local institution assumes responsibility for teaching the programs and conducting the examinations without further inputs from the foreign institutions. Such programs can be found from the preuniversity level all the way up to the postgraduate level. A very popular overseas preuniversity course is the GCE A-level examination from the United Kingdom. Private colleges offer a wide range of courses that provide practical, employment-oriented training in technical, trade, and craft areas. Many of these courses lead to formal awards of certificates, diplomas, and higher diplomas from foreign bodies such as the Business and Technology Education Council in the United Kingdom. Another form of validation and accreditation is from foreign professional or subprofessional examination bodies related to different fields in commerce, trade, and industry. These examination bodies are not teaching institutions but, rather, councils that represent their specific skill or trade. They are responsible for devising the syllabi and conducting examinations. Private colleges in Malaysia offer these professional or semiprofessional courses and help to conduct the examinations set by these bodies. An example of a foreign professional examination body is the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants in the United Kingdom. The external degree programs offered by the University of London in law (LL.B) and business administration (MBA) can be included in this category of foreign-linked programs.

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Twinning Programs

In the twinning or split degree programs, the local institution is linked directly to one foreign institution or a consortium of universities that sets the curriculum, tests, and institutional standards of the program. Usually the foreign institution provides on-site supervision to ensure quality, and in this connection the local institution pays the foreign institution some kind of royalties or franchise fees and administrative costs. Under the terms of the twinning arrangement, transfer students are guaranteed a place at the foreign institution. This arrangement allows the partial completion of a foreign program at a local institution. Qualifying students would then proceed to the final segments of the program at the foreign institution. However, since the Asian currency crisis in 1997, the Malaysian government has approved private colleges to offer programs in which students can study the whole three-year foreign degree program in Malaysia, without going abroad to the twinning partner’s campus. Twinning programs are extremely popular among students qualified to do a degree program because they can get a foreign degree at a reduced cost. The wide range of available twinning programs includes fields of study such as business and commercial studies, engineering, computer studies, law, science, the arts, medicine, pharmacy, and many others. The foreign universities include institutions in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada, or the United States.
Credit Transfer Programs
Credit transfer programs allow for the conferment of a degree by the accumulation of credits. Under this arrangement, students can accumulate credits locally that are then transferable to one of the foreign-linked universities for the completion of the degree program. Basically, a student intending to study overseas collects sufficient credits through a local private college and then applies for entry to a foreign university. The credit transfer program grants students greater flexibility to choose among a group of foreign universities or programs. The program has proven very popular among students who plan to go and study in the United States.

Foreign Branch Campuses
Besides these three groups of foreign-linked programs, other forms of international linkages are making a significant impact on the private higher education scene in Malaysia. One form is distance education programs. Many of the postgraduate programs, especially MBA programs offered by foreign universities, are delivered through the distance learning mode. Another form is the establishment of branch campuses by foreign universities on Malaysian soil. Today, there are four foreign branch campuses, and the first of these was Monash University Malaysia. Not all the international linkages are with Western countries. Higher education and training institutions from India, like the Manipal Medical University, have also set up private colleges in Malaysia through joint ventures with local partners.

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Conclusion
The emergence of international linkages in higher education is not unique to Malaysia. In fact, this case study on Malaysia shows the multiple forms of transnational education that are also found in other countries. In a rapidly globalizing education and human resource market, higher education and training are no longer confined within national boundaries. Through innovative and strategic partnerships, educational programs are offered offshore across national borders. With advanced information communications technologies, distance learning programs are provided electronically as well as through face-to-face instruction. In this new borderless educational arena, students and academic staff move to and fro across nations.

Beyond Dead Reckoning: Research Priorities for Redirecting American Higher Education
By Patricia J. Gumport and Colleagues
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For 30 years, a staple of higher education policy in the United States has been promoting access, based on the rationale that higher education serves not only the individual student but also society as a whole, by producing an educated citizenry and a productive national workforce. Yet American higher education’s very success at extending access and expanding knowledge, together with major societal changes in demographics, technology, the nature of work, and the demand for education—have resulted in a terrain that is both altered and uncharted. American colleges and universities, along with the public agencies that support and monitor their efforts, find themselves relying on a kind of dead reckoning to plot their future course.

Access to What?
Higher education in the United States continues to enjoy broad public support, and there is little examination of what students are gaining access to. Much of higher education’s traditional language no longer describes actual conditions, notwithstanding its continued rhetorical appeal. Discrepancies between ideals and realities, between assumptions and data, render obsolete guidelines that were once effective. Research is needed, not only for more complete information, but also to help reorient higher education within this new landscape. New questions informed by current knowledge can yield a fresh assessment of higher education’s purposes and
effectiveness, and the insights from that research can strengthen higher education’s role in improving the lives of students and the vitality of society as a whole. We believe the set of research priorities and enquiries proposed here will advance both policy and practice to enhance learning for students of all backgrounds. We address two primary audiences: public officials directly responsible for public appropriations to higher education; and institutional leaders—including executives, trustees, and faculty—who decide how and for which purposes their institutions expend their resources.

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Improving Educational Quality and Institutional Performance

In spite of 15 years of the assessment movement and increasingly vocal demands for improved student learning, fundamental practices of teaching remain largely unchanged. Colleges and universities struggle to exhibit the qualities of learning organizations, including the willingness and ability to define priorities, measure progress, create feedback loops, and apply what is learned to improve products and services.

Creating more effective learning organizations. Recent research has shown that organizations can improve their practices through developing a culture of evidence and reflecting upon their outcomes. What kinds of process improvements do exemplary departments or units make in response to assessment-based feedback? How and when do external accountability measures align with internal quality improvement processes?

Linking knowledge about learning to the practice of teaching. Higher education has never had well-developed processes for linking the purposes of teaching to pedagogical methods and evaluation techniques; advancements in communications and information technology have made the task of developing such processes even more complex. How can research findings on learning inform the design of educational processes and student assessment measures? What design principles and criteria generate the most effective approaches for applying technology to enhance learning? Which policies, incentives, and resources support institutions and faculty to develop better instruments and measures of student learning and to use them in their teaching? Which information technologies promote learning efficiencies and under what circumstances? To what extent do external accountability mandates align with institutions’ own internal quality processes, and what are the effects of misalignment?

The changing academic workforce. In the past decade, the profile of academic professionals has been completely transformed. The growing disposition is to view responsibilities once integral to the faculty role as discrete tasks taken up by separate personnel (e.g., content experts, course designers, assessment experts, advisers). Market environments have always rewarded prestige, and one effect of the prestige factor in research achievement has been to reduce a tenure-line faculty member’s accountability in the areas of teaching and advising. Many of those who fulfill an institution’s teaching responsibility now hold part-time, adjunct, and non-tenure-track term appointments. These trends are not confined to higher education but exemplify larger transformations in the American workforce and in the nature of work.

Which academic roles require full-time, tenure-line faculty, and which are suitable for non-tenure-line academic professionals? To what extent does disaggregating the faculty role make higher education institutions more accountable and cost-effective? Under what conditions are adjunct faculty—either because of or despite their engagement outside the academy—effective in promoting student learning and civic engagement?

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Balancing Market Forces with Higher Education’s Public Purposes

The past three decades have seen policymakers increasingly allow markets to replace direct public investment as an instrument of achieving the public good. Moreover, increased reliance on revenue from tuition and fees, combined with a gradual movement from grants to loans in federal student financial assistance, have shifted much of the burden of financing higher education to students themselves. Without a fuller understanding of how market forces affect the decisions and culture of campus settings, colleges and universities risk becoming merely businesses, paying only symbolic homage to the social charter that distinguishes them from for-profit enterprises.
What happens to management culture, resource allocation, and traditional academic governance when markets increasingly influence institutional decision making? What is the impact of market forces on academically important fields that do not have a lucrative proximate market? Under what conditions do market forces work against an institution’s commitment to building a diverse faculty or student body? What happens to legislative influence as state revenue constitutes a declining share of public institutions’ revenues?

Further, given the current societal proclivity to regard higher education as a private good and students as consumers, research needs to examine the impact of students’ exercising their prerogatives as shoppers. How does student consumer interest in courses and subjects affect the status of different academic units within institutions? To what extent has convenience become a primary determinant of student choice and, in turn, institutional success? What is the return on public investment in higher education when students increasingly define their own paths of study, largely apart from degree requirements?

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Drawing New Maps for a Changing Enterprise
Colleges and universities of all types are responding to dramatic changes in the students whom higher education serves, in students’ own purposes and paths through higher education, and in the academic workforce. Yet the image of the academy that most public officials, parents, faculty, and administrators retain more closely resembles campuses at the time when they themselves were undergraduates. Even the terms of reference have come to mean different things to different people: What is meant by “core curriculum,” “faculty,” or “student” today? Organizationally, colleges and universities are forming new collaborative agreements—with for-profit and nonprofit organizations—without precedents to guide them. We need new maps, using new definitions and new kinds of data, to understand this changing terrain.

What types of instruction and delivery are serving which students with what results? What administrative moves support faculty to address differences between outdated conceptions of undergraduates and the students currently enrolled? Which policies constrain or promote persistence and degree completion among underrepresented students? Which investments in technology and distributed learning are paying dividends? Which interorganizational collaborations are successful and why?

Bearings for the Future
These research priorities were identified during a year-long agenda-setting initiative. Our charge was to identify the most pressing issues confronting U.S. higher education now and in the coming decade, propose specific lines of inquiry, and develop a persuasive rationale for investing in state-of-the-art knowledge to further higher education’s improvement. We offer these ideas in the spirit of helping universities and colleges to retain their strength, fulfill the terms of their social charter, and recapture the legislative and public imagination that higher education is critically important to both the students it educates and the societies it serves.

The National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (NCPI) is a collaborative research venture between researchers at Stanford University, the University of Michigan, and the University of Pennsylvania. The findings and opinions expressed in this report do not reflect the position or policies of the funding agency, the U.S. Department of Education. For more information and the full text of this essay, please visit the NCPI website, at http://ncpi.stanford.edu.

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German Higher Education in a European Context

Ulrich Teichler

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Responsibility for the provision of higher education has always varied from country to country. In continental European countries it has traditionally been viewed as the duty of the state. In several of these countries, governments have even funded institutions not under direct government control. In the United Kingdom, by comparison, institutions—though state-approved by royal charter—have been considered to be independent entities that fund themselves through endowments, state support, and tuition fees. In the United States, private and public institutions have had much in common regarding funding, management, and supervision. Other governments have provided the nucleus of higher education, while private institutions have supplemented the core.

In the wake of higher education expansion, growing fiscal problems, and the increasing popularity of neoliberal economic doctrines, private funding and the privatization of higher education institutions have gained ground in many countries traditionally dominated by public higher education. The debate over private and public funding, however, often involves a confusing mix of three issues: student costs, the role of public subsidies, and the level of government supervision.

Student Costs and Public Subsidies

The rationale behind public and private subsidies can be explained first by looking at the costs individual students incur. A recent study shows that tuition fees are charged in about half of the member states of the European Union and tend to be very small as compared to those charged by the national universities in Japan or by state universities in the United States. The proportion of students receiving grants and loans to cover living expenses varies among EU countries from less than 5 percent to more than 90 percent. Levels of public subsidies seem to vary depending on the concept of the social role of students.

Some countries see students as children in society’s family. That family is expected to care for the students, and the students’ study opportunities depend on the family’s ability and readiness to pay (e.g., Greece). Students may also be seen as children in a family system with strong welfare components. In many cases, where parental income is low, the public steps in with grants and loans (e.g., until recently, the United Kingdom). Alternatively, students may be viewed as investors in their future. A student’s future prospects are what count, not the current social situation. Not a single EU country pursues this model consistently, but some components of the model can be observed in Sweden and the Netherlands. Finally, a society may view students primarily as prospective workers and young citizens. Substantial grants are provided irrespective of parental income or students’ potential income after graduation (e.g., Denmark and Finland).

While these beliefs are broad generalizations about various societal images of students, they strongly influence decisions on the appropriate levels of public subsidies to both public and private higher education institutions.

The debate over private and public funding, however, often involves a confusing mix of three issues: student costs, the role of public subsidies, and the level of government supervision.

Supervision of Higher Education

The distinctions over government supervision between public and private institutions are not always obvious. For example, an institution’s legal status may be neither clearly public nor private, making it a matter of interpretation whether the institution is semipublic or semiprivate. In other cases, the official status might be private, but the government may clearly retain a supervisory role. There are also umbrella organizations of various colleges that are partly private and partly public (e.g., Fachhochschulen in Switzerland and ammatikorkeakoulu in Finland). Finally, private institutions might be publicly funded. This holds true for most universities in the United Kingdom, private universities in the Netherlands and Belgium, and for colleges of theology in Germany.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) classifies higher education institutions into three categories: public, government-dependent private, and independent private institutions. Most German, French, U.S., and Australian institutions are in the first category. Most Dutch and British institutions fall into the second category, and most Japanese institutions are in the third category. The
distinction between the second and the third category lies primarily in the level of government funding. Public universities enrolled 81 percent of all university students and 69 percent of students from other programs in 1998 in OECD member countries; government-dependent private universities enrolled 9 percent of university students and 18 percent of students from other programs; and independent private universities enrolled 10 percent of university students and 13 percent of students from other programs.

The proportion of students receiving grants and loans to cover living expenses varies among EU countries from less than 5 percent to more than 90 percent.

Private Higher Education in Germany
In recent years, reports have mushroomed in Germany about the establishment of private higher education institutions. Private institutions generally have been welcomed because they are perceived as contributing to the diversity of higher education and providing administrative and educational models that might trigger reforms in the public sector.

According to OECD statistics, all German universities are public. However, in 1998 official German documents listed 75 (22 percent) of the approximately 344 higher education institutions in Germany as “nongovernmental” and as accommodating about 2 percent of all students. These institutions can be categorized as church-related colleges of theology or social work; private universities pursuing a specific educational philosophy; outsourced segments of public institutions of higher education (i.e., specific divisions that generate income or need specific administrative flexibility not provided in the public sector); and specialized colleges for business studies and a few other fields, primarily funded by donations and tuition fees.

The last two categories emerged in the 1990s and often claim to be different from public universities in several respects. Some underscore a utilitarian approach and state that the curriculum is geared toward superior job marketability. Several call themselves “European” or “international” universities, showcasing a high ratio of foreign students and staff and requiring all students to spend a study period abroad. Many of these colleges attempt to distinguish themselves by declaring to be student-friendly campuses with close faculty-student relationships. Several of these colleges contend that they are “elite” institutions. Finally, some claim to have a very flexible and efficient management style.

All higher education institutions in Germany must apply for approval from the respective Land in which they are located. Public institutions of higher education are supervised by the 16 Länder governments. No approved private university in Germany is owned by a foreign entity. Efforts are being made, however, to establish a university in cooperation with a private U.S. university.

Despite the tremendous growth in the number of private institutions and other privatization efforts in Germany, these endeavors have turned out to be less successful than public debate might suggest. Few donations have been received and institutions have been hesitant to charge high tuition fees.

Components of Privatization in the Public Sector
Moves toward privately funded higher education institutions are weak and tentative in Germany and most Western European countries. Rather, public institutions are gradually taking on some components of market regulation and privatization. Stagnant government funding, rising costs, and increasing student numbers are forcing higher education institutions to look for other sources of income. Governments are simultaneously moving away from complete control of higher education toward less direct regulation through contracts, indicator-based funding, and evaluation. Generally, higher education is being more strongly shaped by competition and incentives than in the past. These factors have led to a growing diversification of funding patterns in many countries. In Europe, the privatization of select elements of public institutions appears to be the dominant trend, while the establishment of independent private institutions remains the exception.

This article is based on a presentation made at Waseda University, Tokyo, on invitation of the Research Institute for Independent Higher Education.
A Decade of Higher Education Reform in Argentina

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This article examines the impact of international policies and economic trends on the Argentine higher education system. The intention is to explore how recent government policies interacted with factors within the society and higher education to shape the institutional picture of the higher education system of today.

A Decade of Changes

The economic crisis of December 2001, which forced the president to resign before the end of his term in office, makes it necessary to come to terms with the last 10 years of higher education reform from the perspective of international policies and economic trends and local responses to them. According to Nobel Prize–winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, Argentina is not solely responsible for having entered the most catastrophic period in its economic history. The economist states that some of the negative consequences of “neoliberal” policies on so-called “emerging economies” might have been avoided had the state not been replaced by market forces in all cases. While the Argentine public sector was internationally condemned for its inefficient administrative control, little criticism was directed at privatization efforts—which also did not alleviate Argentina’s problems.

Stiglitz further asserts that the market economy did not bring the expected social benefits to emerging economies. Problems such as high rates of unemployment, poverty, and violence increased despite meeting the financial conditions set by international agencies like the World Bank that promoted the privatization of national enterprises and related fiscal adjustments. Moreover, local responses by the Argentine political ruling class to privatization efforts were strongly influenced by self-interest and the desire to accumulate individual wealth.

Both international and local policies and developments have strongly impacted the purposes and perceptions of Argentina’s public higher education institutions. Traditional university roles such as fostering democratic values, developing civic-minded citizens and public officials, and forming future national leaders no longer predominate. They have been replaced by the training of human resources to meet the corporate labor market.

Reconsidering the Value of Universities

As in the case of other major social institutions in Argentina, universities have been undergoing dramatic reorganizations in a context that takes the global economy rather the nation-state as its point of departure. This new “common sense” acknowledges the social value of higher education—but primarily for its role in meeting labor market demands and enhancing national competitiveness.

The traditional knowledge-based responsibilities of universities—such as research, teaching, and community service—have increasingly been located within the demands of the labor market. One of the key topics on higher education’s new economy-driven agenda is the gathering of graduates’ performance information. Public and private universities must obtain feedback about their graduates’ earnings once they enter the labor market. Universities are considered to be successful to the extent to which their graduates’ earn high salaries. According to the former rector of one of the most prestigious private universities in Argentina, “the worth of a university is expressed through its graduates’ earnings.” This statement confirms the growing presence of a business-like approach to higher education. Moreover, efficient universities are those that meet the requirements set by large companies searching for candidates. This new understanding, shaped by business interests, makes universities beholden to the corporate sector.

Despite these developments, there has been a dramatic increase in the rate of unemployed university graduates due to the recession in the industrial sector and the enactment of structural adjustments in the public sector during the 1990s. Thus, the relationship between the labor market and university graduates in Argentina has been primarily influenced by sweeping economic policies and secondarily by individual university performance. While the private sector blames universities for their graduates’ failures in the labor market, the unemployment rate in Argentina has reached
its highest level in history (25 percent of the active population) making it virtually impossible for a substantial number of graduates to find work. The private sector is silent in this regard even though it is critical to take into account these broader economic conditions. Such silence helps sustain negative public opinion about traditional university functions.

The Changing Role of the State

For over 170 years, there have been state-funded and state-owned institutions of higher education in Argentina. The state has also legalized professional and academic degree-granting universities. Thus, historically, the state has served as provider and subsidizer, not as regulator, of higher education. This pattern still prevails in spite of the higher education law enacted in 1995 that established the National Council for University Accreditation and Evaluation (CONEAU), which introduced a state regulatory function. The CONEAU has the power to accredit new institutions, set mandatory standards, and accredit some graduate and postgraduate programs. The CONEAU conducts institutional assessment that are to be made public upon completion.

Beyond the emergence of the role of the state as regulator through the CONEAU, the higher education law also authorized universities to establish their own salary scales, to decentralize fiscal control of institution-generated funds, and to create societies, foundations, or other forms of civic associations intended to increase institutional financing and to enhance relations between the universities and faculties with the community.

The current status of higher education in Argentina requires critical reflection on the global and local policies that have recently been adopted.

The higher education landscape in Argentina is also being changed by the unregulated establishment of new branches by public and private universities. Extensiones aulicas (classroom extensions) in various academic and preprofessional areas are being created regardless of their quality. Most of these courses are short-term (2 to 3 years) and charge fees. The global trend in the privatization of higher education is certainly visible in Argentine higher education.

The current status of higher education in Argentina requires critical reflection on the global and local policies that have recently been adopted. New developments have made little to no contributions toward the strengthening of democratic values or to the improvement of institutional quality in Argentina. On the contrary, they have undermined public perceptions of public universities. While institutions should implement improvements, the traditional missions and functions of higher education should not be entirely abandoned.

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News of the Center and the Program in Higher Education

In December 2002, the Center cosponsored an international conference on the future of Asian higher education in Nagoya, Japan. Researchers from 12 Asian countries discussed papers on the future of Asian higher education systems. These papers will be published as a book. Among the participants were Prof. Weifang Min, executive vice president of Peking University in China, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, former secretary (minister) of education of the Philippines, and other key higher education experts. The research project and conference are being cosponsored by the Center for Studies in Higher Education at Nagoya University in Japan, and funded by the Toyota Foundation, the Japan Foundation Asia Center, and the Japanese Ministry of Education. The project codirector is Prof. Toru Umakoshi of Nagoya University.

Women’s universities are the focus of a new research effort at the Center. The role and function of universities for women worldwide will be researched, with the aim of better understanding this segment of the academic community. Center graduate assistants Francesca Purcell and Robin Helms are involved in this effort. The Center’s collaborative research project on private higher education continues. Working with the Project on Research on Private Higher Education at the State University of New York at Albany, directed by Prof. Daniel Levy, Alma Maldonado-Maldonado and Zhu Hong are developing a comprehensive bibliography on private higher education and a listing of doctoral dissertations on the topic. The work is supported by the Ford Foundation.

Center director Prof. Philip G. Altbach has been appointed visiting professor at the University of Hong Kong. He will spend several weeks there in May 2003. He recently was a speaker at the conference on globalization and Catholic higher education, cosponsored by the International Federation of Catholic Universities and the Vatican’s Congregation on Catholic Education. The conference took place in December 2002, at the Vatican in Rome.

New Publications


A report of a multinational study of academic governance and reform, this volume reports on this topic in such countries as Germany, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Switzerland.


A volume in the ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report series, this book focuses on the operationalization of Ernest Boyer’s recommendations for expanding the definition of scholarship to include the scholarship of discovery, of teaching, of integration, and of application. These categories, the authors argue, can be included in the evaluation of the academic profession.


An analysis of postsecondary institutions involved in virtual education, mainly through the Internet, this book provides case studies of several U.S. virtual institutions. Among the cases are the National Technological University, the University of California Extension Center for Independent Learning, the Colorado Electronic Community College, and several others. The author concludes that these institutions are still in an experimental stage.


An extraordinarily comprehensive and useful analysis of South Africa’s higher education experience, this book considers higher education transformation in both the global and South Africa contexts and provides analysis of such topics as funding, student issues, staff and the professoriate, leadership, the role of research, private higher education, and a range of issues relating to change. This book provides insights into the process and problems of change that will be useful to other developing countries.


This comprehensive group of essays on the Free Speech Movement and related events at the Berkeley campus of the University of California in the 1960s provides a thoughtful analysis of these key
events by many of the participants. The FSM was the beginning of the major student movement in the United States in the 1960s, and as such has a central place in the history of student activism.


A selection of essays without an overarching theme on women in higher education, this book includes such topics as women and leadership, barriers to women scientists in higher education, teaching in various areas of women's studies, and others. The material relates to the United States.


This volume reports on a study of foreign biomedical researchers working in the United States. The role of the National Institutes of Health in fostering exchanges and research programs is highlighted. The research is based on interviews with the researchers and is one of the first studies to obtain firsthand perspectives. The authors point out that the NIH channels foreign researchers into the U.S. labor market.


A comprehensive encyclopedia concerning all aspects of higher education in the United States, this two-volume set features basic essays on most key topics relating to higher education ranging from academic administration to women in higher education and workforce development. Each essay has a useful bibliography.


This book provides a journalistic account of the role of affirmative action and the political campaign that resulted in the ending of the policy that gave preferences in admission to students from underrepresented racial groups at the University of California's prestigious law school. Boalt Hall was one of the first law schools in the United States to institute affirmative action and also one of the first to be forced to eliminate it.


In three case studies of small undergraduate liberal arts colleges in the United States, this book focuses on the intersection between institutional and curricular change and the mission and purpose of these colleges. The institutions selected all have a focus on specific missions.


The focus of this volume is on the use of Information Technology on campus—stressing the training of IT personnel, the use of IT for administration, leadership, and human resource management. The volume is sponsored by EDUCAUSE, a U.S. organization stressing the use of technology in higher education.


This volume takes as its point of departure sociologist George Ritzer’s idea of the McDonaldization of modern society—taking Max Weber’s concept of rationalization and extending it to modern social institutions, including the university. The essays in this book are broadly critical of the direction of university systems worldwide, examining such topics as markets and higher education, bureaucratization in the university, digital technology and its implications, teacher training, and other subjects. The data relate to a number of countries.


A detailed analysis of the activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other police agencies in surveillance of students, professors, and others at Canadian universities. These activities included keeping files on many prominent academics.


A series of essays on the broad theme of academic governance by key leaders in higher education in Europe and North America, this volume considers such topics as new missions for the university, decision making and change, government and globalization, and patterns of organization in the universities.


This volume offers a comprehensive overview of eight European countries concerning student life. The focus is on social and economic factors, including demographic characteristics of students, social class backgrounds, sources of in
come (including employment), state assistance to students, living arrangements, and other issues. Data are reported comparatively and also for each individual country. A CD-Rom with additional data is provided.


A guide for new teachers in higher education, this book, written from a British perspective, deals with planning and preparation for teaching, assessment, and student support. It is aimed primarily at teachers at the start of their careers, but will be of interest to all teachers. Data are reported comparatively and also for each individual country. A CD-Rom with additional data is provided.


An analysis of the complex and controversial subject of remedial programs in higher education, this book is a case study of the City College of New York and its English writing program. The author argues that programs that assist students to perform effectively in undergraduate programs are important in an open admissions context, and that the programs are important for the institutions as well as for the students.

An Initiative in International Higher Education

The Boston College Center for International Higher Education provides a unique service to colleges and universities worldwide by focusing on the global realities of higher education. Our goal is to bring an international consciousness to the analysis of higher education. We are convinced that an international perspective will contribute to enlightened policy and practice. To serve this goal, the Center publishes International Higher Education, a book series on higher education, and other publications. We sponsor occasional conferences on key issues in higher education and maintain a resource base for researchers and policymakers. The Center welcomes visiting scholars for periods of study and reflection. We have a special concern for academic institutions in the Jesuit tradition worldwide, and more broadly with Catholic universities. The Center is also concerned with creating dialogue and cooperation among academic institutions in industrialized nations and in developing countries. We are convinced that our future depends on effective collaboration and the creation of an international community focused on the improvement of higher education in the public interest.

Our work is supported by the Ford Foundation and by the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. We are indebted to these funders for core sponsorship.

Our Website

The Center’s award-winning website is a useful source of information and analysis on higher education worldwide. All back issues of International Higher Education are available, and an index provides easy access to articles by topic and country. Center publications are also available, and links to relevant higher education websites and data are provided. We are a featured e-link of the World Bank and other agencies.

The Program in Higher Education in the Lynch School of Education, Boston College

The Center is closely related to the program in higher education at Boston College. The program offers master’s and doctoral degree study in the field of higher education. The program has been preparing professionals in higher education for three decades. It features a rigorous social science–based approach to the study of higher education, combining a concern with the broader theoretical issues relating to higher education and an understanding of the practice of academic administration. The Administrative Fellows initiative provides financial assistance as well as work experience in a variety of administrative settings. Specialization is offered in higher education administration, student affairs and development, international higher education, and other areas. Additional information about the program is available from Dr. Karen Arnold, coordinator of the program in higher education, Lynch School of Education, Campion Hall, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA. Tel: (617) 552-4236 Fax: (617) 552-8422 E-Mail: highered@bc.edu http://www.bc.edu/cihe/