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Why Branch Campuses May Be Unsustainable

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Branch campuses are sprouting around the world, like mushrooms after a heavy rain. According to the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, the number of branch campuses have increased by 43 percent to a total of 162 between 2006 and 2009 (See Rosa Becker's article in this issue of *IHE*). Definitions are slippery; the Observatory's description will suffice:

"An international branch campus is an off-shore entity of a higher education institution operated by the institution or through a joint venture in which the institution is a partner (some countries require foreign providers to partner with a local organization) in the name of the foreign institution. Upon successful completion of the course program, which is fully undertaken at the unit abroad, students are awarded a degree from the foreign institution."

Many of the growing mushrooms may only hold a limited life span and a few might be poisonous. Let us be honest about branch campuses. With a few notable exceptions, they are not really campuses. They are, rather, small, specialized, and limited academic programs offered offshore to take advantage of a perceived market. Not surprisingly, the most popular programs offered are in business management and information technology—with fairly low setup costs and significant worldwide demand. Except where generous hosts—such as in the Arabian Gulf, Singapore, and a few other places—provide facilities and infrastructure, branch campuses become rather spartan places, resembling office complexes rather than academic institutions.

THE FUTURE CRISIS OF THE PROFESSORiate

Ensuring that the professors teaching at branch campuses come from the home university typifies perhaps the greatest problem of sustainability. It is actually difficult to lure home faculty to branch campuses for a long period. Thus, courses are often taught in intensive modules. Without faculty from home, does the branch in fact comprise part of the home institution? Often, branch campuses hire professors who lack an affiliation or experience at the home campus. If the sponsor is an American institution efforts are made to find, as instructors, Americans in the region of the branch or elsewhere and sometimes locals who have US experience. Similarly, administrators and other staff are frequently not from the sponsoring institution.

The ability to attract home campus professors to the branches has been undermined. Research-active senior faculty feel

reluctant to leave their work, especially in the sciences. Junior faculty worry that overseas teaching will not serve their chances for promotion. Concerns about the education of children, employment of spouses, and other family issues also intervene. Even in cases where additional remuneration and other benefits are offered, it is frequently difficult to lure professors overseas. The problem is exacerbated over time. The relatively small number of home-campus faculty willing to relocate is restricted and quickly exhausted.

REPLICATING THE HOME CAMPUS

Branches typically offer a limited curriculum—generally in fields that attract large enrollments, require limited infrastructure, and are relatively inexpensive to teach. Branch campuses seldom reflect the home university in terms of facilities, the breadth of curriculum, or the experience of studying at the sponsoring institution. As governments, accreditors, overseas partners, and students become more savvy about their educational goals, they may demand the “real thing” in the branches. An interesting case is the University of Liverpool's joint-

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venture campus with Xi'an Jiao Tong University in Suzhou, China. Mainly focused on teaching, Liverpool's Chinese partners have requested that the campus be research focused because Liverpool itself is a research-led university in the United Kingdom. It will be difficult for Liverpool to replicate this in China. With regard to the Johns Hopkins University's medical program in Singapore, the local authorities did not feel it was providing the promised goals, resulting in the cancellation of the program.

REPLICATING THE STUDENTS

For a branch campus to provide an education equivalent to the form offered at the home university, the student body must largely match the one at home in terms of selectivity and quality. Especially for the more prestigious institutions—such as Cornell, Liverpool, Monash, and some others—this model will be difficult to sustain. For the many less-highly ranked institutions sponsoring branches, maintaining a branch campus will not be as problematic. It is questionable even now that most branches accept only students who would be qualified at home. These problems will likely become more serious given the increased competition for the top students in the host countries.

In some cases, the pool of available students may become unpredictable as more branches are developed, and local institutions are inevitably improved. This particularly serious problem will likely infiltrate the Arabian Gulf region, where numerous branches have been established and the local and perhaps even the regional student population will have many other options over time. Some of the branches, established generally with funding from host governments or other agencies, are already facing enrollment problems, and many are operating under capacity.

CHANGING LOCAL CONDITIONS

The higher education environment has become fluid in many parts of the world. Demand for higher education expanded throughout the developing world, resulting in large numbers of students going overseas to study as well as a significant demand for branch campuses in countries with inadequate domestic provision or where the quality of local institutions is perceived as low. In the immediate future, expansion is anticipated to be strong due to broad demand for access to both mass and elite institutions. But the longer term is more difficult to predict. Many countries, such as China, are expanding local capacity at all levels, and branch campuses may soon be less attractive. India, which has not allowed much foreign involvement, may be opening its doors soon. At the same time, local capacity at the top is quite limited. India has announced plans for significant expansion of its selective institutions, including more Indian Institutes of Technology, which will for the first time be open to international students. In short, the future market for branch campuses is difficult to predict.

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RISKS AND DANGERS

Much is unclear about branch campuses. Universities establishing them have in general not considered the long-term implications. Establishing a real branch campus that provides an education the same as at the home institution is not an initially easy task, and it is much more difficult as time goes on. Sustainability should be a central concern when establishing a branch campus, but there is little evidence of such a concept. And the longer-term prospects in the countries where branches are being set up remain unclear. Branch campuses may be the “flavor of the month,” but the pitfalls, with resulting damage to academic reputations, financial losses, and of course poor service to students, loom as significant prospects. ■

International Branch Campuses: New Trends and Directions

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Since 2006 the number of international branch campuses in the world have increased by 43 percent, according to a new report published by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE). Branch-campus establishments have also taken some new directions.

DEFINITIONS

There is no universally agreed definition of an international branch campus, and apart from the Observatory’s 2006 branch-campus report, no official and comprehensive list appears to include all existing branch campuses in the world or in specific regions around the globe. Both factors make it difficult to analyze and compare emerging trends across countries.

The term *international branch campus* is used here as an off-shore entity of a higher education institution operated by the institution or through a joint venture in which the institution is a partner (some countries require foreign providers to partner with a local organization) in the name of the foreign institution. Upon successful completion of the course program, which is fully undertaken at the unit abroad, students are awarded a degree from the foreign institution.

As distinctions between branch campuses, satellite campuses, and study centers are blurred, subjective judgment is often required to conclude whether a certain operation exists. The traditional branch campus is characterized by academic and student facilities (such as a library, student accommodation, and recreational activities), research facilities, and a range of course offerings. This article, however, also refers to smaller-scale operations that offer at least one full-degree program at their own independent offices (i.e., not located within a foreign university).

Certain establishments do not fit OBHE’s definition of branch campuses. Not included are schools with more than one institution’s courses and those with programs offered through a partner institution or only providing joint and double degrees; foreign campuses that only offer parts of a degree program; or study-abroad campuses for home students. Also excluded from this article are operations modeled on a foreign country’s higher education system but without ties to a specific institution (such as the American University of Cairo); and foreign-backed universities, which have been established with-

in the host country's higher education system and jurisdiction but with initial academic support from foreign providers (such as the Swiss-German University of Indonesia).

MARKET TRENDS

Since September 2006, the number of international branch campuses in the world have increased by 43 percent, to 162, and more source and host countries have become involved in branch-campus development. Institutions from the United States continue to dominate, both in the number of established operations and in the campus growth over the past three years. Seventy-eight campuses, the equivalent of 48 percent of all current international branch campuses, have been set up by US institutions. The United States is followed by Australia (14 campuses), the United Kingdom (13), and France and India (11 campuses, each).

The traditional branch campus is characterized by academic and student facilities (such as a library, student accommodation, and recreational activities), research facilities, and a range of course offerings.

Among the host countries, the United Arab Emirates is the clear leader, hosting 40 international branch campuses, a quarter of all such ventures in the world. Two-thirds of these foreign campuses are located in Dubai International Academic City. The prime position among the host countries is largely driven by a high student demand, coupled with the country's need to build a knowledge economy and reduce its dependence on the export of oil. China is in second position among the host countries, with 15 campuses, followed by Singapore (12) and Qatar (9), two states whose governments are actively trying to establish themselves as "international higher education hubs" for their region.

Recently, the directions of branch-campus establishment have started to change. While only three years ago, "North-to-South" branch-campus development was clearly dominating, "North-to-North" and, particularly, "South-to-South" provision have increased, with the latter indicating that developing countries are slowly but increasingly establishing their own branch campuses abroad. The large increase in South-to-South provision is largely due to the improved quality of higher education programs in developing countries, coupled with their increased ambition to export programs and hopes to generate a profit from these ventures. The relevance and need for programs in countries with similar socioeconomic contexts and directions of development have also contributed to this growth.

Overall, the international branch-campus market has become more competitive, however, and there have also been several branch-campus closures, reaffirming the need for insti-

tutions to undertake careful market research before deciding to create a campus abroad.

SPONSORS

International branch-campus proposals no longer always originate from the providing institutions. Increasingly, branch-campus initiatives have been invited and even financially supported by governments or other organizations in host countries. In the Middle East and Southeast Asia several "international higher education hubs" have been established, which offer favorable conditions for foreign campuses. Countries providing support, funding, or infrastructure to foreign providers have attracted the highest number of new branch-campus establishments. For example, the United Arab Emirates has been able to attract more campuses than any other country, partly because of its oil wealth, which allows the country to set useful funding and support "packages" (such as tax-free trade zones) for foreign institutions that establish a local campus.

Dubai International Academic City, for instance, offers foreign campuses 100 percent foreign ownership, a 100 percent tax exemption, and a 100 percent repatriation of profits. Foreign campus entry, however, is very restrictive. In Qatar, the Qatar Foundation bears all the costs of developing international branch campuses in Education City, including the costs of buildings, infrastructure, administrative assistance, and even

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staff bonuses. Qatari students at the branch campuses in Education City are eligible for local government study grants, and students enrolled at the hub's US branch campuses are given the opportunity to "cross-register" by taking a course at US branch campus A and another course at US branch campus B. In Asia, South Korea's Incheon Free Economic Zone will likely offer tax incentives and financial support—such as, support toward construction costs or reductions in accommodation rent. These conditions can be incentives for foreign providers.

CONCLUSION

The fast expansion in the number of international branch campuses worldwide is likely to lead to increased global competition for international students, along with several successes and a number of failures. Partly in response to recent branch-campus closures, higher education institutions have become more aware of the long-term costs and risks involved in

branch-campus establishment and are more often looking for sponsors and entering into public-private partnerships to share and reduce such risks. ■

Gulf State Branch Campuses: Global Student Recruitment

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As one of the more overt symbols of a perceived movement toward the Westernization—indeed the Americanization—of the Gulf tertiary system, incoming New York University-Abu Dhabi (opening fall 2010) has naturally drawn comparison to the six American degree-granting branch campuses presently operating in Doha's Education City. At first glance, the terms of agreement established by the government of Abu Dhabi and the Qatar Foundation appear similar: both projects are comprehensively funded and concede full autonomy in decision making to the universities. Standards of admission are ostensibly maintained, and completion of the requisite curriculum is followed by the provision of degrees indistinguishable from those awarded at the home campus. The effort to enroll students in adequate numbers, however, reveals a significant divergence in strategy. These differences will carry major implications for New York University-Abu Dhabi's integration into the social fabric of Abu Dhabi.

QATAR FOUNDATION AND QATARI STUDENTS

Qatar—much like the other Gulf Cooperation Council states—has long struggled with a central dilemma: how should the diversification of the local economy optimally proceed if it is necessarily accompanied by an influx of both skilled and unskilled expatriate (non-national) labor. By 1975, just four years after independence from Britain, 98,000 of Qatar's population of 158,000 were migrant workers, and South Asian laborers outnumbered Arabs by a margin of three to one. Education policy has largely been driven by a desire to legitimately qualify the national population for work in the growing mixed and private sectors and, in so doing, contribute to at least the partial reversal of this demographic imbalance.

In accordance with this goal, the Qatar Foundation has established explicit targets for the number of Qataris each of the six universities in Education City should aim to enroll. At present, Qataris make up 46 percent of a student population that, in any case, is not very large (the classes of 2009 totaled

around 200 graduates). The Qatar Foundation would like to see these numbers increase. Its strategy to counteract low enrollment has been multifaceted but mostly local in focus. Since 2001, Education City has played home to the Academic Bridge Program, which provides up to two years of preparatory work for students hoping to qualify for otherwise unattainable Education City admission. To similar ends, Texas A&M-Qatar has developed the Aggie Opportunity Program, a foundational scheme that sets standards for provisional acceptance and effectively increases the number of Qatari students the institution admits. Seven of nine Qataris enrolled in this program in the 2006/07 academic year were later welcomed as full-time students. Lastly, an outreach to potential applicants has been directed at the Gulf Cooperation Council states, if not Qatar. Georgetown University School of Foreign Services in Qatar, for example, made more than 30 visits to Qatari high schools during a five-month span in 2007.

A DIVERGENT STRATEGY

In working toward an eventual (and much more ambitious) goal of 2,000 undergraduates, New York University-Abu Dhabi has taken a separate approach. The Abu Dhabi government has not made the enrollment of a desired number of Emiratis explicit policy, and John Sexton, president of New York University, believes that nationals in the United Arab Emirates will likely become only a tiny percentage of the student population. As such, there is no foundation year program.

Standards of admission are ostensibly maintained, and completion of the requisite curriculum is followed by the provision of degrees indistinguishable from those awarded at the home campus.

Instead, Sexton and the Abu Dhabi branch campus have ramped up admissions requirements. The "global education" offered at the university will attractively combine with unparalleled financial aid packages. International students, who would otherwise attend the Ivies or else New York University's Washington Square campus, will opt for Gulf-style freshman orientation. An estimated 40 to 50 percent of the student body will be made up of Americans. To help fill the rolls, school counselors from the world's most elite secondary schools are being encouraged to nominate two students for possible admission. Recruitment events are taking place in every continent except Antarctica.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Simply put, to approach their enrollment goals in Abu Dhabi, an elite university such as New York University must appeal to expatriates. While in line with the university's hopes for an enhanced international profile, this policy is a departure from

Abu Dhabi's historically ambivalent stance toward its non-national demographic. Relative to Dubai, Abu Dhabi has leaned on smaller influxes of culturally similar Arab and Pakistani workers. A more cautious approach to the diversification of the local economy has been enabled by Abu Dhabi's massive oil reserves, over 90 percent of the United Arab Emirates' total supply. Former United Arab Emirates' president, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, is on record as saying that a majority expatriate population would continue to pose "a grave problem which threatens the stability of our society and the prospects for future generations."

Indeed, these anxieties are reflected in present-day Abu Dhabi as well as in the development of the local tertiary education structure. The government declared 2008 "The Year of National Identity," and apart from the selective pairing with two elite branch campuses (Paris Sorbonne University-Abu Dhabi being the other), it has only allowed powerful indigenous families to open its private universities. Prominent examples of this include ALHOSN University (established in 2005 with the university slogan, "Global Knowledge with Local Vision") and Abu Dhabi University (established 2003, with the motto "Universal Knowledge, Timeless Truth"). Admissions standards for these universities are relatively low, with the end result being that Emiratis are able to enroll locally in large numbers.

Since 2001, Education City has played home to the Academic Bridge Program, which provides up to two years of preparatory work for students hoping to qualify for otherwise unattainable Education City admission.

LINKS TO THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

If New York University-Abu Dhabi succeeds it will assuredly become the premier tertiary institution in the Gulf region. Yet, in its present form, its enrollment strategy is likely to inspire dynamic tension between the availability of world-class education—comprehensively funded by the Emirate—and its relative inaccessibility to the local population.

Questions about Education City's interconnection with the rest of Qatari society are common. Its officials and academic administrators have been sensitive to charges of elitism and isolation, particularly when coupled with an expressed concern that Qatar University—the institution representing over 90 percent of Qataris in tertiary education—is being forgotten. The Qatar Foundation has attempted to counter these accusations with demonstrable links between the branch campuses, the local business community, and the national university. One of the major benefits of Education City is understood to be the ready supply of experts at the disposal of Qatar University faculty. In short, Education City acts as a long-term, local consultancy.

New York University-Abu Dhabi is already making comparable inroads—in 2008 inaugurating its Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed University Scholars Program with collaboration from the Abu Dhabi Education Council. The program identifies a handful of the most talented upper-year students from the United Arab Emirates' national universities, who then participate in select academic and leadership programming provided by New York University. Given the projected enrollment aims of the branch campus and some of the cultural unease that pervades a demographically imbalanced Abu Dhabi, reaching out and expanding tangible links to the community and its existing universities will be of paramount importance. ■

Transnational Higher Education: Why It Happens and Who Benefits?

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Transnational higher education programs have become an increasingly integral part of the internationalization of higher education. The students are located in the receiving country rather than the source country where the awarding institution is based. While not an entirely new phenomenon in the tertiary education landscape, the scale of the global expansion of contemporary transnational developments is substantially different. Until my recent article entitled "Transnational Higher Education: A Stock Take of Current Activity" (*Journal of Studies in International Education*, September 2009), an understanding of the growth of transnational developments was largely based on anecdotal evidence, given a dearth of comprehensive statistics. Through an analysis of secondary data, synthesizing a range of intelligence scattered around books, academic journals, newspapers, and institutional Web sites, the article quantified the scale of contemporary transnational higher education in mid-2008. This sector involved approximately 3,800 to 4,300 programs.

While transnational higher education is not a new phenomenon, the pace of its global expansion, however, is. This growth has taken place amidst liberalization of foreign direct investment policies in the education sector. However, foreign direct

investment liberalization is a facilitator of transnational education, not its catalyst. In the following discussion, four rationales are highlighted to help explain the growth in transnational higher education. These rationales are derived from research undertaken by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The mutual understanding rationale emphasizes academic, cultural, social, and political grounds for the internationalization of education and does not consider education as part of an articulated economic policy. Under this concept, the internationalization policies for higher education are based on strengthening ties between countries through the creation of networks of political and business elites. For example, a number of Spanish institutions, especially Catholic institutions, have apparently developed transnational higher education programs to extend Spanish influence in the developing countries of Latin America.

SKILLED MIGRATION

Under the skilled migration rationale, internationalization is meant to attract foreign students who are then encouraged to stay in the source country post graduation and contribute to its knowledge economy. Germany is a country where the skilled migration rationale is being employed. This approach is more devoted to bringing students to the source country rather than taking transnational programs to receiving countries. However, transnational programs can serve as a feeder strategy to facilitate student mobility to the source country (e.g., twinning programs).

REVENUE GENERATION

The revenue-generation rationale highlights the market and trade approach of transnational higher education. It reflects income as an important rationale for recruiting international students. In the United Kingdom, for example, the prime minister's initiative has highlighted offshore education to diversify the export of education services, which currently focuses primarily on student mobility. Similarly, some traditional receiving countries have, in recent years, shown an interest in developing their transnational delivery to take advantage of the export revenues thus provided to the internationalization of education. Singapore is a key example of this strategy.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Lastly, the capacity development rationale views transnational higher education as a means of fulfilling the unmet demand for education from local constituents and building capacity and capability for quality education. This rationale is especially important in countries such as Malaysia, where the higher

education system does not meet domestic demand for higher education.

THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS

These four rationales for the growth of transnational higher education are not mutually exclusive. For example, a source country might benefit from revenue generation, while the receiving country is promoted through capacity and capability building. In both the popular media as well as academic literature, transnational higher education has received much criticism regarding its benefits largely accruing to source countries, to the detriment of receiving countries. In other words, these programs have often been referred to as a North/South (developed countries/developing countries) or West/East phenomenon. Given the mutually nonexclusive aspect of the different rationales, there is a danger in analyzing transnational higher education through such North/South polarized lenses. Instead, a more balanced debate needs to be highlighted to consider that the impacts of transnational higher education may be wide-ranging and accrue to both receiving and source countries.

Under the skilled migration rationale, internationalization is meant to attract foreign students who are then encouraged to stay in the source country post graduation and contribute to its knowledge economy.

Such a balanced debate would present a more positive picture of transnational higher education, although it needs to be acknowledged that developments are not risk free. For example, providers who are just profit minded and not concerned about the delivery of quality programs, will undermine the benefits as a capacity and capability instrument. However, providers can be controlled through proper management and governance of regulatory mechanisms. Disregarding all transnational developments at the outset because of these rogue providers would be an injustice to the benefits that properly implemented programs can deliver. The case of Singapore and Malaysia are good examples in this respect. Not all countries, however, have the same level of regulatory power as Singapore and Malaysia to manage the growth of transnational developments. Countries with a lack of regulatory capacity and enforcement may need to reinforce their institutions when engaging with such programs. Thus, while uncontrolled developments do have their dangers, the exercise of regulatory frameworks can minimize these risks. Both the popular press and the academic community share a responsibility to represent a more balanced debate on the issue of who benefits from transnational higher education. ■

Politics, UNESCO, and Higher Education: A Case Study

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On Wednesday, July 8, 2009, at 5:00 pm (Paris time), the World Conference on Higher Education steering-committee chairperson read the conference's final communiqué. The entire assembly of 199 United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) member countries, approved it by consensus and with acclamations. The chairperson reported that 20 observers followed the drafting committee's work. Two of these observers are the authors of this article, offering a behind-the-scenes account of the events that occurred before the final communiqué's presentation. In contrast to the general calm atmosphere predominating during the conference sessions, the drafting process was notable for passionate debates and tense negotiations among members, as they worked to craft the final document.

The 1998 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education agreed on a very relevant final declaration that helped to generate common understandings at the global level on the definition of higher education and the main challenges to be faced by governments and stakeholders. Because of this, we think it is important to detail the content and the "politics of higher education" behind the redaction of the second World Conference on Higher Education's final communiqué (<http://www.unesco.org/en/wche2009/resources/conference-documents/>).

DRAFTING PROCESS

Before the world conference, a series of regional conferences were convened. Each of the regional conferences' final declarations served as the main input for the final communiqué's first draft presented to the drafting committee. The committee included 17 UNESCO member states (Germany, France, the United States, Venezuela, India, Brazil, Jamaica, Romania, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Madagascar, RD Congo, Morocco, South Africa, China, Palestine, and Sudan), the chairperson (from Russia), one UNESCO representative, four higher education experts, three stakeholders (International Association of Universities, Education International, and European Students' Union), two general rapporteurs, and three drafters.

Five meetings, over three days, were scheduled to draft the final document. The first day's two meetings were spent discussing the drafting committee's general procedures. On the second day, content discussions began. Two meetings were

held that day, the first one at noon and the second one in the evening. The latter started at 7:30 pm and ended after 2 am. Undoubtedly, this was the most intense drafting-process day.

THREE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

During the drafting process, most of the political discussion concerned the following issues, although not exclusively.

Defining higher education. The most complicated issue to reach agreement involved defining higher education's meaning. The first draft stated: "Higher education plays an important role in nation-building. Higher education as a public good must be a matter of responsibility of all governments." The revised final communiqué states: "Higher education as a public good and a strategic imperative for all levels of education and as the basis for research, innovation, and creativity must be a matter of responsibility and economic support of all governments." Between the first and final drafts, middle-stage iterations included: "Higher education is a social public good and a human right" (3rd draft) to more market-driven conceptions of higher education as a "public service" (5th draft). The Latin American countries strongly advocated the 3rd-draft wording, while the United States was reluctant to accept the use of the "public-good" category. Extended negotiations were necessary to resolve this major disagreement. On the conference's last day, India's and Brazil's representatives negotiated with the United States to accept the use of "public good." It is unclear exactly what was negotiated, but it may have been the elimination of the paragraph on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), as shown below. For the United States, the use of the adverb "as" was more acceptable than the verb "to be" (higher education is a public good). Even so, the final wording might still be perceived as too problematic for some countries, such as the United States itself, that support higher levels of market intervention in the field.

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GATS and trade in higher education. The GATS debate consumed a lot of time during the drafting process. The first draft stated: "Trade in services is a manifestation of globalization that has caused great concern in the academic community; in particular with GATS under the WTO (World Trade Organization). Member states should not consider higher education as a commercial transaction. . . ." Again, the discussion centered on disagreement between the United States and Latin American countries. The latter pushed for keeping this point in the communiqué, as it could strengthen their position on higher education as a public good. But the United States was opposed to its inclusion, arguing that UNESCO is not the

forum to discuss GATS, and that the global market of higher education can coexist with a more state-driven sector.

Romania also backed the United States, arguing that Romanians have already liberalized higher education using GATS. As a consequence, Romanians felt that it would be unreasonable to accept the content of this paragraph when their behavior in the context of the WTO/GATS is the opposite. After a long and normative discussion on whether education should or should not be considered a commodity, Brazil and Venezuela, surprisingly, accepted the deletion of the paragraph in its entirety. As a result, the final communiqué contains no mention of GATS.

The result of these tensions for the World Conference on Higher Education was a protracted yet fragmented communiqué that, in our opinion, does not transmit a clear and coherent message to the higher education international community.

Worldwide university rankings. The initial draft stated: “Globalization has also increased the pressure to make comparisons between higher education institutions, resulting in the emergence of international rankings. Such comparisons should promote institutional diversity by including a range of criteria that reflect the variety of goals and purposes of different systems, institutions, and institution types. . . .” By the second draft, the paragraph had been revised to read: “Comparisons, in order to be useful, must be based on quality data and appropriate analysis reflecting the diversity of systems and institutional missions.” The word “ranking” had disappeared from this draft and was never included again. The Indian representative strongly and repeatedly requested elimination of the ranking concept from the communiqué. Never clear were the objections on the use of this term. The main debates involved the “solution” based on rather erasing the topics that had strong opposition than continuing to discuss them.

FINAL RESULTS

The final draft needed to be approved by the third day. Time pressures, exhaustion, and last-minute negotiations in the corridors had a combined effect in reaching this objective. As a consequence, certain contentious topics were resolved (or “unresolved”) by simply deleting them from the document (i.e., discussions involving GATS and rankings). Another factor induced countries to reach consensus: No one wanted to stall the drafting process and, as a consequence, be singled out as being responsible for the failure of the conference.

In total, six drafts were necessary to compose the final communiqué and a lot of negotiations and frame-bridging to satisfy all the interests and ideas involved, which included progres-

sive demands (represented by the Latin American countries) and strong promarket statements (specifically pushed by the United States). In the Latin American case, this position finds an explanation in the current wave of left-wing governments in the region that push for a bigger presence of the state in the provision of a range of public services—higher education among them. In the US case, the influence of the new administration has not been reflected in changes on the traditional country's positions in UNESCO. The result of these tensions for the World Conference on Higher Education was a protracted yet fragmented communiqué that, in our opinion, does not transmit a clear and coherent message to the higher education international community. It is still too soon, however, to judge its political relevance. In the meantime, we hope that these insider notes contribute to explaining the form and the content, but especially, the omissions pertaining to the 2009 final communiqué. ■

The Future of International Postsecondary Student Enrollments

MADELEINE F. GREEN AND KIMBERLY KOCH

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According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, there were an estimated 2.8 million internationally mobile students worldwide, up from 1.8 million in 1999. UNESCO defines an international student as one who crossed his or her national border to pursue an education and excludes students who are in a program for less than one year.

Governments and higher education institutions support the recruitment and enrollment of international students for a variety of reasons, including income generation, cultural diplomacy, promoting innovation and productivity by gaining access to talent, and promoting campus internationalization. Although the number of students seeking education abroad is growing and is likely to continue doing so, the competition for international students is fierce.

We examine international student enrollments in postsecondary education in the top-five receiving countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Australia—summarizing the efforts of these nations to attract these students and the factors that will influence future trends.

THE TOP-FIVE RECEIVING COUNTRIES

In 2006/07, the United States had the largest number (595,874) and share (20%) of international students. (The UNESCO count differs from the commonly cited Institute of International Education figures because of definitional differences.) The United Kingdom hosted 351,470, or 13 percent, of all international students. France and Germany each hosted 246,612 and 206,875 students, respectively, or about 8 percent. Australia enrolled 211,526 international students, or 7 percent.

This snapshot, however, tells only part of the story. Australia's international students comprise 17 percent of total Australian enrollments, compared to 3 percent in the United States. Additionally, Australia's 2007 international student enrollment grew by 15 percent from the previous year and constitutes the country's third-largest export industry. Foreign enrollments constitute 14 percent of the UK student population and about 11 percent in France and Germany. When international students are viewed as proportion of total student enrollment in the country, their impact becomes evident.

RECRUITING STRATEGIES

All of the countries except the United States have launched national recruiting campaigns; all host central Web sites. They brand their efforts with slogans such as "Choose France," Australia's "Live, Learn and Grow," the United Kingdom's "Innovative, Individual, Inspirational," and Germany's "Land of Ideas." Each country has a governmental or quasi-governmental organization that provides information and varying levels of marketing activities. Germany's DAAD (German

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Academic Exchange Service), an intermediary organization between higher education institutions and government, has 64 offices worldwide. The UK government has set national targets for international student enrollments, and the British Council, with offices in more than 100 countries, plays a marketing role. CampusFrance, launched in 2006 to replace EduFrance, has 100 offices in 75 countries. Australia has recently launched a A\$2.8 million drive to support international education, focusing on six major Asian target countries. Australia Education International—the international arm of the government's Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations—has 25 offices in 17 countries. The United States lacks a coordinated national strategy; individual institutions bear the major responsibility for recruitment. The US Department of State maintains a Web site and provides outreach through its 450 advising centers in US embassies.

VISA POLICIES

The ease and expense of obtaining a visa are important factors in a country's ability to attract international students. US international student enrollments dropped after the events of September 11, 2001. Students experienced delays in obtaining visas in the immediate aftermath, and the requirement for a personal interview at the embassy adds time and expense to the application process. In 2009, the United Kingdom instituted a new points-based system; implementation problems have been cited in the press. Australia has made it possible for students to work for up to 20 hours per week under their student visa but, at the same time, have tightened policies enabling students to become permanent residents after their studies. Australia and the United States have the highest entry/visa fees—US\$427 and A\$331, respectively. Germany and France have the lowest, at US\$86 and US\$70, with France charging an extra fee for a residence permit.

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are new competitors on the horizon—including China, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, the Gulf States, countries seeking to become centers of excellence and regional hubs.

All five countries offer scholarships for international students. Available information suggests that Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France are making considerable investments relative to the size of their higher education systems. The largest US effort, the Fulbright Foreign Student programs provide 3,200 scholarships (US\$95 million.) The United Kingdom offers 1,885 Chevening scholarships (US\$48 million). Australia's largest program provides 1,000 Development Scholarships (US\$85 million). France and Germany each provide a total of approximately EUR 100 million (US\$150 million) in scholarships.

CONCLUSION

Many factors will shape the future distribution of internationally mobile students, including the attractiveness and quality of the educational opportunities in the receiving country, the success of a coordinated national strategy to recruit international students, and the relative ease of applying to institutions and of obtaining a visa. Additionally, there are new competitors on the horizon—including China, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, the Gulf States, countries seeking to become centers of excellence and regional hubs. The growing trend of offshore education enables students to stay in their home countries or regions and receive a foreign education. This option may become increasingly attractive in light of greatly reduced costs to students and the attractiveness to governments that wish to avoid brain drain. It is not at all evident that the past will predict the future.

Power and University Presidents

AMANDA GOODALL

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The question of who should lead research universities has been the focus of my work: should they be individuals who are essentially good managers, or are good scholars more desirable? In several *IHE* articles (in 2006 and 2007) I have stated, using statistical evidence, that as presidents top scholars improve the performance of research universities. Drawing from interviews with university leaders, I have raised four possible explanations for the empirical patterns. First, a president (vice chancellor, rector, principal) who is a distinguished scholar will essentially understand the core business of a university—that of research and teaching. The scholar-leaders will likely demand higher academic standards, and their appointment may also signal a university's priorities. Finally, they will have greater credibility among their academic peers.

PRESIDENTS AND UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

University presidents in the United States and United Kingdom were asked how much power each leader had in order to undertake certain tasks—for example, to design university strategy or hire top-team members. A total of 19 presidents were interviewed from the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Rockefeller University, Cornell, Oxford, London School of Economics and Political Science, Imperial College London, University of Manchester, and University of Southampton, among others.

In response to the question “whose role do you believe it is to write or construct the strategy for the university?” the degree of congruence was striking. With little or no hesitation, most of the leaders stated that it was the responsibility of the president or vice chancellor to set the direction of a university. The general feeling was that the president is the *only* person who can ask “Where are we going? What is our strategy?” Debates emerge, it was suggested, out of the top team, but the goal to finally determine an area of strategy remained with the head. Common among interviewees was the belief that if decision making is devolved too far down, leaders lose control, particularly regarding the academic direction.

Committees tend to have greater authority in European universities than those in the United States. However, as was evident from the interviews, UK vice chancellors are beginning to take away certain rights. The British heads stressed the leader's responsibility as differentiated from that of committees, argu-

ing that it is the vice chancellor's role to form university strategy and then to get it approved, not the job of any committee.

A number of authors have argued that presidents need power if they are to successfully lead a university. Similarly, an institution that has too much “democracy” can become impotent. The decline of many European universities is attributed partially to their diffused decision-making processes—specifically, decision making by elected committees. Political scientists may refer to “tyranny of the majority.” The form of consensus decision making that can exist in European universities protects the status quo and curtails the actions of leaders, thereby reducing the likelihood of change. In fact, some scholars have suggested that university presidents with possibly the most direct powers reside at some of the best schools in the world—for example, Ivy League institutions, Stanford, and California Institute of Technology. Seemingly, leaders are appointed to make decisions, direct the institution, and take the fall when things do not work out. This explains why they tend to receive the highest salary in their organizations. If governance mechanisms are functioning properly, powerful heads benefit universities

The scholar-leaders will likely demand higher academic standards, and their appointment may also signal a university's priorities.

SELECTING THE TOP-MANAGEMENT TEAM

Another of the powers bestowed on university heads concerns the right to hire top-team members. These powers do exist for US presidents. There are a number of tiers of leadership in research universities. Below presidents are provosts, pro-vice chancellors and other deputy heads, senior administrative staff, and leaders of key strategic units—such as deans of schools or faculties. For a leader to execute strategies and extend his or her influence, it matters who is selected as provosts and pro-vice chancellors. It is normal for university presidents at American institutions to choose top-team members and make other important hires. But this practice is less established in the United Kingdom and even rarer in Europe.

Almost all of the 12 UK vice chancellors interviewed complained that they first needed to change or adapt the selection process, before hiring their own choice of top-team members. For some of these leaders this procedure was slow and involved a great deal of negotiation. One UK head protested that his actions had been blocked by incumbent pro-vice chancellors for two years, until their terms were completed. At his institution pro-vice chancellors were appointed by the senate, which had 200 members. This style of selection was common in the United Kingdom, but many of the interviewed leaders had started to flex their muscles. Some UK heads negotiated the power to hire top-team members as part of their contract. This was true in the case of an experienced leader who was

asked to take over the reins of a weak and struggling university and introduced a new pro-vice chancellor, chief operating officer, and registrar, among others. One leader threatened to resign unless powers to select top-team members were transferred exclusively to the vice chancellor.

Collegiality does not necessarily mean that everyone makes decisions. This assertiveness by British heads is quite recent. Thus, at UK research universities, power to select top management teams is slowly following the US policy. In the United Kingdom, it is more common for heads of new universities (those established from polytechnics after 1992) to have direct powers to hire top-team members.

The traditional and largely continuing European approach involves appointment through a process of faculty elections. This practice has been criticized because, again, it substantially weakens presidential powers, inhibits organizational change, and favors the status quo. One former and very experienced US dean said he was strongly opposed to faculty making the selection of provosts or presidents, and he went on to say, "I am against the notion of democracy." This is noteworthy because many academics construe universities to be collegial and therefore nonhierarchical, with democratic decision-making structures. This former US dean argued that universities are at least as hierarchical as the military, and our obsessive labeling would imply this is the case ("Professor Dr Dr" is not an uncommon title in Germany).

Leaders do need power. The executive powers given to university presidents in the United States extend far beyond those conferred on European rectors, although vice chancellors in the United Kingdom are becoming more assertive. The world's outstanding research universities are located in the United States. These top institutions outperform their European counterparts. Presidents having adequate clout in meritocratic organizations may explain some of this difference. ■

A New Direction for Private Higher Education in India

PAWAN AGARWAL

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In India private higher education accounts for more than a third of overall enrollment and about four-fifths of enrollment in professional higher education. Although the country has a long history of institutions entirely funded through private initiatives, frantic growth of private institutions is a recent

phenomenon. Currently, the established private institutions are consolidating their positions and gain scale by setting up new campuses, establishing new programs, and expanding into new geographies. As a result, chains of private institutions are emerging.

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While earlier a few trusts and philanthropic societies with broad representation of a community or a religious group used to set up such institutions, now most of such chains are family owned. Rather than being on the fringes, these new establishments are in mainstream higher education and distinct from chains of training centers built for instance by the National Institute of Information Technologies that achieved scale in the information technology training segment through its innovative model of franchising. Most of the chains had modest beginnings (with a few students graduating from the school to the higher education sector) and grew over time. And now all of them are onto major expansion spree.

EARLIER INITIATIVES

The Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani is one of the oldest and perhaps the most prestigious of these chains and has retained its leadership through differentiated programs and strong industry linkages. It started in the early 1900s as a small school and blossomed into a set of colleges for a wide range of subjects ranging from humanities to engineering until 1964, when these colleges were amalgamated into a private university. By setting up campuses at Goa and Hyderabad in India and at Dubai abroad, the Birla Institute is now a multicampus university with about 9,000 students and 19,000 students enrolled in off-campus work-integrated programs.

The Manipal Education Group, with Manipal University as its flagship, is a leading player in professional education and distance learning in the country today. The group started with a medical college in 1953 and now has 24 colleges with an enrollment of over 80,000, in a range of subjects at all levels—making Manipal, a nondescript small town on the south coast, a major higher education hub. From its initial narrow focus on engineering and medical programs, it now offers programs in humanities and social sciences. The group was early to recognize the global opportunity and effectively leveraged its brand equity and experience for international expansion. It is spending US\$90 million to upgrade its Manipal facilities and setting up four campuses, investing about US\$25 to 30 million on each campus in India. To consolidate its overseas presence in Nepal, Malaysia, and Dubai, the group acquired the entire

stake of American University of Antigua and entered the Caribbean medical market in 2008 and soon plans to enter Oman, Indonesia, and Vietnam. The group's international operations contribute to more than 50 percent of its revenue.

From targeting foreign students when it began, the Pune-based Symbiosis that started in 1971 has 33 institutions in 9 campuses, enrolling 45,000 students on campus and 100,000 students in distance-learning programs. It was granted deemed-university status in 2002. In recognition of the fact that it enrolls students from over 60 countries, the institution renamed itself as the Symbiosis International University in 2006. The Apeejay Education Society, which started with schools about 40 years ago and later expanded into higher education, has 13 institutions of higher education enrolling 32,000 students in 80 courses across the country.

NEW INITIATIVES

The Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India (ICFAI) was established in 1984 to impart training in finance and management to students, working executives and professionals, and the CFA Program (popular abroad) in 1985. It now has seven private universities in Uttarakhand, Tripura, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Jharkhand under its fold, and another three are planned in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Punjab. Each university is a separate and independent legal entity and offers programs at bachelor's and master's levels at a full-time campus and through flexible learning formats in a wide range of subjects. Though a late entrant, the ICFAI universities have now become the largest chain of universities with pan-India presence, enrolling several hundred thousand students.

Amity University, which started just a decade ago, has two universities and 70 institutions that cater to 50,000 students in 130 different programs, from sciences to humanities to media. It has spent around US\$220 million so far, plans to invest around \$450 million in the next two to three years and to increase the student intake to 500,000 in the next five years. It claims to have consistently grown at 50 percent annually for the past five years and plans to double every year now—both in terms of student intake and revenues.

Coimbatore-based PSG Group, which has 10 colleges with an enrollment of 16,992 students, expects to establish a university soon. The Bengaluru-based Jain Group has 21 education institutions with an aggregate enrollment of 16,400 students and 1,750 employees and plans 100 colleges within the next 10 years.

In each state or region, new chains of institutions are emerging. Even the states that were laggard in private professional education have embraced private growth for pragmatic reasons. West Bengal has the Techno-India Group, with 14 professional institutions including institutions at Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru under its fold.

FUTURE OF PRIVATE CHAINS

The operation of private institutions tied together in a chain is dictated by operational efficiency and marketing strategy. Such institutions are put together under one brand name. This is not just a marketing ploy but also a strategy that declares their product is working and can now be offered, through institutional cloning, to populations that cannot reach the initial places.

Though only some of the multiple sites may have some autonomy, the core idea is a rather standard package for curriculum, pedagogy, hiring, and admissions to attain higher operational efficiency. As the chains expand nationally, they tend to use an operational management framework for general business organizations by adopting standardized processes.

In such institutions the main source of funding—both to meet recurrent costs and capital costs for expansion—come largely from fees. Due to economies of scale and growing demand, they are able to generate huge surpluses from their operations. Most of the revenues are ploughed back in expansion and consolidation since the Indian tax laws bind the non-profits to reinvest rather than share their surplus among promoters. As a result, such chains of institutions would keep on expanding and would be a force to reckon with in the Indian higher education in the times to come. ■

Private Higher Education in Colombia: Problems and Achievements

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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. See <http://www.albany.edu/>.

Within the Latin American context, Colombia has long been a country leader in diversified private higher education development. In fact, during its history Colombian higher education has had as much as a 68 percent private sector, historically paralleled only by Brazil and in recent decades by Chile. The private institutions became Colombia's majority sector in 1975, but already during the 1960s this part of the system was striking for its size. Today, private enrollment represents almost half of total national enrollment. A decline from

1997 to 2007 may be only short term as the Ministry of Education data show private growth outpacing public growth in 2008.

Private institutions are much more than twice the number of public ones, 197 out of the total 279 officially registered. These institutions are characterized by enormous diversity in size, objectives, and levels. This trend has assisted increased access for the low-income population and the fulfillment of various functions and goals. Nevertheless, quality has become a concern notably in a system that relies so much on the private sector. Whatever the mix of problems and achievements explored below, the significant weight of Colombia's private sector should first be understood as owing much to broad political-historical tendencies and public policies.

Private institutions are much more than twice the number of public ones, 197 out of the total 279 officially registered.

SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS INITIATIVES

Colombian higher education was first influenced by the educational culture inherited from Spain. The first universities in Colombia were mainly private, basically more than in other colonies; they were founded by Catholic orders, while becoming more controlled by the Spanish crown during the late colonial period. Some of these leading institutions are today's Universidad de Santo Tomás (1580), the Universidad Pontificia Javeriana (1623), and the Universidad del Rosario (1653).

As the liberators fought for national independence, they created national public universities to promote the consolidation of the republic. However, private initiatives also expanded, whether by partisan enterprises amid the struggles to steer the new state or by intellectuals who advocated secular, nonreligious, and apolitical institutions. Whereas conservative leaders were likely to give to the Church a fundamental role in education, liberals reacted to conservatism by creating new secular higher education institutions.

In the second half of the 20th century, private higher education expanded from a system exclusively for the elite to one accommodating part of the increased demand of middle classes. Colombia became a Latin American leader in the number of nonelite institutions.

STATE PROMOTION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Expansion and diversity have also been promoted by policy initiatives. Given the financial concerns against greatly enlarging the public sector, the Colombian government supports private higher education's ability to absorb the demand in both universities and nonuniversity institutions. Indeed, for decades, the major "public policy" for the expansion of private higher education was simply a lack of investment to expand public higher education.

An analysis of the latest reforms suggests that Colombian public policy has become more proactive and, albeit belatedly, concerned with academic quality. Along with a complex quality-assurance system adopted since 2001, the government has developed tools to stimulate the private initiative in open competition for public funds, by supporting projects to increase quality while achieving enrollment goals. Due to the recent nature of those policies, whether they can effectively address structural quality problems in the lowest-layer institutions remains to be seen.

INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY, MASSIFICATION, AND QUALITY

About 15 percent of Colombian private universities are founded by religious communities, but the system also shows industry-tied and intellectual enterprises in the founding of private institutions by origin. Many private nonelite institutions are family owned, with a critical ambivalence between the desire for economical earnings and the Colombian legislation that disallows for-profit forms. The practices of some family members for financial gains through positions and high salaries within institutions and arrangements to rent buildings to their own universities are obviously the target of criticisms. Such practices may not only hurt revenues and sustainability of institutions but are also pathways for owners to evade tax payment under the false "nonprofit" cover.

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The phenomenon of massification has also created varied types of private higher education institutions regarding legitimacy and quality, ranging from bottom-tier to semielite or locally elite private institutions.

types of private higher education institutions regarding legitimacy and quality, ranging from bottom-tier to semielite or locally elite private institutions. As in other country systems, policies for expanded access have led in Colombia to the unavoidable problem of low academic quality at the bottom of a stratified system. As the system has achieved a 62 percent absorption rate of high school graduates (against 37% in 2002, according to the World Bank), many institutions house students with poor academic backgrounds. In Colombia, the typical trade-off of access and quality into private higher education shows selective universities characterized by high-quality education alongside less-selective institutions.

Some crucial factors related to the troublesome quality of private bottom-tier institutions include the lack of management tools such as budgets or development plans and the scarcity of full-time professors. Many of those shoddy institutions depend on moonlighting public university professors,

often teaching in more than one private university. Bottom-tier institutions in Colombia have problems in hiring and paying professors, and some operate in rented buildings poorly adequate for teaching or research. Of course, along with control efforts by the government to change the problematic patterns there are several worthy endeavors of institutions in the middle, searching simultaneously for access and quality.

IN PURSUIT OF QUALITY

In contrast to the troublesome features, Colombian private higher education has led the movement into voluntary high-quality accreditation. Private institutions constitute the majority of institutions (63%) in obtaining such accreditation according to the National Commission of Accreditation data. About a dozen of those private accredited universities might be classified as the leading ones, characterized as well by their offer of doctoral degrees especially in health, law, and social sciences and having a well-trained faculty.

Colombian private higher education has led the movement into voluntary high-quality accreditation.

Truly, no Colombian higher education institution appears in the research-oriented world rankings—such as the *Times Higher Education*/QS or the Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings. The leading private Universidad de Los Andes is the only institution registered within the top 500 on the World Universities' rankings (Webometrics.info) according to the visibility, volume, and quality of its electronic publications. The Universidad de Los Andes also has the greatest number of doctorate programs within the private sector.

Although such classifications are quite inexact, perhaps an additional 30 of the five-year private institutions hold national or regional prestige because of accredited programs recognized by the public and the academic community at the undergraduate level. More clearly “demand-absorbing” units could be found in another 74 institutions. Along with them, 81 nonuniversity private institutions offer two-and-three-year programs. As only few of the Colombian “demand-absorbing” and nonuniversity institutions have accredited programs, their quality and legitimacy rest more in holding the “basic conditions of quality.” These conditions are mandatory for all Colombian higher education institutions assessed by academic peers and the Ministry of Education as part of the quality-assurance system. ■

Undergraduate Teaching Evaluation in China: Progress and Debate

KAI JIANG

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China has experienced dramatic higher education expansion during the past decade. In comparison with the previous year, the number of students admitted to higher education increased by 47 percent in 1999, which again increased by 25 percent in 2000. In 2002, the relevant age group participating in higher education reached 15 percent, compared with 5 percent in 1993. With more than 27 million students, China's current higher education system is the largest one in the world.

Under the context of rapid expansion, priority has been placed on quantitative growth. Universities, especially local universities were encouraged by the government to enroll more students. Meanwhile, the quality of higher education came to be somewhat neglected. Forgetting about quality caused many problems, such as decline of educational expense per student, deteriorating teaching conditions, and employment difficulty for colleges graduates. Education quality has been questioned by employers, academics, and the public. The government worries that without rigid quality assurance, the expansion itself may not improve national and individual competitiveness.

Currently, the priority of higher education has shifted from quantity growth to quality enhancement. Quality is now being seriously considered by China's government and universities.

MAJOR INITIATIVE

A key measure for China to guarantee quality is the national evaluation of colleges and universities. In 1994, the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education initiated a pilot project on undergraduate teaching evaluation and followed this with two other such evaluations in 1996 and 1999. The results indicated that higher education institutions under evaluation tended to improve their campus and teaching facilities, increase educational spending, closely monitor teaching quality, and put emphasis on teaching.

The landmark of evaluation is the establishment of the Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC) of the ministry (<http://www.pgzx.edu.cn>) in 2004. During its first five-year cycle, HEEC implemented an undergraduate teaching evaluation for 589 colleges and universities. Although it is to be developed as a comprehensive quasi-government evaluation agency, HEEC starts its work with the national evaluation of

undergraduate teaching. The ministry insists that undergraduate teaching typically reflects higher education quality, and thus teaching must be strengthened rather than weakened.

The evaluation of the standards of undergraduate teaching work at regular higher education institutions includes three stages: the institutions conduct self-evaluation; experts' teams enter the institutions to conduct investigations; and the institutions carry out rectifications and reforms. HEEC developed a sophisticated indicator system for evaluation, which includes 7 first-level indicators and 19 second-level indicators. Both the Ministry of Education and its affiliated HEEC hold the discourse of evaluation as the means and improvement of teaching quality.

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The evaluation of standards in undergraduate teaching work is the most far-reaching higher education reform since "adjustment of colleges and departments" (*yuanxi tiaozheng*), which adopted the former USSR system in the early 1950s to facilitate national industrialization.

In fact, adopting the same evaluation instrument and indicator system on undergraduate teaching, provincial education administrations have implemented sub-baccalaureate teaching evaluation on tertiary vocational colleges in respective scopes. The teaching at the majority of private higher education institutions was evaluated by HEEC or provincial education administrations.

EFFECTS AND DEBATES

According to the ministry and HEEC, achievements of the first-cycle undergraduate teaching evaluation are remarkable, similar to that of evaluations in 1996 and 1999. Even so, Ji Zhou, the minister of education, admitted some negative effects in the evaluation, such as formalism, fraud, and deception. Besides, the unitary nature of the evaluation system limits its benefits across different categories of institutions, and the costs, especially hidden costs, are high. Ironically, although most colleges and universities were burdened with heavy pressure and invested huge energy before teaching evaluation, more than 80 percent of institutions received a score of "A" in the first-cycle evaluation.

Academics, administrators, students, government, the public, and the media have been involved in the debate on effects and direction of undergraduate teaching evaluation. Among them, two essays by presidents of national key universities in 2008 constituted a sharp-cut contrast, published by *People's Daily*, the most influential newspaper in China. Baocheng Ji, president of Renmin University of China, was the former head

of the Department of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education, which was in charge of teaching evaluation before HEEC was established. He criticized the multitudinous evaluations of universities and claimed more autonomy shall be granted to universities, including evaluation. Daren Huang, president of Zhongshan University, held a completely different stance, insisting that teaching evaluation is quite necessary. Huang pointed out that China's higher education evaluation bears a solid legal basis, and the monitoring education quality represents an international norm. Despite some problems that exist, the evaluation itself cannot be disaffirmed. According to him, if teaching evaluation becomes a regular tool for quality guarantee, it will not disturb everyday teaching at universities.

Although undergraduate-teaching evaluation is still in heated debate, a vice-minister of education stated that China would continue in this direction with efforts to strengthen evaluation of its higher education institutions. Organizing evaluation is specified as the responsibility of government and receiving evaluation as an obligation of the universities.

THE FUTURE

Based on the positive and negative experiences of the first five-year evaluation of undergraduate teaching, the Ministry of Education and HEEC are working to improve evaluation. The new direction of undergraduate-teaching evaluation will include three aspects. First, a quality-assurance system run within each higher education institution is preferred to an external monitoring system driven by government. Second, to

Academics, administrators, students, government, the public, and the media have been involved in the debate on effects and direction of undergraduate teaching evaluation.

avoid colleges and universities becoming a passive recipient of evaluation, more opportunities will be provided for them to play an active and leading role in their institutional evaluation. Third, the pressure on the majority of higher education institutions to participate in lengthy and stressful evaluations will be reduced. It has gradually become realized that undergraduate-teaching evaluation is more than a top-down measure of the government but rather an accountability measure among a broader group of stakeholders—including not only government but also institutions, academics, administrators, students, families, and even the media.

While a great deal of work remains to develop a comprehensive, well-established higher education evaluation system, China's specific national evaluation of undergraduate teaching represents an important milestone in national efforts to ensure and improve education quality. It has been reported that the Ministry of Education will initiate the second five-year cycle

evaluation of undergraduate teaching via HEEC in late 2009. Some initiatives on teaching evaluation will be explored in the new cycle. ■

Academic Freedom and Public Intellectuals in China

QIANG ZHA

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Academic freedom has always been viewed as problematic in China. The recent academic integrity crisis on university campuses and governmental intervention have once again brought this issue to the fore. Since 2002, China's Ministry of Education has promulgated a series of policies aiming to clean up academic corruption on university campuses. Most recently, in March 2009, it announced severe penalties for academic misbehavior. Then, what is the status quo of academic freedom in Chinese universities? To consider this issue, it is necessary to go back to the Confucian intellectual tradition, as it viewed the relations between academics and the state in a quite different way from the Western notion. This article starts by offering a historical perspective on academic freedom in China, followed by an effort at discerning the trajectory of its evolution over the last century, as a way of exploring the causes of corruption among contemporary Chinese university scholars.

UNITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

Unlike the Western tradition, where scholars believe in the power of words and seek to be public intellectuals through engaging in critical debate, the Confucian tradition prompted Chinese scholars to realize their ideals through action and a kind of direct responsibility for managing the state. This tradition was best explained by the Confucian canons of knowledge and the imperial examination system that selected intellectuals to serve as scholar-officials. Knowledge was less a matter of understanding the world than of changing it, and scholars were expected to "cultivate the self, manage the family, govern the country, and bring peace to the world." Put explicitly, they sought a unity of knowledge and action through their roles as scholar-officials. Rather than considering themselves as independent social critics, they saw themselves as offsetting political authority with intellectual authority and being responsible to "tame" the ruler so that he would be a "Philosopher King." While there were inevitably cases of cynicism and corruption, this scholar-official role did not necessarily confine Confucian scholars in terms of independent thinking. More often, they were seen as upholding social justice and morality with their "iron shoulders."

A CENTURY OF UPS AND DOWNS

The abolition of the imperial examination system in 1905 led to the formation of an independent intellectual class. In the May 4th Movement of 1919, often called China's enlightenment, the Confucian tradition was repudiated and both radicalism and utilitarianism began to characterize Chinese academia. The former resulted in revolutionary activism, while the latter led to a growing cynicism among Chinese scholars. Since then Chinese scholarship seems to have oscillated between these opposite extremes. The May 4th Movement witnessed the emergence of radical intellectuals, many of whom later joined the Chinese Communist Party and contributed to the formation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Eight years later, in 1957, when Khrushchev denounced Stalin at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, Chinese intellectuals participated enthusiastically in the Hundred Flowers Campaign, suggesting that China's new government should "govern democratically" and accept criticism. Mao Zedong viewed this as violating a healthy level of criticism and launched the Anti-Rightist Movement. Many university-based intellectuals were labelled "rightists" and sent into exile.

The Anti-Rightist Movement resulted in Chinese intellectuals feeling themselves to be objects of suspicion and oppression. They became largely voiceless from the late 1950s to the

The abolition of the imperial examination system in 1905 led to the formation of an independent intellectual class.

late 1970s, and some became cynical. This may have contributed to such disasters as the great famine of the early 1960s and the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976. When Deng Xiaoping launched a series of economic reforms that led to the gradual implementation of a market economy, the Chinese government found itself groping to resolve the contradictions that arose from its new and controversial policy. Intellectuals were again encouraged to contribute actively to reform, in the name of "respecting knowledge and talent." Irritated by China's economic backwardness and the ultraleft thinking of the Cultural Revolution, many Chinese intellectuals shared a strong commitment to the pursuit of freedom and democracy in the 1980s. Thus, the 1980s witnessed a second enlightenment era with a predominant belief among university faculty that the reforms had not gone far enough. Having seen the political liberalization undertaken in the name of *glasnost* by Gorbachev, they were hoping for comparable reform in China. This culminated in the June 4th Incident in 1989.

Leaving the idealist and passionate 1980s behind, Chinese intellectuals experienced a transformation close to what their Western counterparts did after 1968: a split between intellectual reformer and academic worker. A very few continued as liberal intellectuals, but the majority retreated to university cam-

pushes to seek knowledge and academic pursuits for their own sake. Chinese intellectuals now do contribute to policy formation at various levels, through offering professional advice, but they rarely take up the role of social critics or social activists. They have adopted a stance that is termed “constructive criticism” and does not necessarily reflect the radical social commitment of liberal intellectuals. As the Western idea of academic freedom and direct criticism of government has gradually lost its attractiveness, in the face of China's economic success more and more scholars in Chinese universities favor “constructive criticism.”

CHINESE SCHOLARS AND ACADEMIC CORRUPTION

After 1992 China changed very rapidly, making some scholars anxious. Along with increasing wealth, the market economy has also encouraged utilitarianism and a one-sided emphasis on accumulating material wealth. Scholars have found their elite culture replaced by a secular one. Some of them have been attracted by various “shortcuts” to power and influence, especially when their academic integrity has lost its ideological underpinnings and utilitarianism has taken over. It is in this context that plagiarism has become widespread, even in top universities. A recent article in *Science* (March 16, 2009) on plagiarizing or fabricating data by researchers at Zhejiang University (one of China's top universities) put a spotlight on the crisis of academic integrity in Chinese universities and the fact that it is now attracting international attention. This shows a widely held perception that corruption is not limited to the power sphere in China but has penetrated academia. In October 2009, when the Chinese government celebrated the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and announced Chinese universities now ranked the world's fifth in terms of research capacity, based on the volume of the research papers published, criticism came up immediately from within and outside of the sector, citing the increasing plagiarism and declining integrity.

The Anti-Rightist Movement resulted in Chinese intellectuals feeling themselves to be objects of suspicion and oppression. They became largely voiceless from the late 1950s to the late 1970s

Realizing that academic corruption could jeopardize China's ambition of creating world-class universities, the government has stepped in. While the government used to be viewed as an obstacle to academic freedom, it has now had to become a watchdog for the academic integrity of scholars and universities in China. Elsewhere, this is a time that cries out for intellectuals to exercise self-mastery and self-discipline. China is not exempt from these trends, but Chinese scholars may be even more vulnerable, due to the character of the political regime and discontinuity with the Confucian scholarly tra-

dition. Until Chinese scholars can show themselves to be accountable and exercise a kind of reciprocal responsibility, they may not be entitled to the kinds of autonomy and academic freedom that have been part of the Western tradition. While the Confucian classics are now being reintroduced into the curriculum, it is not clear whether this will lead to a renaissance of China's tradition of intellectual authority and a high degree of social responsibility. ■

Institutional Diversification in Chinese Higher Education

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China's higher education system has experienced unprecedented growth since 1998. According to the most recent data from the Ministry of Education in China, the number of new students entering undergraduate programs rose from around 1 million in 1998 to some 6 million in 2008. This increase resulted in a total number of students of over 20 million in 2008, making China the world's largest provider of higher education.

With the rapid expansion in student numbers came the introduction of several new types of degree-granting institutions. As outlined in an article by Ruth Hayhoe and Jing Lin in *IHE* (Spring 2008), private colleges and *duli xueyuan* or independent colleges, which are set up by public universities with the contribution of a private investor, account for a substantial share of increased enrollments: within just six years (2000 to 2006) 318 independent colleges were established. Now one in six students studying for an undergraduate degree in China is attending an independent or a private college.

This article reports on an exploratory study comparing an independent college and a private college with two public institutions located in a provincial capital in southeastern China. The two public institutions (one university and one college, according to the official classification of higher education institutions) are well established and—in line with government regulation—charge the same level of tuition fees. The independent and the private colleges are younger institutions and charge around 2.5 times higher fees than the public institutions.

In 2008, the public university, public college, independent college, and private college in this study enrolled around 9,000, 2,000, 3,000, and 800 new undergraduate degree-level students, respectively. The public and the private colleges were promoted to degree-level institutions relatively recently, and this explains their smaller intake of students. The majority of students at the private college were following sub-degree-level vocational courses. Many of the teachers at the two nonpublic institutions are retired faculty from public institutions.

Now one in six students studying for an undergraduate degree in China is attending an independent or a private college.

UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAM SCORES

The analysis of the student intake showed clear differences in the types of students attending the four institutions. Students at the two public institutions had significantly higher scores in the university entrance exams than their counterparts at the independent college and the private college. This indicates that the independent and private colleges contribute to the expansion of higher education at the lower end of the student achievement spectrum.

SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Significant differences exist in the socioeconomic backgrounds of the student intake of the four institutions. The parents of independent college students had the strongest educational backgrounds in the four institutions and held more prestigious occupational positions, compared with the parents of students studying at the other institutions. The difference in the socioeconomic background of students is particularly strong between the two nonpublic colleges. For example, parents of independent college students were almost five times more likely to have earned a higher education degree than parents of students studying at the private college. Also, compared with fathers of students at the private college, fathers of students at the independent college were 9.5 times more likely to be managers of businesses, 4 times more likely to be administrative personnel at a public authority, and twice as likely to be clerks at public authorities, while fathers of students at the private college were more likely to be industrial and construction workers or farmers. Similar patterns can be found when the occupational positions of the mothers of students are compared.

RURAL/URBAN ORIGINS

Significant differences can also be found in the geographic recruitment patterns of institutions. The independent college recruits more students from urban areas than the other institutions. Its intake of students from rural areas was significantly lower (at 18% of the overall student sample) than at the other

three institutions (29.6%, 24.2% and 37.6% for the public university, public college, and private college, respectively). This is significant, since the rural-urban divide in China is stark and closely correlated not only with the educational achievements of students at high school level (with students at urban high schools on average achieving higher scores) but also with family income levels (with families in rural areas being overall poorer than families in urban areas).

DEGREE OF FINANCIAL CONCERN

The differences in the socioeconomic background of the students are also reflected in the degree of concern students have with regard to the cost of their studies. Despite the fact that students at the independent college pay significantly higher tuition fees, their levels of financial concern are not higher than those of students studying at the two public institutions. However, students at the private college are on average much more concerned about their finances: 45 percent of students at the private college state that they are very concerned about the cost of their studies, which is double the level of concern of students at the other three institutions. This means that the higher level of tuition fees at the nonpublic institutions does not affect students at the independent college because of their more privileged family background, whereas for students at the private college fee levels are a real concern. The study also shows that the high level of financial concern of students at the private college is linked to much lower aspirations for further study.

Lower-achieving students from well-off backgrounds with high levels of economic, social, and cultural capital benefit from the option of paying increased fees to attend independent colleges affiliated to prestigious public institutions.

CONCLUSION

The increasing significance of the independent colleges and the private colleges in the provision of higher education in China has occurred without adequate attention to issues of choice and equality. For example, lower-achieving students from well-off backgrounds with high levels of economic, social, and cultural capital benefit from the option of paying increased fees to attend independent colleges affiliated to prestigious public institutions, while lower-achieving poorer students pay increased fees to attend less-prestigious private institutions. Further research into the labor market outcomes for graduates from different types of institutions is urgently required to establish the rates of return for students from various socioeconomic groups and those from rural and urban areas.

Government policy on higher education does not create more choice for the majority of students. Instead, the diversification of the institutional setup of higher education institutions in China appears to be a by-product of the overarching aim of increasing student numbers. Choice can only be exercised by higher socioeconomic groups.

The recent establishment of private and independent colleges has resulted in a significant new sector, shifting the higher education system in China from being almost homogeneously public to one where a significant proportion of students are enrolled in nonpublic institutions. However, the ever-present institutional hierarchy in the Chinese higher education sector emphasizes vertical diversity, with strong differences in the prestige of the institutions, at the expense of horizontal diversity of institutions offering different types of education. While this form of diversification has created new opportunities for accessing higher education, it has also led to new inequalities in terms of the relative cost and prestige of education at different types of institutions. ■

In Search for World-Class Universities: The Case of Russia

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Innovative development in Russia toward building a knowledge-based economy has become a national priority. While it is recognized that Russian higher education and research fall behind the world leaders in higher education, nostalgia for Soviet achievements in education and science remains relatively strong in the society.

GLOBAL RANKINGS

As in some other countries, in Russia global rankings have stimulated a critical analysis of the current state of higher education and research. Leading Russian institutions did not succeed in global rankings. Moscow State University moved between the 66th and 76th positions, and St. Petersburg State University is listed within the 400-to-500 category of the world's top institutions by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University ranking during 2004 and 2008. The *Times Higher Education* version of the top institutions was also disappointing: since 2004, Moscow State University's ranking varied from 79 to 231.

For one part of the academic community the lower positions of Russian institutions in the rankings have not become a surprise, only serving another signal of the troubles in Russian higher education and research. For other sectors it was difficult to accept such a low ranking position of Russian higher education. The national response to the global challenges was manifold and reflected the lack of social consensus regarding higher education.

As in some other countries, in Russia global rankings have stimulated a critical analysis of the current state of higher education and research.

A RUSSIAN RANKING

The dissatisfaction with the methodology and mainly the outcomes of the global rankings have generated the design of a new global ranking declared to be more correct and objective. In 2009, the Russian independent rating agency, RatER, presented a new version of global ranking. The authors emphasize that in contrast to existing rankings it pays more attention to the indicators of the quality of education and teaching. Data collection methods include survey of universities, educational statistics, universities' reports, and Scopus® data. The indicators include the number of educational programs (fields of study), patents and certificates of discoveries, performance of the computer center, number of publications and citations, international awards, university budget per student, presence of university on the Web, and international students. As a result, in this Russian global ranking Moscow State University occupied fifth place, ahead of Harvard, Stanford, and Cambridge. The academic community criticized the ranking and its methodology for numerous flaws. However, to some extent the Russian version proved to be appealing as an alternative or addition to the available rankings.

NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES' PROGRAM

The Russian government is concerned about modernization of Russian education and including several Russian institutions in global rankings. The policy-related response to the international challenges has involved supporting a selected group of universities. The first steps to establish leading institutions were undertaken in 2006 when the Ministry of Education and Science merged several regional institutions to found two federal universities, Siberian and Southern, to strengthen higher education in their respective regions. From 2006 to 2008, in the framework of the national priority project, 57 universities on the competitive basis received federal funding to develop their innovative programs (up to US\$33 million per institution). In 2008 the president of Russia signed a decree to grant a status of national research university along with the funding over the next 10 years for a National Research Nuclear University and technological universities in Moscow. In 2009,

the Ministry of Education and Science launched a competition for the status of national research university and 10-year financing, and 110 applications were accepted. Federal funding (up to US\$60 million) for the first 5 years will support the innovative development programs in priority fields selected by universities. Finally, a dozen universities have received the national research status—the majority of them (9) technical universities and the others classical universities in Nizhny Novgorod and Novosibirsk and an economics university in Moscow.

National research universities are expected to change their legal status from educational establishment to an autonomous educational organization that provides more economic freedom, although this change is not compulsory. In the meantime, the Russian Parliament is about to accept the legislation on the special status of Moscow State and St. Petersburg State universities, which are to become federally funded universities able to employ additional admissions examinations and issue their own diplomas. The rectors are to be appointed by the president of Russia, although this policy is not yet decided.

In 2009, the Russian independent rating agency, RatER, presented a new version of global ranking. The authors emphasize that in contrast to existing rankings it pays more attention to the indicators of the quality of education and teaching.

Thus, Russia followed the path of some other countries in defining elite (or to-be-elite) institutions and providing them financial support. The competition regulations imply the control over the groundwork of innovative programs and an abrogation of the status of the national research university if an institution fails in the success of the program.

However, Russia has not elaborated a policy of building a world-class university. It is unclear which criteria the innovation would meet and how such a university should be built. How will the success of the project in the international arena be evaluated? How will the progress toward a world-class university be measured? No answers to these questions have yet been determined. Anyway, it would be unreasonable to expect that the positions of Russian universities in global rankings will notably improve over a five-year period. In particular, the ratings of publications and citations cannot grow so fast (by the way, by publications and citations the staff of the Russian Academy of Sciences outpace universities' staff).

WORLD-CLASS CULTURE

It is important to mention that a world-class university does not only involve research achievements, huge budget, higher internationalization, and excellent facilities, although these

aspects are undoubtedly critical. In a democratic culture, excellence in research and teaching has had some prerequisites: academic freedom, transparency and collegiality in decision making, and open competitions. These values are endangered in many developed and developing countries, but remain important. In Russia, practices of academic freedom, peer review, and transparency in decision making and competitions are still insufficient; and such a cultural component might become an obstacle in a search for excellence. The change toward excellence requires adequate compensation for faculty, clear demands, an incentive reward system at institutional and societal levels, stimuli and opportunities to do research, integration into the international academic community, and English proficiency, among other issues. These changes would attract "best and brightest" faculty and students and form an academic culture, where excellence and therefore world-class institutions become real.

DIVERSIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

For Russia it is also important that universities, at least in the near future, cannot specialize in a single mode of research. The Academy of Sciences trains graduate students and is able, at least at some research units, to develop internationally recognized research, while universities still produce less R&D. Due to the organization of higher education and research, it would be important to establish and expand horizontal networks between universities and research institutions and

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between universities. Also, the diversification of universities, now a formal initiative, should not lead to the deterioration of the majority of institutions. Most institutions not only fulfill important social functions in their respective regions but also supply talented students to the leading institutions and might demonstrate potential for innovations as well. The demographic decline is decreasing the number of students as well as, thus, the financing from tuitions, which might encourage universities to search for new sources of funding through innovation and research. The knowledge production seems to move toward higher diversification and, therefore, to a partial decline of some elements of the universities' system and Academy of Sciences.

CONCLUSION

Obviously, by selecting technological universities (former Soviet polytechnic institutes) the government tends to foster innovations in applied research and development and underestimates the strategic priority of basic research in various fields, while building a new economy of a knowledge and democratic society. Also, the amount of program funding could hardly provide dramatic changes.

However, as an experiment with a new autonomous organization, this program could be quite stimulating in the development of Russian higher education, by opening new opportunities for R&D at universities. Participating institutions will not be able to appear among top world institutions in the near future but will indicate if innovations are possible in the routine construction of Russian higher education. ■

Russian Universities' "Midrange" Collaboration Strategies

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An intriguing trend in the change of modern universities is the engagement in forms of collaboration, especially regarding cooperation strategies on the international level. In Russia, two opposing strategies are commonly used by universities: first, the establishment of formal relationships and councils that in reality do not produce any collaborative projects or programs; second, large-scale mergers of regional universities initiated primarily by the government despite university objections. However, some universities have chosen to undertake a "midrange" cooperative development—a consortium of several educational and science organizations with a participation of regional government and hi-tech enterprises.

UNIVERSITY MERGERS IN RUSSIA

Connections and mergers within the Russian higher education system are influenced by the historical context of state policy development. In the 1990s drastic social and economic changes forced Russian universities to operate under insufficient state financing and weaker connections with industry. At the same time, the marketization and commercialization of higher education formed the main impetus for university development. Since 1991, the relative number of students per 10,000 of the population increased 2.5 times (to 475 in 2008).

Universities started to expand enrollments, trying to respond to the demand of all prospective groups. Almost all strong universities initiated regional expansion, establishing branches (oriented toward fee-based programs).

As the market became saturated, there was no need for effective collaboration. Every university tried to concentrate as many resources and students as possible within the institution. Models of interaction and structural forms produced during the Soviet period lost relevance to university strategies. Industry-based educational activities were limited to infrequent exchanges of professionals and the widespread practice of professors being simultaneously employed at several universities. Therefore, many councils and associations of universities had become organizations offering merely a veneer of cooperation, with no real projects and outcomes.

Mergers were rarely initiated by universities. The two most important mergers executed in Russia (Siberian Federal University in Krasnoyarsk and South Federal University in Rostov-on-Don, both founded in 2006) assisted development in certain Russian regions. In both cases four universities were integrated into one organization; the resulting institutions faced similar problems and obstacles during the merger process. The resulting organizational structure is inflexible and characterized by excessive centralization. Moreover, the mergers have resulted in an increased heterogeneity of the university, which encourages the creation of groups disconnected with the new institutions' overall objectives. Finally, the occurrence of serious legislative gaps undermines the establishment of large projects. As a result, the federal universities are currently not performing as expected.

CONSORTIA: PROFILE OF THE MODEL

A consortium of universities represents an alternative model to both weak and formal contractual forms of collaboration and to the rigid model of institutional mergers. Currently, four leading universities located in Tomsk are starting to implement this model. The participating universities include a tradi-

Connections and mergers within the Russian higher education system are influenced by the historical context of state policy development.

tional comprehensive institution and a medical one and two polytechnic institutions with strong participation by local government, the scientific centers of the Academy of Science, and hi-tech enterprises in the planning process.

Universities and other participants of the consortium have identified a set of common problems possibly to overcome with the help of intensive arrangements: in the sphere of education—doubling of courses, unfair educational competition in the region, low proportion of young teaching staff, and decreasing competitiveness for the most talented school-

leavers and bachelor's degree recipients; in the sphere of research and innovation—a small number of large research projects and inefficient marketing. This prediction of common problems allowed universities to create a set of shared goals and principles for further collaboration. The consortium will focus on the development of interdisciplinary research, acceleration of the innovation process by means of integrating education and research, the collective positioning in national and global markets, and increasing economic efficiency of universities. Such ambitious goals are going to be achieved with the use of a flexible two-level organizational structure. On the first level (center), the universities will conduct large collaborative research projects and develop double-degree master's and PhD programs. On the second level (periphery) the universities will conduct their educational programs and research projects.

The emergence of new strategies reflect some factors that stimulate universities to look at each other not only as competitors, but as partners.

Two arrangements are relevant for planning practical issues—the development of the City Credit Transfer System and the Common Technology Transfer Office. The first format allows students to take courses for their bachelor's or master's degree at any of the city universities. Universities approve the amount of courses available to all students in Tomsk; then, a student can add some of the courses to the curriculum, attend them, and pass final exams. The rationale for the second arrangement is the pressing need to be competitive on the market of new technologies and innovations. This office is aimed at overcoming the territorial remoteness of Tomsk and mediating between investors, hi-tech companies, and researchers.

NEW INCENTIVES FOR COOPERATION

The emergence of new strategies reflect some factors that stimulate universities to look at each other not only as competitors, but as partners. First, the risk of decreasing enrollments and problems for extensive development will force universities (especially in the regions) toward efforts for collective positioning and attracting talented school-leavers. Second, due to the considerable changes in state policy supporting higher education, Russian universities will need to develop effective strategies to obtain or retain status and additional funding. Collaboration can form a significant part of such strategies. Third, Russian universities are starting to understand importance to be included within the networks of the global knowledge economy and develop interconnections at the institutional level. In many respects the successful development of the Russian higher education system depends on the success of international engagements. ■

Ethiopia: The Dilemmas of Expansion

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Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. More than three-fourths of the nation's primary economic activity involves small-scale agriculture, not only highly inefficient but extremely vulnerable to variations in climate and international market prices. In order to move from an agrarian to a modern economy, Ethiopia requires citizens with more education. This necessity is especially critical in a country with the 15th-largest population on the planet and a median age of barely 17 years. Accordingly, the government has expanded the higher education system while growing enrollment, both at breakneck speed.

Ethiopia had only two universities for much of the 20th century. Since the mid-1990s, the number of private institutions have expanded, with a simultaneous growth of the public sector. Today 19 additional public universities represent either newly established institutions or colleges merged and upgraded to university status. There are also 26 regional teacher education colleges and approximately 60 accredited private postsecondary institutions (only one recognized as a university).

The pace of growth has been intoxicating, and the challenges of current circumstances in Ethiopia make the expansion of the higher education system all the more daunting. The country reflects the tensions that Sir John Daniels graphically presents in his "iron triangle," where access, cost, and quality are precariously balanced against each other.

STRONG (MALE) ENROLLMENT GROWTH

At all levels, access to education in Ethiopia has improved significantly, with greater numbers of students completing secondary education and continuing on to postsecondary study. Ministry of Education statistics show that during the 2000/01 academic year, undergraduate enrollment at public universities (not including distance and evening enrollment) was approximately 34,000. By 2007/08, regular undergraduate enrollment had increased to more than 125,000. Many more men than women, however, are benefiting from expanded access: less than 30 percent of the undergraduate enrollment and barely 10 percent of graduate enrollment is female.

QUALITY CHALLENGES

While difficult to measure, quality has cause for concern. The number of instructors has not kept pace with enrollment growth. In 2000, slightly more than 3,400 teachers provided instruction at Ethiopia's universities. In 2008/09, there were

approximately 7,500 university instructors. In other words, while enrollment nearly quadrupled, teaching staff barely doubled. This disparity is also apparent in the evolution of the teacher-student ratio, which grew from 1:8 in 1995 to 1:15 today.

The system struggles to fill many teaching vacancies given the absence of enough qualified Ethiopians to fill these positions. As a result, instructors are also hired from abroad. Most universities do not have the resources to effectively supervise or mentor so many new and inexperienced instructors. Fewer than 20 percent of the current teachers hold master's degrees, and fewer than 4 percent hold PhDs, underscoring the limited experience with scholarship.

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Quality is also constrained by infrastructure. During the past two years, the country has suffered from regular rolling blackouts, and few universities have generators to keep technical infrastructure operational during power cuts. The construction of classroom space, expansion of library collections, addition of computer labs, and the development of electronic networks lag behind enrollment expansion. International agencies are helping the government to develop new facilities and infrastructure; however, these efforts are largely uncoordinated and will take time.

COST CONSIDERATIONS

The cost of educating a growing cohort of university students is quickly exceeding available government funds. A new policy has eased the country away from fully subsidized higher education to a cost recovery scheme, but this system will not return funds to government coffers for several years to come. The government currently depends on international aid as well as expatriate faculty to fill in the many gaps that result from the rapid growth of higher education. But even with aid, funding is insufficient to address the enormous needs of this nascent system.

HUMAN RESOURCES AS A "MOVING TARGET"

Too many of the best and brightest academic and administrative staff in Ethiopia are on the move. Graduate study and professional development opportunities are currently available overseas through national and donor agency programs. In the long term this will certainly strengthen Ethiopian higher education. However, educational opportunities abroad often lead to "brain drain," while even the short-term absence of professors and administrators presents significant challenges at the home institution. Extra teaching responsibilities fall onto the colleagues who remain behind, and a wide range of develop-

ment and research projects are often handed off to less-experienced and less-qualified staff.

Meanwhile, the movement of individuals from one university to another or out of higher education altogether is pervasive throughout Ethiopia. Staff turnover takes place at all levels, driven by the desire to improve earnings and to move from rural toward urban areas. Constant staff turnover wreaks havoc on an institution's capacity to operate efficiently and to manage long-term planning and development.

LONG-TERM PLANNING VS. SHORT-TERM ACTION

What are the alternatives to rapid growth without the corresponding infrastructure, staff, or resources? In 1999 less than 1 percent of the age cohort was enrolled in higher education. If the Ethiopian government had decided to "build the house before moving in" for a decade or more the country might not have achieved much progress in expanding access. Instead, the government has pushed forward, putting pressure on university leaders and instructors to "catch up" as they can while providing larger numbers of young Ethiopians with opportunities for further study.

Today 3 percent of the age cohort in Ethiopia is now enrolled in higher education, according to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) data. Although far short of international levels, Ethiopia has achieved a rapid 300 percent rise in enrollment, and the government will continue to push for greater gains. The question is whether the universities respond to enrollment gains with relevant resources and personnel.

This period has proven to be an exciting time for Ethiopia's higher education system, but "growing pains" are evident and will continue, given such rapid expansion. At this critical stage, where much has already been accomplished, quality assurance and a commitment to appropriate and sustained infrastructure must rise to the top of the national agenda. ■

Enhancing Retention and Success in South Africa

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Internationally, one of the key challenges facing higher education institutions is to match expanding enrollments and more diversified student bodies with enhanced retention and success rates. Nowhere is this imperative more pressing and topical than in South Africa, for a number of reasons. First, the

majority of its students are severely underprepared for higher learning. This is mainly the consequence of the ongoing legacy of apartheid and the predominantly substandard primary and secondary education system in South Africa. After 15 years of democratic rule, the postapartheid government has been unable to rectify these inequalities and inefficiencies significantly. Most students emanate from disadvantaged backgrounds and face challenging socioeconomic and financial circumstances that, in combination, threaten student retention and success. While the participation of black South African students has expanded dramatically over the past two decades, no corresponding increase in black faculty and staff and no meaningful shift in institutional cultures have been evident.

As a result, many black students report experiences of alienation within the prevailing Eurocentric cultures and practices in historically white institutions. This, in part, has contributed toward particularly poor retention, success, and graduation rates among black students. A recent self-made video by white extremist students at the conservative University of the Free State, in which they purposefully humiliated black cleaning staff with the intention of demeaning the process of racial integration, highlighted the persistence of racism in the South African higher education institutions. The video precipitated national outrage and led to the appointment of a commission by the Ministry of Education to investigate both the overt and subtle manifestations of this problem and to propose recommendations. This event has focused fresh attention on the barriers experienced by black students as a result of insufficient transformation in South African institutions of higher education. Fourth, South Africa has been experiencing an ongoing high-level skills shortage, which continues to obstruct growth and development. Increasing participation, retention, and graduation rates is therefore a top priority, particularly because of the enormous impact of HIV/AIDS on student retention and in the workplace and as South Africa enjoys notoriety in having among the highest prevalence rates in the world.

QUANTIFYING THE PROBLEM

A recent national study commissioned by the Council on Higher Education revealed the extent of the retention and success challenge in South Africa. The sobering reality is that only 30 percent of South Africa's 2000 first-time entering student cohort had graduated within five years, with a further 14 percent still registered. This meant that well over half the cohort, 56 percent, had dropped out. Within these aggregate figures, wide variation among institutional types was evident—particularly so between contact and distance institutions, between the academic universities and the vocational technikons, and between historically advantaged and disadvantaged institutions. The five-year graduation rate ranged from 50 percent at contact universities, to 32 percent at contact technikons, to 14 percent at the country's largest university—the distance education University of South Africa (Unisa)—and to a disturbingly low 2 percent at the distance education Technikon South

Africa. Dropout rates also varied widely from 85 percent at Technikon South Africa to 59 percent at Unisa, 58 percent at contact technikons, and 38 percent at contact universities. Due to their sheer size, Unisa's and Technikon South Africa's poor graduation and retention rates had an enormously negative impact on aggregate figures.

THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

With this background in mind, it is not surprising that government has exerted strong pressure to improve retention and success rates and that institutions continue to carry the burden of large-scale academic development programs aimed at rectifying the effects of poor schooling. The pressure to improve is particularly strongly felt at the new Unisa, which as part of a major government-driven restructuring of the institutional

On the student's side, such transformation entails developing the personal attributes, skills, and knowledge required to master the demands and expectations of higher learning while simultaneously managing the many and often conflicting nonacademic life circumstances that impact retention and success.

landscape merged with Technikon South Africa and another small distance education provider to become one of the world's largest megauniversities. With approximately 260,000 students, Unisa now constitutes around a third of total South African enrollments. Offering open access to a mix of academic and vocational programs and catering for a large number of occasional, nondegree students, Unisa plays a major role in national and continental human-resource development and in providing for labor market needs and opportunities for formative education. Given its enormous size, the university absorbs a high proportion of government subsidy. As this is weighted toward outputs, the institution also faces compelling financial reasons to address this challenge effectively.

The issue facing Unisa is particularly daunting. The vast majority of its enrollments comprise nontraditional, part-time students with an average age of 31 years. In addition, the rapid increases in enrollments over the past few years have severely strained Unisa's operational systems. This has resulted, at times, in service-delivery problems such as the late distribution of study materials, which reduces tuition time. Internally conducted cohort case studies of three large commerce and law undergraduate programs indicated very low 10-year graduation rates that ranged from 14 percent to 30 percent. Interestingly, the time-to-completion of students who did graduate was within the expected minimum time for these qualifications, based on average course loads of just under half full-time equiva-

lents. These findings suggest that time-to-completion was satisfactory and that, consequently, reducing the inordinately high dropout rates of around 50 to 70 percent constitutes the major challenge to enhancing success.

EMERGING STRATEGIES

For these reasons, improving retention and success at Unisa has been foregrounded as a strategic priority, and a coordinated effort in this regard has been undertaken. This plan involves developing a framework to manage this challenge and a strategy for implementation. The first step was the development of a conceptual model identifying all factors impacting on student retention and success in the Unisa context. To this end, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken, covering numerous student retention models from the 1970s onward and focusing on a number of theoretical perspectives: sociological, anthropological, social-critical, and psychological. Drawing from these, the model incorporated a number of key constructs and explains retention and success in the Unisa context with a sufficient fit between students and institutional attributes, expectations, and performance at each step of the student's journey through higher education. Sufficient fit arises from mutual knowledge and coresponsibility for meaningful change. On the student's side, such transformation entails developing the personal attributes, skills, and knowledge required to master the demands and expectations of higher learning while simultaneously managing the many and often conflicting nonacademic life circumstances that impact retention and success. On the institutional side, transformation entails configuring and improving all academic, nonacademic, and operational services to meet specificities of students' lived experiences. Thus, the more that is known about students' life

and learning circumstances, the more innovatively the institution can design and deliver effective academic and nonacademic services and support. Conversely, the more informed a student is on the rigors and demands of tertiary education and the support services available, the more chance exists of uptake and success.

The required quantitative and qualitative data are being gathered through the Unisa student-tracking system. This includes the innovative use of information and communications technologies and data capturing instruments such as mandatory student profiles and online surveys, structured journal writing, blogs, and social networking tools to capture relevant ongoing life and learning experiences. Unisa's student portal is used by approximately 190,000 students. This provides a goldmine of opportunities for particularly rich quantitative and qualitative data gathering, data mining, and statistical and analytic modeling to determine and predict factors shaping success. On the basis of these predictions, proactive supportive interventions are being designed and implemented, again through innovatively using information and communications technologies, in order to reduce the risk of dropout and failure. In these ways, serious efforts are being undertaken to configure Unisa's academic and nonacademic services and support to effectively address the complex learning and life circumstances of its heterogeneous student population. While not yet evaluated, the full impact of these initiatives is anticipated to help enhancing South Africa's overall retention, success, and graduation rates—not only through Unisa's performance in this regard but also through providing practices that are replicable and adaptable in other institutional contexts.

New Publications

Andreade, Maureen S., and Norman W. Evans, eds. *International Students: Strengthening a Critical Resource*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009. 301 pp. (hb). ISBN 978-1-60709-175-2. Web site: www.rowmaneducation.com.

A practical guide to serving international students, this book provides case studies and broader analyses. Written mainly for an American audience, the topics include recruitment of international students, campus orientation, English-language programs, social support for international students, intercultural adjustment, and immigration and legal issues.

Bassett, Roberta Malee, and Alma Maldonado-Maldonado, eds. *International*

Organizations and Higher Education Policy: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally? New York: Routledge, 2009. 312 pp. \$160 (hb). ISBN 978-0-415-99043-1. Web site: www.routledge.com.

The editors of this volume argue that the role of international and regional organizations on higher education worldwide is increasingly important. These organizations help set both international and national policy agendas, sponsor research, shape debate, and link policymakers and researchers worldwide. This volume examines the role of such key players as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Regional analyses are provided for Asia (with a case study of China), Europe, Africa, and

Latin America. A final section examines international assistance to higher education institutions in developing countries.

Bowen, William G., Matthew M. Chignos, and Michael S. McPherson. *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009. 389 pp. (hb). \$27.95. ISBN 978-0-691-13748-3. Web site: www.press.princeton.edu.

Based on a careful study of 21 flagship public universities and four statewide systems, this book explores retention and graduate rates for undergraduates. The authors look at parental education, family income, high school grades, and other key variables. Among the findings are that students from minority backgrounds and from poor families have lower graduate rates and only 30 percent of students in the 8th grade will obtain a BA

degree by age 26. Although limited in scope, this study is one of the most extensive analyses of retention and completion ever undertaken, and it examines a topic of growing importance in the United States and internationally.

King, Roger. *Governing Universities Globally: Organizations, Regulation, and Rankings*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2009. 235 pp. \$115 (hb). ISBN 978-1-84720-739-5. Web site: www.e-elgar.com.

The basic argument of this book is that universities worldwide are increasingly subject to what the author calls global governance—pressure from a globalized economic system,

regional arrangements such as the OECD and the European Union, and a growing nexus of quality-assurance mechanisms, among others. Themes discussed include transnational governance such as the OECD, the impact of rankings, growing competition among academic institutions and systems, the world-class university model, and others. The author sees a kind of academic convergence in this new global framework.

Meek, V. Lynn, Ulrich Teichler, and Mary-Louise Kearney, eds. *Higher Education, Research and Innovation: Changing Dynamics*. Kassel, Germany: International Center for Higher Education Research, 2009, 240 pp.

(pb). ISBN 978-3-934377-10-3. Electronic version available from http://www.uni-kassel.de/incher/v_pub/UNESCO_RR_09.pdf.

This volume reviews the work of the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research, and Knowledge. Among the themes discussed are changing academic work, national research systems, policy dynamics of higher education research, and measuring R&D in developing countries. The future directions for higher education policy research is also discussed.

News of the Center

From the beginning of 2010, *International Higher Education* will be published in a Russian edition, sponsored by Independent Kazakhstan Quality Assurance Agency in Education. In addition, the *Deutsche Universitätszeitung*, the main higher education publication in Germany, will distribute *IHE* in English to its readers.

Center director Philip Altbach and research associate Liz Reisberg attended the World-Class University conference in Shanghai in early November. Altbach delivered a keynote talk on “The Past, Present, and Future of Research Universities.” There was also a working session of the research university study group that is cosponsored by CIHE and the World Bank. The project, which will result in a book of case studies of research universities, is coordinated by Philip Altbach and Jamil Salmi of the World Bank. Altbach also participated in the advisory committee of the Graduate School of Education at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. In December, Philip Altbach visited Moscow at the invitation of the New Economic School, which sponsored a round table on higher education development in Russia. He also met with colleagues at the Higher School of Economics to continue the collaboration with HSE and CIHE on research concerning academic remuneration,

and he gave a talk at the Peoples Friendship University.

In October, the Center hosted a two-day seminar for 33 professors and administrators from Brazil. The delegation was coordinated on the Brazilian side by Fabio José Garcia dos Reis, the Director of Operations at the Centro Universitário Salesiano de São Paulo. In November, the Center welcomed a delegation of 14 high-level administrators from Vietnam National University in Hanoi for a half-day seminar and site visit.

Research associate Laura Rumbley participated in the annual conference of the European Association for International Education in Madrid, Spain, where she presented at a roundtable session on research in international education. Research assistant Kara Godwin presented a paper on international liberal arts at the Association for the Study of Higher Education conference in Vancouver, Canada. In October, Liz Reisberg participated in strategic planning in Lima with members of the new commission responsible for developing a quality assurance scheme for higher education in Peru. Philip Altbach has organized a panel on global higher education trends for the Comparative and International Education Society annual conference in Chicago in March. He will receive the Lifetime Achievement award of the Higher Education Special Interest Group of the CIES as well.

BC_CIHE on Twitter

We have expanded CIHE's Web presence by including Twitter. Now, in addition to our Web site and Facebook page, we are tweeting. Twitter provides different kind of forum for staff at CIHE to post information and commentary.

Recent tweets include commentary from the Third International Conference on World-Class Universities in Shanghai, news about activities of CIHE, and responses to items in the news. We hope you will consider “following” us!

THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION (CIHE)

The Boston College Center for International Higher Education brings an international consciousness to the analysis of higher education. We believe that an international perspective will contribute to enlightened policy and practice. To serve this goal, the Center publishes the *International Higher Education* quarterly newsletter, a book series, and other publications; sponsors conferences; and welcomes visiting scholars. We have a special concern for academic institutions in the Jesuit tradition worldwide and, more broadly, with Catholic universities.

The Center promotes dialogue and cooperation among academic institutions throughout the world. We believe that the future depends on effective collaboration and the creation of an international community focused on the improvement of higher education in the public interest.

CIHE WEB SITE

The different sections of the Center Web site support the work of scholars and professionals in international higher education, with links to key resources in the field. All issues of *International Higher Education* are available online, with a searchable archive. In addition, the International Higher Education Clearinghouse (IHEC) is a source of articles,

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reports, trends, databases, online newsletters, announcements of upcoming international conferences, links to professional associations, and resources on developments in the Bologna Process and the GATS. The Higher Education Corruption Monitor provides information from sources around the world, including a selection of news articles, a bibliography, and links to other agencies. The International Network for Higher Education in Africa (INHEA), is an information clearinghouse on research, development, and advocacy activities related to postsecondary education in Africa.

THE PROGRAM IN HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE LYNCH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, BOSTON COLLEGE

The Center is closely related to the graduate program in higher education at Boston College. The program offers master's and doctoral degrees that feature a social science-based approach to the study of higher education. The Administrative Fellows initiative provides financial assistance as well as work experience in a variety of administrative settings. Specializations are offered in higher education administration, student affairs and development, and international education. For additional information, please contact Dr. Karen Arnold (arnoldk@bc.edu) or visit our Web site: <http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/>.

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