New Models in Transcultural Learning Institutions and Curricula

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Introduction

This research examines driving issues forcing change in international higher education, changes institutions might adopt to adapt to those drivers, new academic policies, and concludes with consideration of the promise and peril the future might hold. The interrelated issues of governance, funding, faculty, technologies, curriculum, and so on, are interwoven throughout section headings, rather than treated as distinct and isolated issues.

Adapting to and Adopting Change

Adaptation to change may be considered a response to realities imposed by outside environmental forces. Very little choice is involved in adaptation itself; we either adapt, or we cease to be players. We may have freedom of choice in how we adapt (what we choose to adopt), but we are not free from choice itself.

Global Conditions

A World Bank study determined that the ability to generate quality knowledge within institutions of higher education is increasingly critical to national competitiveness in the global marketplace, which poses a serious challenge to nations in the developing world (Task force, 2000). For the last quarter of a century, many governments and donor organizations have assigned a relatively low priority to developing higher education opportunities through international assistance programs, likely grounded in a “narrow” and “misleading analysis” that “public investment in universities and colleges brings

meager returns compared to investment in primary and secondary schools, and that higher education magnifies income inequality" (p. 1).

> As a result, developing countries' higher education systems are under great strain. They are chronically underfunded, but face escalating demand. Faculties are often under-qualified, poorly motivated, and poorly rewarded. Students are badly taught and curricula under-developed. Developed countries, meanwhile, are constantly raising the stakes. Quite simply, many developing countries will need to work much harder just to maintain their position, let alone to catch up. (Task force, 2000, p. 1)

More recent thinking on the values of tertiary education has determined that higher learning is vital in developing national productivity and the ability to compete globally (The World Bank, 2002). Higher education can support economic growth and poverty reduction through such contributions as (a) training a qualified work force including scientists, teachers, capable business and government leaders; (b) conducting research and generating new knowledge; and (c) adapting stores of global knowledge for local use. "Tertiary education institutions are unique in their ability to integrate and create synergy among these three dimensions" (pp. 4-5).

Altbach (2004c) observed that higher education is now in a new era of power and influence, where the push for market-driven profits has surpassed politics and ideologies in the realms of international relations. Rather than governments and armies, it is multinational corporations, media conglomerates, and even universities that serve as the neocolonists seeking to dominate in the global marketplace (p. 6). About 2 million students are attracted to the lure of universities outside of their own countries, and that number is projected to increase to 8 million by 2025, and national governments are taking a greater interest both in attracting international students as well as sending their own students abroad to make them more competitive in the global economy (Altbach, 2004b, p. 1).

Millions of international students will continue to enroll in American institutions as the size and diversity of the United States makes it especially attractive, even though other nations are becoming more competitive in attracting cross-border enrollments (p. 4). In the academic year 1999-2000, it was estimated that more than 500,000 international students and their dependents in the United States contributed some $12 billion to the U.S. economy (ACE, 2002, p. 28). The United States attracts more foreign students to its universities and colleges than its three largest competitors of the U.K., Germany, and France combined; other competitive nations vigorously recruiting international students include Australia and New Zealand (Altbach, 2004b, p. 2).

Among the top priorities for American and other academic leaders around the world will be to meet the increasing local demand for higher education, as well as compete in the globally competitive marketplace for a greater share of international students (ACE, 2002). In many countries, the capacity to meet the demand for postsecondary education falls far short of the need (Altbach, 2004b). More than half of the world's postsecondary students live in the poorer southern nations of the developing are, and are increasingly looking to the richer countries of the north for educational opportunity (p. 1). The proportion of students studying outside of their home countries will likely expand as "academic systems become more similar and academic degrees more widely accepted internationally, as immigration rules are tailored to people with high skill levels, and as universities themselves are more open to hiring the best talent worldwide" (Altbach, 2004c, p. 9).

The United States, however, has become less appealing to international students, even as the demand for international education is climbing. According to a

2004 survey conducted by the Council of Graduate Schools, the number of international students applying to study in the United States has dropped dramatically, in large part due to delays in processing visa applications, which has prompted warnings of a reverse brain drain where gifted scientists and researchers may select more welcoming countries (Foreign students decline, 2004, p. 4). International students from developing nations, especially from Islamic countries, have reported disrespectful treatment from U.S. officials, and the word has spread worldwide (Altbach, 2004b). “Coming to study in the United States has become an obstacle course, and prospective students abroad are increasingly leery of stringent, changing, arbitrary, and sometimes inconsistent government regulations regarding visas, reporting to government agencies, and the like” (p. 5).

American institutions may find themselves at a further disadvantage as “expanding needs, rising costs, and declining investments in international and foreign language training have led the United States to a dangerous shortfall of individuals with global competence” – a necessity not only for appealing educational programs, but to produce a knowledge of languages and cultures for a “sufficient and diverse pool of American students to meet the needs of government agencies, the private sector, and education itself” in a globalized environment (ACE, 2002, p. 7). American students have also been attracted to studies abroad, providing at least a nominal recognition of the need for a global awareness; however, the tiny proportion of American undergraduates studying abroad is only at .02 percent (Altbach, 2004b, p. 6).

The American Council on Education has warned that the success of Americans involved in international endeavors including education and business will depend on the

global competence of our people (ACE, 2002). “Global competence is a broad term the ranges from the in-depth knowledge required for interpreting information affecting national security, to the skills and understanding that foster improved relations with all regions of the world” (p. 7). Global competence is demonstrated by such abilities as proficiency in a foreign language, and the ability to function effectively when relating to other cultural environments and value systems (p. 7). Undeveloped global competency is a shortcoming analysts have found in many American students and institutions. Though Americans may be well grounded in the principles of free-markets and the dynamics international competition, if American academic leaders and students are not prepared to improve their understanding of other cultures and develop the “skills to live in a global economy, they are going to have a hard time” (Adam, 2003, p. 4).

The World Bank (2002) has called on all nations to find ways to meet the needs of higher education as a means not only to promote the sciences, but to develop worldwide social benefits as well. “Tertiary education facilitates nation building by promoting greater social cohesion, trust in social institutions, democratic participation and open debate, and appreciation of diversity and gender, ethnicity, religion, and social class” (p. xxi).

Fading Funding

Accompanying the increased global pressures on American higher education is the rise of market forces pushing institutions to compete at a time when academia is suffering from drastically reduced funding, with little hope for better times in the near future (Smith, 2004). Over a two-year period, California cut funds for higher education

by 9.6 percent with more cuts to come, while Colorado's funds were cut by 21.8 percent and Massachusetts's by 23 percent (p. 33).

To compensate for the cuts, many colleges and universities are raising their tuition rate, which has predictably imposed further hardships on lower-income students (Reed & Szymanksi, 2004). Over a period of decades, the funding of higher education has continued to shift from state governments to students and their families (Smith, 2004). Such a rise in costs may not only prevent needy students from gaining access to higher learning, but may also further a transfer of money to already wealthy families:

> As tuition rises, colleges are offering more merit-based aid, which tends to benefit wealthier families. As tuition rises, students and their families are taking on huge loan debt, which transfers money to financial and credit-card companies. As tuition rises, more pressure is put on financially strapped states and public colleges to fulfill the push to privatize public services, including higher education. (Reed & Szymanksi, 2004, p. 40)

Lower-income students are finding themselves increasingly reliant on debt rather than grants to finance their education, which presents further problems for lower income families. Over the course of 20 years starting in 1982, the percentage of federal financial aid in the form of grants dropped from over 50 percent, to only 40 percent in 2002-03. "Most federal financial aid now comes in the form of loans, and research suggests that students from lower-income families are less willing than other students to take on large loan burdens to finance their higher education" (Bradley, 2004, p. 30). Heller (2004) warned that a growing consideration of merit over need in awarding financial aid poses further complications for college access.

> Research on tuition prices and financial aid over the past three decades has consistently found that, short of keeping tuition prices as low as possible, financial aid targeted at needy students is the best policy for increasing college access among underrepresented students. Merit scholarships, whether provided by states or institutions, are awarded disproportionately to students from groups that already

> have the highest college participation rates in the nation – white, Asian-American, and upper-income students. (Heller, 2004, p. 38)

Faculty Affairs

Another fundamental change in the new academic environment, and also directly related to current financial circumstances, is the rapidly declining proportion of faculty who are appointed to tenured positions (AAUP, 2003). This decrease in the protections of tenure may threaten the academic freedom so fundamental to the mission of higher education, since "faculty tenure is the only secure protection for academic freedom in teaching, research, and service" (p. 1).

Some organizations – in particular those who represent full-time and tenured educators – argue that as tenured faculty are replaced, the quality and credibility of higher education may suffer. The American Federation of Teachers has assumed the position that while non-tenured part-time and adjunct instructors may "teach with distinction and make major contributions to the institutions they serve," what creates the problem is their "exploited status, which requires them to rise above adverse and unreasonable circumstances in order to deliver quality education" (AFT, 2002, p. 8).

The American Association of University Professors has cited a number of ways where the increase in adjunct or "contingent" faculty over the last decade has created "systemic problems for higher education," including how student learning has been diminished by less opportunity for contact with tenured faculty "whose expertise in their field in effectiveness as teachers have been validated by peer review"; a weakened faculty governance caused by higher turnover and frequent exclusion of contingent

faculty from governance; and inequities among colleagues which undermine the "collegial atmosphere of academic institutions and hamper the effectiveness of academic decision making" (AAUP, 2003, p. 4). The over-reliance on adjunct faculty might pose additional threats, as parts of the academic whole are "divided and assigned piecemeal to instructors, lecturers, graduate students, specialists, researchers, and even administrators" (p. 4).

AAUP president Jane Buck recently referred to the "exploitation of contingent faculty and the continuing attacks on tenure" as a challenge to the quality of American education (Buck wins, 2004, p. 17). The theme of worker exploitation has been advanced as well by the American Federation of teachers, in that the "compensation, benefits and professional support accorded to part-time/adjunct faculty are woefully inadequate," with average pay so low that universities and colleges are reasonably called "academic sweatshops" (AFT, 2002, p. 7). Other analysts have found that "to be an adjunct teacher means to struggle with feelings of resentment, abjection, anger, and failure brought on by one's job" (Teeuwen & Hantke, 2003, p. 2).

Other analysts, including an adjunct instructor and columnist for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, have suggested that the market forces of the new academic environment require that faculty in higher education need to adjust their thinking for the times:

> Many in the adjunct community are calling for "change" when, in fact, they are calling for things to go back to the way they were. They want to return to an earlier era when most everyone in academics had a fulltime job, retirement and health insurance benefits, and an opportunity to earn tenure. Granted, that would be nice. But it's not likely to happen. …Only those who can adapt to the new situation and work within its new reality will flourish, while those who nostalgically operate within the past will fail. (Carroll, 2004, p. 22)

Hess (2004) concluded that an entrepreneurial outlook on the new marketplace of higher education logically sees contingent faculty as players in the free market purchase of academic labor. This attitude may lead to a "trivialization of contingent academic labor and the dismissal of any collective approaches to changing its conditions" (p. 38). Given the heated rhetoric, the threats to academic quality, the involvement of representative unions, the fiscal realities, and the administrative pressures to balance all the forces, the reforms of faculty status within the academy is sure to be a hot issue into the years to come.

Evolving Policies

To cope with the adaptive pressures and forces in academia, committed leaders and guardians will need to consider new policies to ensure a continued successful evolution of the practices and purposes of higher education. Some of the possible policy considerations below include new modes of governance, faculty relations, and fiscal management.

New Modes of Governance

As considered above in the Breadth component, one of the largest problems facing effective management in the new academic environment is finding new ways of engaging faculty in governance, while keeping the greater interests of the organization moving ahead in a highly charged and competitive marketplace (page 19). The transformational changes needed throughout higher education to adapt to the new market forces will require institutional leaders articulating a clear vision

and applying a focused allocation of resources (page 36). A new governance model will need to employ effective methods of coping with the mundane realities of the marketplace, while not neglecting the invaluable greater calling of higher education.

The World Bank has concluded that, on its own, the market will not likely devise such a system that considers many academic issues beyond bottom-line costs and benefits (Task force, 2000). It is a given that "markets require profit and this can crowd out important educational duties and opportunities"; and to counter this governments will need to develop a new protective role serving as benevolent "supervisors of higher education, rather than directors … establishing the parameters within which success can be achieved, while allowing specific solutions to emerge from the creativity of higher education professionals" (p. 2). Tertiary education governors and guardians cannot allow the tried and respected functions of academia to fail, along with some of the best hopes for educating "low-income and minority students, thereby increasing their employability, income prospects, and social mobility and decreasing income inequality" around the world (The World Bank, 2002, p. 5). Beyond serving the individual needs of students, higher education at its best may also serve by contributing to the "social capital necessary for constructing healthy civil societies and socially cohesive cultures, achieving good governance, and building democratic political systems" (p. 5).

New modes of governance will need to ensure that postsecondary education fulfills one of its most important missions of the day, which is providing students with a greater global understanding (Cooper, 2003). Those involved in guiding the curricula and pedagogy of academic institutions will also need to have greater appreciation and

accommodation of cultural differences, as higher education becomes a global agent for change – while considering that other nations may not necessarily share the American perspective on mixing profit motives with academic aspirations (Guri-Rosenblit, 2001).

The World Bank recommended a number of purposes and responsibilities that governors of higher education should consider as they lead the academy through its transformational change. Some of the main messages include:

- Social and economic progress is achieved principally through the advancement and application of knowledge.
- Tertiary education is responsible for the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge and for building technical and professional capacity.
- Developing and transition countries are at risk of being further marginalized in a highly competitive world economy because their tertiary education systems are not adequately prepared to capitalize on the creation and use of knowledge.
- The state has a responsibility to put in place an enabling framework that encourages tertiary education institutions to be more innovative and responsive to the needs of a globally competitive knowledge economy and the changing labor market requirements for advanced human capital. (World Bank, 2002, p. 6)

New Faculty Policies

Despite catastrophic predictions and territorial warfare, it is a given that throughout American higher education institutions have come to rely increasingly on part-time and fulltime non-tenure track faculty (Ehrenberg & Rizzo, 2004). In the academic year 2001-02, more than 50 percent of newly hired fulltime faculty was off the tenure track (p. 31). As critics observe, fewer tenured faculty may mean “fewer people to design, guide, and implement inspired, inventive, thought-provoking liberal arts curricula,” which could then fall to the duty of administrators “whose primary concern is increasingly profitability” (Glaros, 2004, p. 44). Furthermore, by relying on an “exploited class of contingent and under-supported faculty” (Smith, 2004, p. 35), it may well be that

"the new university also teaches its students about the benefits and logic of inequality" (Hess, 2004, p. 41). The problems of equity are likely to deepen, as online courses become mainstream and "just another part of a faculty member's workload" at reduced levels of compensation (Carnevale, 2004a, p. 1).

The American Association of University Professors, and the American Federation of Teachers have staked out their positions, with recommendations including that the appointment of faculty to contingent positions should resemble the hiring and evaluation process for tenure track faculty; adjunct faculty should be paid at a rate and benefit compensation prorated to be comparable to a fulltime position; and no more than 15 percent of an institution's total instruction should be provided by non-tenure faculty (AAUP, 2003, pp. 6-8; AFT, 2002, p. 5). In other words, any economic benefit and competitive advantage in hiring adjuncts should be denied to administrators, a position hardly apt to win administration's favor in the new educational marketplace.

These unfortunate financial circumstances may be falling at the worst possible time, when higher education is called upon to serve greater and more urgent demands than ever. Yet higher education as a sector is hardly alone in the coping with challenges of adjusting to a global environment, and a sympathetic public outcry over the injustices in academia is unlikely. Rather than wage war between each other, administrators and faculty will need to achieve a common understanding in the face of environmental realities, and seek solutions with an aim of fairness and mutual consideration.

New Financial Policies

Since many of the drivers in the new educational environment are directly tied to financially based market forces, the standard fiscal foundations of the traditional model may

well need revision. Some old-school financial decisions have proven problematic. For example, many institution administrators attempted to compete for students through a major investment in offerings such as recreational facilities, remodeled dormitories, and state-of-the-art computer technology (AAUP, 2003). However, these student inducements required cuts in other areas of the instructional budget, which was accomplished by hiring fewer tenure-track faculty and more contingent faculty. "While this choice may have improved the infrastructure on many campuses, it has undoubtedly imposed the cost on the quality of instruction" (pp. 3-4).

Blaney (2004) suggested that the time might be right to consider two major changes in the support structure for colleges – potentially saving hundred millions of dollars as well as increasing access for students – through a shift in the allocation of government funds and a tiered tuition rate.

> First, a greater proportion of state money for higher education should go directly to students, allowing them to choose where they want to enroll. Right now, only a relatively small percentage of public funds goes to individuals directly, rather than to institutions. Secondly, tuition at state institutions should be indexed to income, similar to a graduated income tax, so that wealthy families would cover more of the cost directly. (Blaney, 2004, p. 1)

Administrators may also find it worthwhile to allocate greater sums to attracting international students and providing better programs to serve them. International education is a big business, with foreign students contributing more than $12 billion each year to the U.S. economy (Altbach, 2004b). Not only are international students a financial asset to the host country, they are valuable contributors to the host's "global competitiveness by swelling the numbers of highly trained people in key disciplines. In some graduate specialties such as engineering, computer sciences, and a few others, foreign students constitute a majority of students at the doctoral level" (Altbach, 2004b, p. 2). There are

some negative repercussions to an increase in international studies, however, since there is frequently a net drain of revenue from the home countries as the students spend their tuition funds in the host country – a fact especially detrimental to developing nations (Altbach, 2004c). In addition, the returning students carry back home elements of a foreign academic culture, which may have little relevance to their own national needs (p. 9).

Given the global benefits and demand for increased access to higher education, richer nations and donor organizations may need to ensure that funds are available in poorer nations to support educational opportunities. The World Bank (2002) found that very few nations have financial programs reaching more than 10% of the student population, and the handful of exceptions are richer nations including Australia, Canada, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Promise and Peril

The future of higher education around the world has much riding on it, both in terms of peril in a critical mission unfilled, as well as the potential promise of a job done right. Success or failure may be determined by how well the guardians of academia meet the looming challenges of applying new technologies and providing access to universal learning. Following are some examples of the best and worst case scenarios of what may lie ahead in the immediate years to come.

The Peril

Ironically – in this age of instant rich media communications with exponentially multiplying bandwidth and dimensions, when nearly the entire knowledge base of human experience is digitalized and accessible – the dangers of

isolation and division between peoples are perhaps higher than ever. Furthermore, if the global network connections that do form simply serve a purpose of homogenization, at a cultural cost of diversity and the survival protections that diversity provides, society may be the worse for it.

The World Bank (2002) found it a favorable development as new types of tertiary institutions take advantage of new education delivery opportunities provided by evolving technologies, but warns however that the dangers of digital divides within and between nations could counter the benefits. Most of the academic databases on the Internet are dominated by major universities in the northern countries, with content largely in English, which affects access and usage from other countries, particularly the poorer southern nations (Altbach, 2004c). “Academic institutions and countries unable to pay for access to these information sources find it difficult to participate fully in the networks,” a problem compounded by copyright and ownership restrictions that further limit access (p. 15). The transnational initiatives in higher education typically involve a south-to-north dynamic, “almost without exception dominated by the partner institution in the north – in terms of curriculum, orientation, and sometimes the teaching staff” (Altbach, 2004b, p. 8). Typically, the language of instruction is in English, even if that is not the language of the instructed country, and there is “often little effort to adapt offshore programs to the needs or traditions of the country in which the programs are offered – they are simply exported impact” (p. 8).

Academic institutions offering education to other nations may frequently be insensitive to the characteristics of a local culture and the students’ particular needs (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004). Some analysts are criticizing that universities

may offer abroad lower quality programs than are found on the home campus, and that the program content does not focus on local concerns, while the primary use of English as the language of instruction raises further questions "about cultural imperialism and homogenization. Developing countries would surely be ill-served if universities from the outside replaced local universities rather than supplemented them" (p. 28).

Though the United States may dominate the rest of the world in attracting international students, it has often failed to offer in return much interest in the rest of the world. The United States withdrew from UNESCO in 1984, depriving scientific communities and higher educators of "important opportunities to participate in potentially beneficial cultural, scientific, and educational reforms" (ACE, 2002, p. 20). American academia has never developed a national approach to international higher education, and the federal government has provided little support for it. "Whatever national policies do exist are negative – significant barriers have been erected in the name of national security that make it more difficult for foreign students and scholars to come to the United States," while other countries are expanding their international outreach with policies encouraging foreign students to attend their academic institutions (Altbach, 2004b, p. 11). Inexplicably, state governments which have traditionally been responsible for developing American higher education policy, have frequently been "uninterested in and even hostile to international students, despite the fact that those students bring significant amounts of money into local economies and provide needed help as low-paid teaching and research assistance in public universities" (p. 11).

Another counter-juxtaposition of circumstance is that the demand for international education is so high while at the same time teachers skilled with global competence are

so few (ACE, 2002). Universities and colleges lack sufficient foreign language and international studies faculty – especially in less common languages and nations – and faculty in professional disciplines such as "business, public health, law, and the environment, need greater international expertise. Lack of priority, rising costs, and dwindling funds from all sources have eroded higher education's capacity to produce the numbers and variety of experts needed" (p. 12).

> Global transformations has made it imperative that the United States have citizens with a broad set of international skills and crosscultural understanding, and far more international experts on a greater variety of world regions and issues. Meeting these needs will take a generation of education and reform. The federal government must act now. The administration and the Congress must take a leadership role in declaring a national policy on international education, raise the level of awareness as to the importance of global competence to U.S. national interest, and stimulate concerted nationwide efforts to address these challenges. (ACE, 2002, p. 23)

Higher educators also must do more to assure that new pedagogical technologies are effectively applied and fairly distributed, or the promising tools may be discarded and further innovation discouraged. Zemsky and Massy (2004) found that in general, instructors are only using technology to simplify tasks, not to change how they fundamentally teach their subjects. "They readily translate lecture notes into PowerPoint presentations. They use course-management tools like Blackboard and WebCT to distribute class materials, grades, and assignments. But the materials are simply scanned, and the assignments neither look nor feel different" (p. 3). Even when textbook publishers make applied technologies available for faculty, such as interactive CDs or course websites, the instructors typically do not assign them (p. 3).

Lorensten (2001) observed that the successful implementation of new communication technologies is a complex process, and universities need to

carefully study and share successful experiences. When this responsibility goes unfulfilled, the gap between those who effectively use the technologies and those who do not will "grow even greater. The international community cannot live with this type of situation," when a global balance requires common access to the resources of knowledge and technology (p. 521).

The Promise

The promise of the new educational environment was stated simply and eloquently more than 20 years ago in the *A Nation At Risk* report prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education: "All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1). The world now has the ability to fulfill that prescient vision through efficient and effective technological tools, provided world leaders find the will and the means to make it so.

In the United States, most Americans have come to believe that a college education is now as important as a high school diploma used to be for finding professional success (Reed & Szymanksi, 2004). As high school is seen to be a worthwhile investment deserving of public support and free access, the time may come when a free college education providing full access to all qualified aspirants is also seen as a social good.

> Current tuition and fees for all students now enrolled – full and part time – in public two- and four-year colleges and universities total a little more than $30 billion. Even if expanded access doubled enrollments, only $60 billion of public money would be required. This expense could easily be covered by closing some corporate tax loopholes, eliminating some tax cuts to the very wealthy, or taking a slice from the $400 billion defense budget. Making public education free is not only the right, rational, and

> just thing to do. It is also a goal that can be won in the foreseeable future. (Reed & Szymanksi, 2004, p. 43)

Distance learning technologies are also expanding higher educational opportunities to many previously excluded groups of people, both domestically and globally. Aspiring college students around the world may benefit from a new era of "transnational higher education, in which academic institutions from one country operate in another, academic programs are jointly offered by universities from different countries, and higher education is delivered through distance technologies" (Altbach, 2004b, p. 7). Though the initial pace may be slow and there are many administrative challenges to overcome, "on most campuses, money is being spent, smart classrooms are being built, and faculty members are experimenting with new ways of bringing electronically mediated learning into the classroom. Ultimately, the lure of learning anytime anywhere will prove irresistible" (Zemsky & Massy, 2004, p. 4).

Already majorities of academic leaders are expressing a belief that online education may prove equal or superior to face-to-face instruction, and will become even more so in the near years ahead (Allen & Seaman, 2003). Studies are finding that online communications in important ways may serve as a superior forum for scholarly and inclusive interaction.

> On the Internet, there is no race, no gender, no age, no infirmities—only minds: people talking to people. …Other people want more time to consider an idea and formulate their responses. Rather than speaking extemporaneously, they are often minimal contributors to real-time conversations. … When given a chance to think and then speak, as is the case with several forms of online conversation, these people experience a new freedom and level of participation. They can be heard clearly, and the power of their responses is often impressive. (Jonassen, Howland, Moore, & Marra, 2003, pp. 74-76)

Teachers at all levels of experience, especially newer instructors already comfortable with 21st century technologies, are effectively employing electronic teaching aids, both online and in traditional classrooms. Thoms (2001) found the tools and techniques of online learning may be employed to effectively engage and motivate adult learners by creating a climate of exploration and offering diverse options for accessing information. Woodbridge (2003) advised that instructors might apply new technologies in numerous ways to increase teaching and learning efficacy with integrated and engaging communication tools.

Along with the international expansion of distance learning programs, traditional universities and colleges are also finding the global marketplace is supporting the operation of satellite campuses in foreign nations. For example, Australian universities are joining with partners in Malaysia, South Africa, and Vietnam to offer offshore Australian degrees (Altbach, 2004b). “Governments see transnational education, like attracting foreign students, as a way to increase higher education’s revenues” (p. 8).

It may well be that profit incentives rather than social visions are what ultimately motivate governments and people to transcend their differences and strive for cooperative and peaceful interaction. Researchers are devoting studies to identify effective methods to ensure that international cross-cultural harmony may be better realized. Bruffee (2002) suggested three such principles: 1.) Recognize that “most cultural communities are nearly identical in many of the most rudimentary elements of social structure, needs, and desires.” 2.) Further recognize that “culturally diverse communities nested together in heterogeneous societies do share solid common ground.” And 3.) Find that “taking the common ground requires learning the intricacies and tact of re-negotiating membership

on one's own cultures and of finding new occasions to negotiate across the boundaries that divide cultural communities" (pp. 14-15).

Conceicao (2002) advised that social and culturally relevant adult education in cyberspace should include "self-awareness and knowledge of the learner's background, interests, and level of experience" (p. 44). Jongewaard (2001) identified six citizenship characteristics of transcultural universalism: cross-cultural adaptability, geographical global awareness, contextual global awareness, empathetic activism, shared values, and trans-cultural awareness. "Effective global citizens will have a working knowledge of these categories … Further, teachers trained in these areas will have the knowledge and skills to teach their own students about the universals that unite us all, despite our many differences" (p. 6). Macia (1999) found international instructors might increase their effectiveness by seeking out transcultural experiences and literary themes that resonate with students from diverse nations.

Perhaps among the most valuable aspects of the new potential in global higher education are the benefits gained from learning about world problems that transcend national boundaries (Tye, 2003). By such better understanding, humanity may best discover solutions that tap the "interconnectedness of systems – cultural, ecological, economic, political, and technological" (p. 1).

> Global education also involves learning to understand and appreciate our neighbors who have different cultural backgrounds from ours; to see the world through the eyes and minds of others; and to realize that other peoples of the world need and want much the same things. (p. 1)

Returning to the statement of promise, we are truly living in a time when no child need live in ignorance; no inquiring soul need go uninformed. The calling of our age is to engage the will to make it so. We must first advance through many challenging social,

political, and economic spheres. Each of these challenges may prove terminally problematic. The fiscal tyrannies of a competitive market may well deny the commodity of knowledge to those people living beyond the margins of a profitable business plan. Despotic governments may inhibit information flow to their peoples under the guise of national security. Though the greatest hurdle could well be within the social sphere: do we truly believe that universal education for its own sake is a worthy aim and a fundamental right, and are we willing to pay the costs?

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