

# The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities

**By Philip G. Altbach and Jane Knight**

*Philip G. Altbach is Monan professor of higher education and director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College. A former Fulbright scholar, he is currently the Distinguished Scholar Leader of the Fulbright Program's New Century Scholars Program. The author of Comparative Higher Education and Student Politics in America, Altbach is co-editor of American Higher Education in the 21st Century and former editor of The Review of Higher Education. He has held fellowships from the Japan Foundation for the Promotion of Science and from the German Academic Exchange Service.*

*Jane Knight focuses on the international dimension of higher education at the institutional, system, national, and international levels. She conducts regional comparative studies of international education—Latin America, Asia Pacific, North America, and Europe—with the Organization of Economic and Cultural Development (OECD) and the World Bank. Her policy research includes cross-border education, trade agreements, brain drain, and strategic alliances. An adjunct professor at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Knight is conducting research in Mexico as part of the National Centre for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CENEVAL). She is also an associate at the Center for Inter-American Studies and Programs at the Mexican Technological Autonomous Institute (ITAM).*

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The international activities of universities dramatically expanded in volume, scope, and complexity over the past two decades. These activities range from traditional study abroad programs allowing students to learn about other cultures to providing access to higher education in countries where local institutions cannot meet the demand. Other activities stress upgrading the international perspectives and skills of students, enhancing foreign language programs, and providing cross-cultural understanding.

Internationalization is often confused with globalization.<sup>1</sup> We define globalization as the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement. Global capital has, for the first time, invested heavily in knowledge industries worldwide, including higher education and advanced training. This invest-

ment reflects the emergence of the “knowledge society,” the rise of the service sector, and the dependence of many societies on knowledge products and highly educated personnel for economic growth.<sup>2</sup> These elements of globalization underlie our analysis.

The results of globalization include the integration of research, the use of English as the *lingua franca* for scientific communication, the growing international labor market for scholars and scientists, the growth of communications firms and of multinational and technology publishing, and the use of information technology (IT). IT facilitates communication, permits efficient storage, selection, and dissemination of knowledge, and allows providers to offer academic programs through e-learning.

This essay delineates academic programs, institutions, innovations, and practices created to cope with globalization and to reap its benefits. Globalization

may be unalterable, but internationalization involves many choices. Globalization tends to concentrate wealth, knowledge, and power in those already possessing these elements. International academic mobility similarly favors well-developed education systems and institutions, thereby compounding existing inequalities. Initiatives and programs, coming largely from the North, are focused on the South. Northern institutions and corporations own most knowledge, knowledge products, and IT infrastructure, though South-to-South activities are increasing, especially in Asia and Africa. Internationalization is a two-way street—students move largely from South to North, for example—and serves important needs in the developing world. But the North largely controls the process. We focus on cross-border movement of students and of higher education programs and institutions—big business for universities and other providers—the growing international market for academic and scientific personnel, curricular internationalization, and the commercialization of international higher education, especially the growing influence of the for-profit higher education sector.<sup>3</sup>

### THE FREE-TRADE CONTEXT

The contemporary emphasis on free trade stimulates international academic mobility. Current thinking sees international higher education as a commodity to be traded freely and as a private good, not a public responsibility. Commercial forces therefore have a legitimate or even a dominant place in higher education, which comes under the domain of the market.<sup>4</sup> The World Trade Organization (WTO) will provide a regulatory framework to encourage international trade in education and service-related industries as part of negotiating the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). GATS remains under negotiation, and individual countries may agree to some or all of its provisions. But GATS will, when WTO member countries implement the agreement, focus on facilitating academic mobility via:

- Cross-border supply. This mode may include distance education (e-learning), and franchising courses or degrees. It does not necessarily require the physical movement of the consumer or provider.
- Consumption abroad. The consumer moves to the country of the provider. This mode includes traditional student mobility.
- Commercial presence. The service provider establishes facilities in another country including

branch campuses and joint ventures with local institutions.

- Presence of natural persons. This mode includes persons, including professors and researchers, who travel temporarily to another country to provide educational services.<sup>5</sup>

### INTERNATIONALIZATION: MOTIVATIONS AND SOURCES

Understanding the most important stimuli for academic internationalization is a pre-requisite for our analysis.

**Profits.** Earning money is a key motive for all internationalization projects in the for-profit sector and for some traditional nonprofit universities with financial problems. For-profit higher education providers include Laureate (formerly Sylvan Learning Systems), and the Apollo Group (the present company of the University of Phoenix, now the largest private university in the U.S.). These providers entered the international market by establishing new institutions, purchasing existing institutions, and partnering with firms or educational institutions in other countries. Many countries also host new private universities with overseas links, some in the for-profit sector. Many universities use American, British, German, or other foreign curricula; many teach in English, and some are accredited in other countries.

Traditional nonprofit universities also entered the international market. Their main motivations for internationalization, notes a recent survey, are not financial. Instead, they wish to enhance research and knowledge capacity and to increase cultural understanding. Many universities are located in countries where governments cut public funding and encouraged international ventures—Australia and the United Kingdom are two examples. Most initiatives, including branch campuses, franchised degree programs, and partnerships with local institutions, are focused on developing and middle-income countries.

Many countries recruit international students to earn profits by charging high fees—including Australia, Canada, the U.K., and the U.S. International graduate students also provide research and teaching services for modest compensation. International students also spend significant amounts of money in the host countries—an estimated \$12 billion to the U.S. economy, for example.<sup>6</sup>

It is impossible to quantify the financial scope of academic internationalization. But the sums are large

because knowledge industries, especially higher education, often form a substantial part of the total economy. It is also difficult to calculate the impact of international activities on engaged academic institutions and firms, but again, the amount is large and growing rapidly.

**Access provision and demand absorption.** The proportion of young people demanding and obtaining access worldwide expanded dramatically with the advent of mass higher education. Demand is increasing rapidly even in countries still enrolling under 20 percent of the age group, such as India, China, and much of Africa. Many international higher education services—focused on profits—provide access to students in countries lacking the domestic capacity to meet the demand. Access can take many forms: branch campuses, franchised foreign academic programs or degrees, or independent institutions based on foreign academic models.

**Traditional internationalization.** Many universities have participated in international activities for decades, some for a century or more. Prestigious, selective U.S. colleges use international programs to provide an international and cross-cultural perspective for their students and to enhance their curricula. Campus-based internationalization initiatives include study abroad experiences, curriculum enrichment via international studies majors or area studies, strengthened foreign-language instruction, and sponsorship of foreign students to study on campus.<sup>7</sup> Traditional internationalization is rarely a profit-making activity, though it may enhance the competitiveness, prestige, and strategic alliances of the college.

**European internationalism.** European Union (E.U.) authorities actively pursued academic internationalization for more than two decades as part of the move to economic and political integration. At first, the E.U. promoted and lavishly funded programs such as ERASMUS that provided large numbers of E.U. university students with academic experiences outside their home country.<sup>8</sup> The scope of European regional integration expanded, and now the Bologna process harmonizes entire academic systems to assure compatible degree structures, transferable credits, and equal academic qualifications throughout the E.U. European internationalization focuses mainly on the countries of the E.U.—students are still encouraged to study abroad within the E.U.—though several non-E.U. member states have joined the Bologna process.

The E.U. is also expanding Europe's international programs, especially in Latin America and the Asia/Pacific regions. Current initiatives include regional and institutional linkages and scholarship programs.

**Developing-country internationalization.** Developing countries host a significant number of international students, though they produce a small minority of the worldwide student flow. Developing countries seek to attract foreign students to their universities to improve the quality and cultural composition of the student body, gain prestige, and earn income. India and the Philippines, for example, are significant host countries for students from other developing countries. India hosts more than 8,000 students from abroad, 95 percent from developing countries.<sup>9</sup> China, Malaysia, and India are developing strategies to attract students and to export educational programs and institutions.

**Individual internationalization.** Individuals make many key decisions concerning destinations and fields of study. Students, though constrained by immigration regulations, decide whether they will return home following their academic work or stay at home and enroll in the programs offered by foreign education providers. Most of the world's more than two million international students are self-funded, that is, they and their families pay for their own academic work. Students are therefore the largest source of funds for international education—not governments, academic institutions, or philanthropies.

## CROSS-BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION: GROWTH AREAS

International higher education initiatives exist in almost every country. But the developed countries—especially the large English-speaking nations and, to a lesser extent, the larger E.U. countries—provide most services. By any measure—such as flows of international students, franchisers of academic programs to foreign providers, international accreditors or quality guarantors, or controlling partners in “twinning” arrangements—these countries reap the main financial benefits and control most programs.

The “buying” countries are Asian and Latin American middle-income countries and, to a lesser extent, the poorer nations of the developing world that lack capacity to meet growing demand. Therefore, the largest markets are for “demand absorbing” programs that provide access to students who could not otherwise attend a postsecondary institution.

Government policies favoring particular ethnic groups over others may also influence demand in a few cases, such as Malaysia. The less prestigious end of the higher education system offers most demand-absorbing programs. Foreign providers—almost always aiming to earn a profit—may link up with local entrepreneurs or public or private academic institutions, or they may establish their own branch campuses.

Top European and American institutions have opened branch campuses at the invitations of Singapore and Qatar, and the University of Chicago established a business school in Spain.<sup>10</sup> Their degree programs may include study at the home campus or entirely offshore studies. The market for international higher education initiatives thus ranges from students who cannot obtain access at home and seek almost any means to study to carefully targeted elite students in small, high-quality programs.

Another part of the market: undergraduate students seeking an overseas academic or cultural experience. While predominantly an American phenomenon—175,000 U.S. students go to other countries—other industrialized countries also send significant numbers of students abroad, often via E.U. programs.

Another widespread phenomenon in industrialized nations—providing effective cross-cultural educational preparation for university students, such as internationalizing the curriculum—accompanies the physical movement of students, programs, providers, and academic staff across borders.

### The Landscape of International Education

The proportion of the increased demand for international education that results in student mobility remains unknown, but the movement of programs and education providers across national borders will grow significantly.

The last five years have witnessed the emergence of new types of providers, forms of delivery, and collaborative partnerships. Along with traditional private and public higher education institutions, new providers include commercial IT and media companies, corporate universities, professional associations, and international conglomerates. Providers use face-to-face and virtual modes to deliver education to students in their home countries through twinning, franchising, articulation, validation, and joint or double degree arrangements. Some providers also seek to establish a physical presence through branch campuses, independent institutions, teaching and

testing centers, and acquisitions or mergers with local higher education institutions.

Here are examples of developments in program and provider mobility announced or established in the last two years in all regions of the world.<sup>11</sup> Conventional higher education institutions still predominate but face formidable increases in volume, innovation, and impact from commercial providers and from corporate universities.

**Middle East.** The Middle East is witnessing rapid developments. Poland will establish a new private medical institute in Israel where students will study for three years before moving to the Medical University in Gdańsk for three more years of clinical study. Students will then return to Israel for an internship. Saudi Arabia is establishing new private universities that involve foreign institutions and investors. For instance, the University of Arizona and UNESCO are helping to establish the Prince Sultan Private University. The Stevens Institute of Technology is cooperating in founding the Dar-Al-Faisal University with financial investment from the Boeing Company and the French defense firm Thales. Harvard is planning to set up a branch campus in the United Arab Emirates.

In Bahrain, the University of Hanover (Germany) is planning an affiliation with a new Euro University. Egypt is already home to the American University established more than 80 years ago. But the German University in Cairo and the L'Université Française d'Égypte have been established in the last three years, and a new British University is under development. Types of local and foreign partnerships differ slightly, thereby illustrating the creativity and diversity of new collaborations. The American University in Egypt, for example, is franchised to offer the distance MBA program of Heriot-Watt University from the U.K.

**Asia Pacific.** Vietnam is an emerging center of activity. RMIT University in Australia owns 100 percent of a branch campus, while Troy University, in Alabama, partnered with the International College of I.T. and Management. The number of active partnerships between local and foreign institutions is steadily expanding. For instance, the University of Hue in Vietnam recently developed a franchised and joint-degree bachelor's program in tourism with the University of Hawaii. Hanoi University of Technology is currently offering master's and bachelor's degrees with higher education institutions from Belgium (1), France (8), Germany (1), Singapore (2),

and the U.S. (1). The Vietnamese government recently announced development of the “International University in Vietnam”—another initiative to increase national capacity for higher education. Half the university teaching staff will be Vietnamese and the other half from foreign universities. Foreign institutional involvement will build on and expand from the current links of Ho Chi Minh City National University.

Australia, China, Egypt, and the U.S. are increasing cross-border education to Thailand. The Egyptian Al-Azhar University and Jinan University from China each plan to open a branch campus, while Swinburne University of Technology (Australia) has operated a branch campus since 1998, though it is changing its focus to industry training only. Troy University has a teaching site in Bangkok for its MBA program; students can transfer to the U.S., depending on funds and visa requirements. The Thai-German Graduate School of Engineering, 13 Australian universities, and nine U.K. universities also operate in Thailand.

The University of New South Wales (Australia) will establish the first 100 percent foreign-owned higher education institution in Singapore after receiving government approval. The university plans to offer undergraduate and graduate programs and to develop a strong research capacity. Other respected foreign institutions offer education and training programs in Singapore through joint ventures, exchanges, and branch-campus, including the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Stanford University, John Hopkins University, the German Technische Universität München, and the Technische Universiteit Eindhoven (Netherlands).

Singapore institutions, in turn, are noteworthy exporters. The National University of Singapore and Fudan University developed a joint MBA, aimed at Chinese and Singapore students. The National University is also embarking on a new graduate school initiative for Chinese students to be located in Suzhou Graduate Town, part of the Suzhou Industrial Park. Raffles LaSalle Limited is a publicly traded Singapore company that provides programs in fashion and design in many Asian countries. It is described as “a remarkable instance of international partnership, combining a Singapore firm with branches in Australia, China, Malaysia and Thailand, accreditation from an Australian state and a Canadian province, degrees from an Australian and a U.K. university, and a number of in-country university and college partners.”<sup>12</sup>

India’s higher education sector imports and exports programs and services at an unprecedented pace. One initiative: the partnership between the Caparo Group—a U.K. firm with interests in steel, engineering, and hotels—and Carnegie Mellon University (U.S.) to set up a new campus in India.

**Africa.** Africa, with the partial exception of South Africa, shows the fewest international and cross-border initiatives. The private Universiteit Nienrode (Netherlands Business School) recently established a branch campus in Nigeria in partnership with the African Leadership Forum, a nonprofit organization founded in 1988, one of the first cross-border initiatives on the continent outside of South Africa. Kenya is home to two private nonprofit universities. Pakistan’s Aga Khan University opened a branch university campus in Kenya in 2002 that specializes in nursing education, and Alliant International University (U.S.) provides education in social sciences and the humanities.

The number of foreign programs offered in South Africa has decreased, due to strict new government regulations and accreditation processes. Only a few foreign institutions have branch campuses, including Bond and Monash from Australia, De Montfort (U.K.), and the Netherlands Business School. Three foreign institutions are leaving because of accreditation issues related to a recent review of all MBA programs. Monash will remain (it does not offer an MBA program) as will the British-based Henley Management College, primarily a distance provider.

Mauritius is trying to establish itself as a “cyber island” by attracting foreign IT firms from the West and India. A “knowledge centre”—described as a world-class integrated education and training complex—is a key aspect of its plans. More than 50 foreign universities and professional bodies offer local programs, mostly at the diploma or certificate level and in specialized fields. Attracting foreign education providers to support the education and training needs of a new “cyber island” may stem the brain drain or even stimulate brain gain, but local education institutions may pay a price.

**Europe.** Russia’s major economic reforms have important implications for the higher education sector. Many higher education institutions—for example, the Moscow International Slavonic Institute and the Moscow State University of Industry—operate programs abroad, such as in Bulgaria. But Russia is also the site of joint and double degree programs,

twinning, and franchise arrangements. The Higher School of Economics has a double degree program with the London School of Economics. The Stockholm School of Economics operates in St. Petersburg and the University of Oslo's Centre for Medical Studies is located in Moscow. The British Open University has 80 business-training centers across the country. The University of Southern Queensland is partnering with Far Eastern National University in Vladivostok for program delivery. The Pune-based International Institute of Information Technology (India) plans to offer its master's and Ph.D. courses through the newly established Russian-Indian Centre for Advanced Computer Research in Moscow.

The University of Indianapolis has been active in Greece for more than a decade. Beginning with an articulation arrangement whereby students would start their studies in Athens and complete the program in the U.S., the model evolved into a campus in Greece called the University of Indianapolis, Athens.

Laureate Education (formerly Sylvan), a private company, owns part or all of the Universidad Europa de Madrid in Spain, Les Roches and Glion Hotel School in Switzerland, and the L'ecole Superieur du Commerce Exterior de Paris in France. Apollo International offers its courses in the Netherlands, and Raffles La Salle (Singapore) recently signed an agreement with Middlesex University to offer bachelor's and master's programs in fashion and design.

**North America.** U.S. colleges and universities and private companies are undertaking hundreds of initiatives and partnerships to deliver cross-border education courses and programs—probably the most active and innovative nation in worldwide program and provider mobility. George Washington University is seriously considering a South Korean branch, since the South Korean government has changed its regulations to permit foreign providers. Other U.S. universities are partnering with Korean institutions and companies. Syracuse University, in conjunction with Sejong University in Seoul, offers a specially designed MBA program for Korean students. Duke and Purdue Universities also offer MBAs in Korea, and Stanford University delivers online graduate and postgraduate courses, using alumni as local tutors. U.S. higher education institutions sponsor similar cross-border activities in China, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Middle East. For instance, the University of Missouri

at St. Louis helped to establish the Gulf University of Science and Technology (the first private university in Kuwait) and the Modern College of Business and Science in Oman.

U.S. cross-border activity increasingly involves private and publicly traded companies. The Global Education Index (GEI), developed by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, classifies many large, active publicly traded companies that provide education programs and services. The U.S. houses the majority of a scan of over 50 GEI companies.<sup>13</sup> Better-known companies include Kaplan (owned by the *Washington Post*), Apollo Group, DeVry, Career Education Corporation, and Laureate Education. Kaplan, owner of 57 colleges in the U.S., now owns the Dublin Business School—Ireland's largest private undergraduate institution, and likely the first of many purchases of foreign institutions. The Apollo Group owns the University of Phoenix, the largest American private university, and aggressively seeks to broaden its foreign investments and holdings. Since 1995, Apollo has also owned Western International University (WIU), which runs a branch campus called Modi Apollo International Institute in New Delhi through a partnership with the KK Modi Group, an Indian industrial conglomerate. WIU has an agreement with the Canadian Institute of Business and Technology (CIBT) permitting CIBT to offer WIU programs through its three business schools in Beijing.

Northface Learning Inc., a company to watch for future international expansion, has established Northface University, an IBM and Microsoft-backed initiative offering degree programs in IT and business. The University of Northern Virginia, another small private university offering programs in business and IT, recently opened a branch campus in the Czech Republic and created delivery partnerships in China and India.

The Canadian International Management Institute (CIMI) is a private postsecondary institution that represents the recruiting interests of ten Canadian universities and colleges. CIMI signed a memorandum of understanding with the Chinese Scholarship Council in 2004 to offer a foundation and credit transfer program to students in China wanting Canadian university degrees. Students will be based in China for foundation studies, cultural adjustment, and language training for the first three years of this five-year program. They can continue

their studies in Canada or China for the final two years if they meet grade requirements.

The Al-Ahram Canadian University in Egypt is the only example of direct Canadian university support for a new foreign university. McMaster University, École Polytechnique de Montreal, and the Université du Quebec in Montreal are cooperating with the Al-Ahram Organization, owner of the Egyptian daily newspaper, to establish this private university.

The Serebra Learning Corporation, a publicly traded Canadian company, offers generic and tailor-made software plus more than 1,800 courses mainly in IT. Serebra works with the Consortium for Global Education—a group of 45 U.S. Baptist higher education institutions to provide quality-assured IT training in the developing world. Serebra also played a key role in creating the Pakistan Virtual University.

**Latin America.** The University of the Incarnate Word (UIW), a private institution in San Antonio, Texas, opened a new campus in Mexico in 2003. Endicott College, Alliant International University, and Texas A&M—with a “university center” in Mexico City—are other American institutions with Mexican campuses. In 2000, Laureate Education purchased the Universidad del Valle de Mexico; it plans to open a new branch in Guadalajara. Laureate also owns Universidad Interamericana, a private university with campuses in Costa Rica and Panama, and part of three private universities in Chile. Bologna University, in Italy, is one of the few foreign institutions with a branch campus in Argentina. The Technical Institute of Monterrey, in Mexico, is known for its on-line education programs, especially the MBA, delivered to many Latin American countries.

These diverse initiatives show how conventional higher education institutions and new commercial providers promote, exchange, link, and predominantly sell higher education across borders. Australia and the U.S. dominate the list of participating countries, though India and China are increasingly active. But cross-border activities also involve risks. Challenges related to quality assurance and the national and international recognition of providers, programs, and credits, or qualifications warrant close attention.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE AND RECOGNITION

These various international initiatives raise a series of questions. First: how are the institutions, companies, and networks that deliver cross-border courses or

programs registered, licensed, or recognized by the sending and the receiving countries? Many countries—lacking capacity or political will—do not have the regulatory systems to register or evaluate out-of-country providers. Regulatory frameworks for quality assurance or accreditation, even when they exist, usually do not apply to providers outside the national education system. This loophole permits both bona fide and rogue foreign providers to avoid compliance with national regulations in many countries and makes monitoring their activities difficult. The registration or licensing of foreign providers raises numerous questions. Do criteria or conditions depend on whether providers are part of and recognized by a national education system in their home countries? Do different rules apply if the provider is for-profit or nonprofit, private or public, an institution or a company? What rules apply to companies that establish institutions in foreign countries and have no home-based presence? How do regulators track all the partnerships between local and foreign institutions or companies? These challenges loom large in trying to establish appropriate and effective national or regional regulatory systems.

Second: how do regulators assure the quality of the courses or programs offered by public or private institutions and especially by the new private commercial companies and providers who are usually not part of, or recognized by, nationally based quality assurance schemes? And how do regulators monitor the quality of the academic experience of students engaged in cross-border education? Historically, national quality-assurance agencies did not assess the quality of imported and exported programs, with notable exceptions. But Hong Kong, Israel, Malaysia, and South Africa, as receivers of cross-border education, have developed systems to register and monitor the quality of foreign provision. The U.K. and Australia are sending countries (that is, they send students) that introduced quality assurance for exported cross-border provision by their recognized higher education institutions.

Third: the role of accreditation. Market forces increase the importance of the profile and reputation of providers and their courses. Institutions make major investments in marketing and branding campaigns to earn name recognition and to increase enrollments. Accreditation, part of these campaigns, assures prospective students of the high standing of their programs.

The accreditation process is becoming internationalized and commercialized. Bona fide national and international accreditation agencies now work in many countries. For instance, U.S. national and regional accreditors provide or sell their services in more than over 65 countries. Accreditation bodies of the professions such as ABET (engineering) from the U.S. and EQUIS (business) from Europe, also offer their services abroad.

But new, self-appointed networks of institutions and organizations also accredit their members—a positive development when academic quality improves. But some of these networks and organizations may not offer objective assessments and may be more interested in racing for accreditation “stars” than in improving quality. A related, more worrisome development: the growth of non-recognized, illegitimate accreditation mills that “sell” accreditation without any independent assessment. These mills resemble “degree mills” that sell certificates and degrees with no or minimal course work. Students, employers, and the public need to be warned about these accreditation (and degree) mills, which are often web addresses outside the jurisdiction of national regulatory systems.

Fourth: the need for mechanisms that recognize the academic and professional qualifications gained through domestic or international delivery of education for purposes of employment and further study. Students, employers, and the public must be made aware of the quality and validity of the programs and awards. The key questions: Who awards the qualification, especially in partnerships and network arrangements? Is the provider recognized and, if so, by what kind of accrediting or licensing body? In what country is that body located? The mechanisms for recognizing qualifications must be national, regional, or international to accommodate the mobility of students and professional labor.

Finally, can existing national-level accreditation and quality assurance systems address education mobility across countries, cultures, and jurisdictions? Can countries establish and monitor quality systems for incoming and outgoing education programs given the diversity of providers and delivery methods? Should regional or international frameworks complement and augment national quality accreditation systems? Is it advisable and feasible to develop mutual recognition systems between and among countries? Would an International Code of Good Practice help to assure quality?

Social confidence in higher education demands giving priority to defining the roles and responsibilities of all players involved in quality assurance, including individual institutions and providers, national quality assurance systems, non-government and independent accreditation bodies, professional associations, and regional or international organizations. Their roles defined, these players must collaborate to build a system that ensures the quality and integrity of cross-border education.

These issues have special importance for higher education institutions. Quality assurance starts with the program deliverer—domestic or international. Many higher education institutions have adequate quality assurance processes for domestic delivery. But these processes do not cover the challenges inherent in working across cultures, in a foreign regulatory environment, and potentially, with a foreign partner. These challenges include academic entry requirements, student examination and assessment procedures, faculty workload, delivery modes, curricular adaptation, assuring quality teaching, academic and sociocultural support for students, and title and level of award. In balancing quality issues with the financial investment and return, higher education providers must consider intellectual property ownership, choice of partners, division of responsibilities, academic and business risk assessments, and internal and external approval processes.

## THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

Universities have been international institutions from their medieval European origins, attracting students and faculty from many countries. The rise of nationalism and the nation-state after the Protestant Reformation focused academe inward. Later, the emergence of the Third World from colonialism in the mid-20th century stimulated the establishment of national universities. Now academe has regained its international scope and direction. Internationalization is propelled by IT, the knowledge economy, an integrated world economy, and increased mobility for students, faculty, programs, and providers.

Internationalism will remain a central force in higher education, though its contours are unclear. Australian experts argue that perhaps 15 million students will study abroad by 2025—up from the current two million. This prediction might be optimistic. The international student numbers in Australia have declined somewhat, after a decade of

dramatic expansion. The U.S., the leading host country, also saw a modest enrollment decline in 2004. The long-term trends are strong and stable, but several uncertainties may affect the pace of internationalization:

- *Political realities and national security.* Terrorism may affect international higher education. Tightened visa requirements in the U.S. and other countries, security restrictions on the subjects that can be studied, and fear of terrorism expressed by potential international students may affect cross-border student flows.
- *Government policies and the cost of study.* Policies concerning the cost of tuition and the fees for visas and other documents may affect international initiatives.
- *Expanded domestic capacity.* Interest in studying abroad or in enrolling in international programs may decline as countries increase access to higher education, especially to master's and doctoral programs.
- *English.* The growing use of English as a medium of research and instruction, especially at the graduate level, may stimulate interest in international programs offered by universities in English.
- *The internationalization of the curriculum.* Students may find international programs useful as curricula move toward models developed in the U.S. and other industrialized countries.
- *E-learning.* International acceptance of degrees will lead to an expanded role for distance education, though it is unclear whether international e-learning degrees will become more widespread or domestic e-learning programs, often located in developing or middle-income countries, will continue to dominate.
- *The private sector.* Private higher education is the fastest-growing segment of higher education worldwide, though only a small part of this sector is international. It is not clear if private higher education providers will find the international market sufficiently profitable—though some expansion seems likely.
- *Quality assurance and control.* Quality assurance—a major concern within countries—is a greater problem internationally. Observers criticize many international higher education programs for low standards but fail to identify measures of quality.
- *European policies.* Will the E.U. protect its “European higher education space,” or will it welcome

students and programs from the rest of the world? Will it impose tuition and other fees on non-E.U. students? How will the Bologna initiatives and harmonizing higher education in the E.U. affect international patterns within the E.U. and between the E.U. and the rest of the world?

## CONCLUSION

These are the motives for the growth in international higher education and the landscape of programs and institutions. International higher education will provide substantial access in some countries and will be a niche market in others. We are at a crossroads—today's emerging programs and practices must assure that international higher education benefits the public and not be simply a profit center.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Altbach, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> These themes have been widely analyzed. See, for example, Castells, 2000; Friedman, 2005; and Odin and Mancias, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> We will not focus on e-learning, or the use of IT to deliver academic programs across borders. These delivery systems—fast growing elements of internationalization—deserve a separate analysis.

<sup>4</sup> Kirp, 2003. See also Altbach, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> OECD, 2004a, 35. See also National Education Association, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Davis, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Siaya and Hayward, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Huisman and van der Wende, 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Bhalla, 2005.

<sup>10</sup> It is now moving to the United Kingdom.

<sup>11</sup> Taken from *Breaking News Service* of the Observatory of Borderless Higher Education, 2004a

<sup>12</sup> OBHE, 2004a.

<sup>13</sup> Garrett, 2004.

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