

# INTERNATIONALIZATION WITHIN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

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Internationalization has been one of the most powerful and pervasive forces at work within higher education around the world during the last two decades. With remarkably few exceptions, no corner of the globe or institutional type has proven itself immune to the call to “internationalize” in some fashion. In this process, practical applications and conceptual understandings of internationalization have evolved significantly, while the overall stakes in the internationalization game have become noticeably higher. Whereas at the beginning of the 21st century, international orientations, characteristics, and programmatic offerings of a college or university may have been perceived as merely an interesting and appealing component of an institution’s profile, today internationalization is a core issue of concern to the higher education enterprise, touching directly on questions of social and curricular relevance, institutional quality and prestige, national competitiveness, and innovation potential. More recently, for better or worse, institutions also view internationalization as a source of potential revenue.

The authors of this chapter have previously asserted that it is “not possible for higher education to opt out of the global environment, since its effects are unavoidable” (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009, p. 7). Yet, in spite of the powerful

influence of the global context, “local realities of wealth, language, academic development, and other factors all affect the extent to which institutions are motivated and able to internationalize” (Altbach et al., 2009, p. 7). This means that leaders in higher education must be prepared to track and understand the broadest global trends in higher education, as well as the internationalization of higher education more specifically, while at the same time attending effectively to the unique needs and aspirations of their particular institutions, local communities, and regional or national contexts. Thus it can be quite challenging in today’s complex and fast-moving environments, which are often characterized by scarce resources and competing priorities, to mention just two common yet critical challenges.

The good news is that senior international officers and administrators who are faced with the daunting task of making sense of this complex and shifting landscape have an increasing array of information and resources from which to draw insight and ideas. Internationalization and globalization have been the subject of much analysis over the last two decades. This work has resulted in a substantial body of literature exploring many

facets of these phenomena within the context of higher education. There has also been a great deal of focus on translating theory to practice, with the aim of providing meaningful pathways from the realm of ideas about internationalization to practical implementation, particularly at the institutional level. Indeed, 20 years ago, the AIEA's first *Bridges to the Future* publication (Klasek, 1992) broke important new ground in this area.

Many have since contributed to an evolving set of definitions for globalization and internationalization. For the purposes of this analysis, *globalization* is characterized by "the broad economic, technological, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education and are largely inevitable in the contemporary world" (Altbach, 2006, p. 123). *Internationalization*, meanwhile, is defined as a "process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension in the purpose, functions, or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight, 2003, p. 2). Understood as both a reaction and a companion trend to globalization, internationalization has long been considered the toolkit of responses available (primarily at institutional and national levels) to address the many and diverse opportunities and imperatives presented by the overwhelming forces of globalization. This chapter addresses the significance of the current shift as internationalization moves beyond the concept of the toolkit. Today, internationalization is considered central to the academic enterprise, particularly in terms of planning for the future by policymakers and institutional leaders (International Association of Universities [IAU], 2010), and the phenomenon stands out clearly as a strategic objective essential to the relevance, dynamism, and sustainability of the world's 21st-century institutions and systems of higher education. What is more, internationalization has emerged as a compelling agent of change in its own right, serving as a potent catalyst for new models for the organization, delivery, and even the stated mission of the higher education enterprise in many different contexts across the globe.

A central goal of this chapter is to put various key aspects of internationalization into a broader context for deeper understanding and more nuanced reflection. In addition to more general considerations, brief overviews of internationalization developments in four major regions of the world—Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin

America—are also presented in this chapter. These supplements provide insight into how many of the issues touched on in this analysis are playing out in specific regional contexts.

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## INTERNATIONALIZATION AS A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

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Eva Egron-Polak, secretary-general of the International Association of Universities (IAU), has said that "even though there is still no such thing as global higher education," internationalization is "creating a sense of 'global' in higher education" (Soilemetzidis, 2011, p. 1). Indeed, one of the most important aspects of internationalization today is that the frame of reference for this phenomenon extends well beyond the local and even the national. This is evident in two very visible ways. First, news about internationalization moves rapidly across borders. Indeed, where there is Internet access, information about developments in the internationalization of higher education in one location seems to be widely and nearly instantly available almost everywhere else. Second, approaches to internationalization in one part of the world are often emulated (or, at the very least, examined and considered for application) in other parts of the world. Specific trends and practices are being duplicated in different regions. For example, the growth in the number of countries working to position themselves as regional higher education/innovation "hubs" (Knight, 2011) may be seen as an embodiment of isomorphic trends in internationalization, as is the spreading interest in stronger regional cooperation and integration. One of the most compelling examples of regionalization in the contemporary era emerged in Europe in the context of the Bologna Process, but regionalization has also been taken up as a serious topic of discussion in Asia (Maslen, 2008) and Latin America (Travers, 2011). The expanding use of English as the primary international language of research, scholarly publication, and (increasingly) teaching (Altbach, 2007; Wächter & Maiworm, 2002, 2008) provides another example of an internationalization trend being tested out broadly across the globe. The IAU has been particularly interested in tracking how internationalization is understood and operationalized around the world, and it has produced three reports that

endeavor to capture the perspectives of higher education leaders around the world with regard to the phenomenon (IAU, 2003, 2006, 2010).

The proliferation of information can be attributed to advancements in information technologies, but the dramatic upswing in recent years in coverage about international higher education issues is perhaps more important. In 1995, the Boston College Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) launched *International Higher Education*. This quarterly newsletter—published in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian and distributed internationally both by CIHE and in conjunction with partner organizations in China, Colombia, Germany, and Russia—was an early trendsetter. The CIHE newsletter is now complemented by the center's blog, "The World View," in collaboration with InsideHigherEd.com. Momentum in this area has been promoted by the introduction of other media outlets focused specifically on higher education regionally or worldwide—such as *University World News* and the Academic Cooperation Association's *ACA Newsletter—Education Europe*—as well as the considerable growth in coverage of international issues by longstanding higher education media sources such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Times Higher Education*. In addition, more mainstream, high-profile, and internationally circulated news sources, such as *The Economist* and *New York Times*, now devote significant space to stories and analysis about international issues in higher education, particularly in regard to the social and economic impact of new trends and models. Book series on international higher education topics—sponsored, for example, by CIHE and the Academic Cooperation Association—also have an important bearing on this trend, along with the significant body of studies and reports produced by such organizations as the International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (INCHER-Kassel), based at the University of Kassel in Germany, and the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (based at the University of Twente in the Netherlands), to name just a very few examples.

Chapter 6 in this volume provides a more extensive treatment of the issue of internationalization resources. Still, it is impossible to overstate the influence of the international orientation of many information resources, as well as the easy access to much greater quantities of information

about higher education around the world, on the way institutional leaders and policymakers understand issues and strategic options in local contexts. Internationalization is truly a global phenomenon.

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## ETHICAL CHALLENGES

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The global resonance of internationalization is simultaneously exciting and worrisome. While international engagement—for individuals, institutions, and systems of higher education—has the potential to bring with it enormous opportunities and benefits, the global playing field is inherently uneven (Altbach et al., 2009). In this context, well-resourced actors will have more options and opportunities when it comes to how (and to what degree) to internationalize. Fundamental differences in the quality and quantity of internationalization activities and outcomes will result. In short, an increasingly competitive international environment has the potential to generate real winners and losers.

All of this has significant, real-world implications for the educational opportunities of individual students, the orientation and operation of higher education institutions, and even the performance of national economies. For example, smaller, developing economies are particularly vulnerable as they may find it difficult to integrate (and regulate) opportunities offered by foreign providers with greater capital. For-profit providers, in particular, may expand (and sometimes exploit) local opportunities, but not always in line with national priorities or objectives. Indeed, fundamental conflicts may arise in the introduction and development of for-profit higher education activities, which by definition are designed to advance owners' or (in many cases) shareholders' interests above and beyond the interests of other key stakeholders (such as students, professors, or society more broadly speaking). The activities of international student recruiters, agents, and other commercially oriented actors, who may play close to ethical boundaries, are also coming under closer scrutiny in the United States and elsewhere (National Association for College Admission Counseling, 2011).

The commercialization of higher education on a global scale raises many additional ethical questions, which are addressed later in this

chapter, but, fundamentally, if higher education is to contribute to the advancement of the public good—even where many “private good” objectives exist—global activities should be guided by core principles of ethical engagement. At a minimum, ethical internationalization requires a commitment to such fundamental values as transparency, quality in academic programming and support services, academic freedom, fair treatment of partners and stakeholders, respect for local cultures, and thoughtful allocation of resources. These may sound like mere lofty words, but cultural conflicts are difficult to avoid when issues such as academic integrity, institutional accountability, gender roles, and sexual orientation are viewed from different cultural perspectives. International initiatives often confront dilemmas where the values of cultures are incompatible and the line between what is wrong or right and what is the prerogative of culture is not always clear.

Active engagement with internationalization can put decision makers at all levels into challenging situations where critical decisions must be made in complex and changing environments. Thus, a guiding principle should exist to attend appropriately to the opportunities and imperatives to internationalize, with a long-term perspective firmly rooted in considerations of ethics and quality.

## A COMPLEX AND SHIFTING LANDSCAPE

Internationalization is expressed in many and varied ways. However, an examination of several key aspects of the phenomenon provides a useful framework for understanding its scope and complexity. The central elements in this analysis include:

- The increasing number of internationally mobile students and scholars, moving to and from ever more diverse locations
- The rapid growth in cross-border educational provision
- The push to achieve world-class status
- The interest in producing globally competent graduates capable of understanding and

functioning in a complex and interconnected world

- The increasing prevalence of the English language for teaching and research
- The significant emphasis on cooperative networking among higher education institutions and national higher education systems
- The overt efforts by individual institutions and national higher education systems to compete internationally
- The dramatic increase in the commercialization of international education, particularly in terms of the growing opportunities available to for-profit enterprises.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of manifestations of internationalization. However, these selected topics should serve to highlight the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon and its effects at multiple levels (including individuals, institutions, and national and regional systems of higher education) and across many aspects of the higher education enterprise, from mission and management, to teaching and learning, enrollment and staffing, and more.

## International Student and Scholar Mobility

The movement of students, faculty, researchers, and even nonacademic staff is one of the most obvious and important aspects of internationalization today (see Chapters 21 to 23, this volume, for detailed discussion.). Although the international migration of students is not without precedent, the scale of mobility around the world today is greater than ever before. Mobility represents a basic component of internationalization—ostensibly easily documented and understood. However, on closer inspection, international mobility is a remarkably complex phenomenon, particularly when considered at a global level.

International mobility is increasing. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2010) estimates that, as of 2008, there were some 3.3 million internationally mobile students around the world. This figure is up from the estimated figure of 3 million in 2007 and represents an increase of some 85% over the 1.8 million students thought to have

been mobile in 2000 (OECD, 2010). There is speculation that this number will grow to at least 5.8 million by the year 2020 (Böhm et al., 2004) and 7.2 million by 2025 (Böhm, Davis, Meares, & Peace, 2002). However, it is extremely difficult to compile accurate data. Around the world, mobile students are defined by different criteria and, as a result, counted inconsistently. In some cases, citizenship is used to assess the international or domestic status of students, while in other instances a student is considered to be international if he or she completed the previous level of schooling in a country other than where the current degree (or credential) is being pursued. In still other cases, students may be counted only if they remain to complete a degree, while elsewhere they may factor into the mobility statistics if they are participating in an exchange program of some duration.

Figures generated by different data collection methods are not only difficult to compare across countries but also potentially misleading. For example, Turkish nationals are estimated to make up about a quarter of the foreign population in Germany. For a variety of reasons, many children born into this 1.7 million-strong group have assumed their parents' nationality, rather

than German citizenship (*Deutsche Welle*, 2009). In this unusual situation, if citizenship is the measure of international student status, it is conceivable that many thousands of individuals would be counted as international students, despite being lifelong residents and having been educated since childhood in Germany. This is a rather unusual example, but it is illustrative of the many inconsistencies that can complicate data comparisons (de Wit, Agarwal, Said, Schoole, & Sirozi, 2008; Kelo, Teichler, & Wächter, 2006; Teichler, Ferencz, & Wächter, 2011).

The process of gathering credible numbers on outbound students is also difficult. This is more easily achieved for short-term sojourns abroad used toward completion of a degree at the home institution. However, it is largely impossible to track the phenomenon of outgoing degree mobility, whereby students move internationally to complete a full degree, unless the host country carefully documents these individuals as inbound students. Furthermore, in many places the procedures for capturing and recording international mobility are simply not rigorous enough to allow for time series analyses (Teichler et al., 2011).

### BOX 1.1 A View From Africa

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Higher education systems in Africa—as elsewhere—have been directly affected by the rapidly globalizing environment and the resulting growth in internationalization. While internationalization is often considered a recent phenomenon, it is nothing new to parts of the world, such as Africa, that were once colonized. Indeed, the internationalization of African education in general (and higher education in particular) is directly related to the colonial experience on this continent. For example, the first degree-awarding institution in Nigeria was the University of Ibadan, established in 1948 as a University College of London. In the same year, the University of the Gold Coast in Ghana was also founded as a University of College of London, as was the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, opened after independence in 1961. The three countries share a common legacy of British colonization.

Contemporary patterns of international student and staff mobility also reflect Africa's colonial past. Students and staff who go abroad tend to go to institutions and countries with links to the

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former colonialists. For this reason, students from Anglophone African countries will often go to study in the United Kingdom, students and staff from Francophone Africa will flow to France, and those from Lusophone countries will gravitate toward Portugal.

Dependence continues to be an endemic feature of African higher education's engagement with the rest of the world, most notably in terms of the continent's widespread reliance on external or foreign assistance. The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, a consortium of U.S.-based foundations, was a major player in the period 2000 to 2010 supporting internationalization efforts in higher education in countries such as Egypt, Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, and Nigeria. Foreign embassies and diplomatic missions also serve as agents of internationalization by offering scholarships and study opportunities for Africans abroad. Meanwhile, transnational organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations have played a major role in higher education in some sub-Saharan countries. Ethiopia, for example, is benefiting from the bank's Development Innovation Fund, which supports international institutional linkages, visiting faculty, new and innovative undergraduate and graduate programs, and short-term staff training overseas.

National governments also play a crucial role in the international activities of African higher education. Ministries of various types—such as foreign affairs and home affairs—have oversight in different countries for a range of responsibilities such as determining national human resource needs; negotiating bilateral agreements that facilitate student, staff, research, and knowledge exchange; and issuing visas and study permits. For example, the Mauritian Ministry of Foreign Affairs negotiates all bilateral cooperation agreements between Mauritius and other countries, including those covering scholarships for Mauritius nationals and branch campuses on its soil. The governments of Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, and Botswana play similar roles for the higher education sector in their countries.

Despite enormous challenges, African institutions of higher education are adopting many of the same internationalization activities employed at institutions across the world, including institutional partnerships; joint research projects; inbound and outbound student, faculty, and staff mobility; the introduction of international dimensions into the curriculum; the establishment of branch campuses; and transnational virtual delivery of higher education. Yet, Africa's place in the global higher education network remains disadvantaged. For example, apart from Egypt and South Africa, the flow of international students is more outbound than inbound for the countries of Africa, and relatively few internationally mobile students and staff return to the continent after completing their studies elsewhere, leading to significant brain drain. The dominance of English as the lingua franca of international communication, research, and business adds another layer of difficulty for many of Africa's non-English speaking countries eager to engage with the global knowledge economy and cutting-edge academic networks. The rapid growth of private higher education in Africa—while clearly meeting some needs for access—presents real challenges for quality, a critical issue for international engagement and competitiveness.

In short, providing an accurate global picture of international student mobility is extremely difficult. This is a particular challenge for national and regional policymakers who may wish—as is the case in Europe in the context of the Bologna Process—to articulate clear quantitative goals for mobility as part of larger social,

political, or economic strategies (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Ministers' Communiqué, 2009).

It is notable that while growth in international student numbers has been robust, it has not quite kept pace with overall increases in higher education enrollment around the world. Over the last



35 years, global higher education enrollment is estimated to have risen by more than 400%, whereas the worldwide growth rate in international student mobility has risen somewhat less dramatically by 350% (Bruneforth, 2010). Although the increases in both areas are impressive, they indicate that a smaller percentage of the total enrollment in higher education may be internationally mobile today than was the case 35 years ago. In the absence of reliable data, it is difficult to say conclusively why these trends are not more perfectly aligned. Among the plausible explanations, however, are the efforts in the last couple of decades to expand access to higher education, particularly in developing and middle-income countries. By improving both the quantity and quality of higher education provision at home, some countries are diminishing the influence of one of the fundamental push factors that sends large numbers of students abroad—namely, the inability to find either access to higher education or educational opportunities of sufficiently high quality (de Wit et al., 2008). The dramatic growth in student demand is, among other things, a function of demographics as well as notable increases in secondary school completion rates around the world. These trends show few signs of slowing soon, especially in much of the developing world (Altbach et al., 2009), but it is unclear exactly how these developments will affect international student mobility rates in the future.

Although smaller in scale, measuring and summarizing the movement of scholars, researchers, and staff present even greater challenges (Teichler et al., 2011), since much of this mobility occurs on an ad hoc, short-term basis and is often organized at an individual if not department level. Yet, this kind of activity is understood to be increasingly vital to successful internationalization. Research has indicated that (at least in the U.S. context) faculty members with international experience have a direct and positive effect on student participation in study abroad. In addition, the presence of foreign faculty enhances efforts to infuse curricula and campus life with an international dimension, and domestic faculty with international experience are more likely to “buy in” to initiatives designed to advance campus internationalization (O’Hara, 2009).

The mobility of top international talent is also a major concern of both sending and receiving countries at the highest policy levels (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011; World Economic Forum,

2011). Skilled migration plays out in educational and governmental circles alike. Visa regulations in different countries—including Australia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, United States, Saudi Arabia, and others—actively confer privilege on highly educated applicants or those with expertise in key fields connected to innovation and economic growth. There are also formal initiatives in place to attract such talent. The Banting Fellowship program in Canada is one of many examples of national-level efforts to encourage the pursuit and exchange of international talent, as is a Russian “mega-grant” scheme. The Canadian initiative will invest CAD\$45 million over five years to support 70 two-year fellowships—available to Canadians and non-Canadian citizens—whose work should serve to support the country’s science and technology strategy. Interestingly, the effort is also specifically designed to foster international connections by allowing up to one quarter of fellowship recipients to take placements at research institutions outside of Canada (Office of the Prime Minister of Canada, 2010). Meanwhile, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science announced in late 2010 the names of 40 winners of awards up to 150 million rubles (or USD\$5.3 million) “to conduct research at a Russian university working with a team comprised of researchers from the host institution.” Notably, half of the grant winners were Russian citizens, but just 5 of the 40 award recipients reside in Russia (*ACA Newsletter: Education Europe*, 2010). Talent attraction efforts—or re-attraction, in the case of expatriate scientists and academics—are becoming increasingly common (and high profile) in different parts of the world. China offers another notable example. Of the 1.62 million students who went overseas since 1978, only 497,000 returned, including only 8% of the Chinese who earned PhDs abroad in science and engineering. Having lost so much of its native talent, China is creating new initiatives to cultivate, attract, and repatriate human capital (Wang, 2010). For a more detailed discussion of skilled migration and top talents, see Chapter 23.

Although many of the specifics about international academic mobility dynamics remain to be clarified, it appears certain that the population of internationally mobile students and scholars will continue to grow. That said, this population is likely to exhibit some new characteristics and behaviors. Whereas for decades

students and scholars have moved from the less-developed countries of the global South (particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America) to the wealthier and more economically powerful countries and regions of the North (including Australia, Canada, the United States, and Western Europe), new destinations are emerging as viable options for internationally mobile academic talent, with a strong attraction to one's own region for such opportunities. For example, South Africa has become a destination for many sub-Saharan African students on the move. China, too, is beginning to position itself as a key player in Asia, and South Korea is also devoting resources to building up its international attractiveness. The newly established regional hubs for higher education in Singapore and the Middle East (including Education City in Qatar and the Dubai Knowledge Village) also aim to create a profile for themselves within their respective regions, while Egypt stands out as a destination of choice where religion is a key factor in mobility decision-making (de Wit, et al., 2008). Indeed, de Wit et al. (2008) note that "religious factors are becoming increasingly important, not only in higher education student mobility but also in elementary and secondary education" (p. 248).

Of course, the pull of the world's academic powerhouses will no doubt continue to be significant. Indeed, in 2007, North America and Western Europe captured nearly 65% of the world's mobile students. However, this is down from the 2000 figure of about 70%, while Asia's share of the pie, for example, grew from 13% to 18.5% in the 2000 to 2007 period (Altbach et al., 2009). The so-called regionalization of international student mobility (and other manifestations of internationalization)—whereby individuals and institutions look more readily within their own geographic region rather than to traditional destinations or better-known partner countries outside of the immediate region—is an important trend to watch (IAU, 2006, 2010).

International mobility of academic talent is unquestionably an important issue. There is a widely shared belief that international study is, on balance, a good thing, with positive ramifications for individuals and societies aiming to leverage the contributions of a better educated and more globally competent workforce. But real risks and challenges must be considered. For example, students who move internationally, for

both short-term credit mobility and full degree programs, are largely self-funded and therefore tend to come from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, the experience is often limited to elite groups and to the retention of privilege (IAU, 2010). If internationalization—and student mobility as a key component of the phenomenon—is to adequately reflect other fundamental values of higher education, such as equitable access, then international mobility opportunities need to be made available more broadly to more diverse groups of students. Student organizations in Europe, where student mobility has been a high-profile policy matter for more than two decades, have been particularly vocal in recent years about concerns in this area (European Students' Union, 2008).

Just as international opportunities are unevenly distributed, so too are effects. Although increasingly viewed through the more neutral lens of "brain circulation," the international movement of academic talent can represent a net loss (so-called "brain drain") for some countries (especially the poorest countries across Africa) while escalating the advantages of developed countries. More and better data on student mobility, including analyses of the quality and impact of these experience and their long-term effects for individuals, institutions, and societies are sorely needed. (For a longer discussion on this issue, see Chapter 21, this volume.)

### Cross-Border Education

The movement of people has long characterized the international dimension of higher education but, increasingly, programs and entire institutions are on the move, as are institutional models and approaches to teaching and learning (see Chapters 18 to 20, this volume, for detailed discussion). Cross-border education—also commonly referred to as *transnational* or *borderless* education—takes many different forms, including

fully fledged "sister" institutions of existing universities (such as New York University in Abu Dhabi), branch or satellite campuses of parent institutions . . . , and collaborative arrangements (such as the one between the University of Nottingham and Zhejiang Wanli Education Group-University, which allows for the operation of the University of Nottingham Ningbo, China). Also prevalent are single programs or narrow



fields of study being offered overseas by one institution or jointly by two or more (Altbach et al., p. 25).

Joint and double degree programs, “twinning,” and franchise arrangements also figure into this landscape. The international reach of distance learning may also be considered relevant in this context.

Efforts to catalogue a comprehensive list of cross-border programs (including that of Verbik & Merkley, 2006) are hampered by the fact that there are so many different configurations of this phenomenon. There are, however, strong indications that both supply and demand are growing. As mentioned previously, in much of the developing world, demand for higher education is outpacing the ability of domestic suppliers (public or private) to respond. This unmet need represents a real opportunity for foreign providers, many of whom are for-profit entities eager to expand their markets. Even traditional universities see the potential for a return from investing in operations overseas. Benefits sought by these actors include the extension of an international profile and brand, as well as the establishment of a convenient base of operations for study abroad, international research activities for faculty, and cooperation with foreign partner institutions (Verbik & Merkley, 2006).

The potential for problems when crossing national borders is often underestimated, however. On the provider side, foreign institutions may not have an adequate understanding of the cultural and regulatory framework into which they are moving. This can result in unrealistic expectations of partnership dynamics, what can be achieved in the host country, and on what timetable. Decisions to launch a branch campus are frequently based on short-term financial aspirations, often encouraged by subsidies provided by host countries or institutions rather than mission-driven rationales. Objectives should reflect a meaningful and sustainable combination of local needs and foreign provider goals (Knight, 2005; Rumbley & Altbach, 2007). Indeed, major missteps have resulted in significant losses for institutions trying to establish outposts overseas. Examples include Michigan State University, which decided to end its undergraduate programs in Dubai (at a loss of over \$4 million) (Mills, 2010; Swan, 2010), and George Mason University (2009), which pulled out of its

Ras Al Khaimah campus in 2009, just four years after opening its doors there. More dramatically, in 2007, the University of New South Wales (UNSW) reportedly agreed to pay back all of the grants and loans—totaling \$22.4 million—that the Australian university had received from Singapore to launch a branch campus there. UNSW had opened the campus just a few months before the closure was announced (Overland, 2007).

Time and money are clearly key considerations in this discussion, but so are issues of academic quality, academic freedom, and the basic rights of individuals. How does an institution ensure that the quality of its international offerings will be comparable to the home campus, particularly when home campus faculty may be unwilling to relocate overseas? For a research university, can the branch campus offer the same opportunities for research? Are the same principles of academic freedom upheld on both the home and branch campus? Are individuals—for example, women, ethnic and religious minorities, homosexuals, students with special needs—afforded the same rights, protections, and opportunities? These questions shed light on the range of issues that providers and hosts must consider in the cross-border education discussion.

The stakes for host countries in all of this are arguably higher, however. Poorer countries, in particular, and those with nascent or otherwise ineffective regulatory frameworks, can find it exceedingly difficult (if not impossible) to protect the public from low-quality or deceptive educational programming offered by some foreign providers, not to mention outright fraud perpetrated by rogue providers. Meanwhile, imported curricula and teaching methods may not be appropriate or effective in a specific national or cultural context (Teferra, 2008b). Developing economies are keen to train ever-larger cohorts of young people to help drive economic development and innovation. But these efforts are undermined if attention is not paid to both the quality and content of the education (Knight, 2005, 2008; Teferra, 2008b).

Cross-border initiatives often disregard local priorities. A foreign provider will typically avoid fields that require large investment in infrastructure such as laboratories or high-tech equipment. The end result is that, while cross-border providers may help to increase higher education

enrollment, they may not deliver the training most urgently needed in the host country. Yet, some of the world's most prestigious institutions are participating in cross-border activity. For example, the Weill Cornell Medical College, Cornell University's medical school, operates a campus in Qatar, where it trains physicians and conducts medical research, notably in the areas of "genetic and molecular medicine, women's and children's health, gene therapy, and vaccine development" (Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, 2009, p. 1) Other examples include the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business in London, Boston University's longstanding campus in Brussels, and Stanford University's collaboration with the National University of Singapore to deliver an Executive Program in International Management. Cross-border education is generally delivered by much less prestigious institutions.

In addition to programs and institutions, approaches to higher education appear to be moving across borders, as well. For example, from Hong Kong (Rumbley, 2008) to Amsterdam (Rumbley, 2010), there is an emerging interest—or, some are careful to specify, "renewed" interest

(Rumbley, 2010)—in liberal education for undergraduate students around the world (Peterson, 2011). Many point to the United States as the cradle of this kind of higher education and therefore see this model as an export to other parts of the world. Yale University's initiative to open a liberal arts program in Singapore (in conjunction with the National University of Singapore) and Bard College's initiatives in Russia, Central Asia, and Palestine (Peterson, 2011) may be seen as examples of such developments. Advocates for the current "global migration" of liberal arts (Peterson, 2011, p. 11) argue that they are not opportunistically riding a wave of simple fascination with liberal learning. Rather, they assert that the kind of education provided by liberal arts programs—with attention to multidisciplinary, the development of students' critical thinking skills, and the overt emphasis on enabling students to "learn how to learn"—is critically important for local and national stakeholders everywhere, where the focus is on building stronger multicultural societies as well as dynamic workforces capable of innovating and adapting to change (Peterson, 2011; Rumbley, 2008, 2010).

### BOX 1.2 A View From Asia

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Today, the international profile of Asian universities is rising steadily, and the higher education market within Asia is undergoing rapid expansion. Competition among universities is intensifying beyond national borders, and universities from outside Asia are eagerly launching themselves in Asian countries. It must be noted, however, that the region is far too diverse to be described under the one umbrella term, *Asian*. On the one hand, in countries like Japan and South Korea, more than half of the respective age cohort goes on to higher education. On the other hand, in some countries in South and Southeast Asia, higher education enrollments remain low and in single figures. Yet, an overview of the state of higher education in Asian countries alerts us to the fact that a considerable number of issues are common to all countries. The most prominent of these is the strong interest in the internationalization of universities.

Until now, Asian countries tended to send their human resources to North America, Europe, and Australia. Moreover, prestigious universities from those areas have moved to open branch campuses in Asian countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, particularly since the 1990s. Thus, universities in Asia are rapidly undergoing internationalization in an effort not to lose their own students, and

students of neighboring countries, to Western universities. Also, the international recruitment of teaching staff and researchers has become easier today, thanks to a flexible employment system being created by such trends as incorporating universities (notably in Japan and Malaysia) and by making universities self-governing (as seen in Thailand and Indonesia).

Asian countries have endorsed these internationalization initiatives. In Japan, for instance, the government in 2010 inaugurated the Global 30 project, aimed at vastly increasing the number of foreign students in the country. To enhance international competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy, governments are also targeting focused support on core research facilities to promote the growth of world-class research centers; Project 211 in China, BrainKorea 21 in South Korea, and the Center of Excellence Program in Japan are relevant examples. In this way, governments are endeavoring to attract excellent researchers regardless of nationality. Furthermore, internationalization of the higher education market in Asia is stimulating regional political networks—for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation—to get involved in university issues, thereby speeding up the drive toward regional coordination. The ASEAN University Network is evidence of this trend.

Many Asian countries are working to boost the international competitiveness of their own universities by focusing on quality assurance efforts. But there is huge variation in quality assurance capacity within the region. In Southeast Asia, for example, the countries of Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Malaysia have already developed or established their own mechanisms for monitoring quality. By contrast, in countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos, no adequate progress has been made in the design and implementation of effective quality assurance systems. This intraregional gap is a large obstacle in developing a common framework for quality assurance in Southeast Asia. Therefore, organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Quality Network are assisting those member countries with limited capacity to develop further efforts to enhance quality assurance.

For Asian universities to survive and to develop successfully in the international higher education market of the 21st century, each needs to build its own distinctive university profile while meeting global standards. At the same time, to differentiate themselves from Western universities, they must also delineate distinctive features of universities that clearly reflect the unique and multifaceted character of “Asia.”

In spite of very real challenges, and in the face of spirited debate surrounding the appropriateness and viability of specific initiatives, cross-border activities are increasing in number and scope. One of the most interesting developments involves—much like the student mobility trends—a visible increase in South-South movement, although the trend for educational programming to flow North-South still dominates. And while such initiatives are still relatively small in number, the announcement by the Open University of Malaysia that it will soon offer master’s programs in Ghana and Vietnam (Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2010) is just one example of how emerging actors in this area may change the dimensions of

the playing field in coming years. There is, without question, a “sense of opportunity and also of urgency . . . felt by many institutions keen to engage internationally” (Altbach et al., 2009, p. 26). But experience suggests caution in this highly complex and fluid area of international engagement.

### World-class Aspirations

Internationalization is increasingly understood as a transformative phenomenon, moving institutions—and even national and supranational actors—to adjust everything from administrative policies to entire frames of reference. A very tangible example of this development can

be seen in the way that universities around the world are embracing (at least in principle) the notion that their missions and strategic development must incorporate a perspective beyond the local and even the national horizon. The widespread aspiration to world-class status provides especially clear evidence of such developments.

Excellence at a world-class level has become an objective for higher education institutions and systems across the globe (Altbach, 2004; Hazelkorn, 2011; Salmi, 2009). Organized efforts to achieve international recognition for quality higher education can be seen on all continents. The proliferation of international university rankings—from the *Academic Ranking of World Universities* (originally compiled by Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2003 and now produced by the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy) to the *Ranking Iberoamericano*, released for the first time in 2010 by SCImago Institutions Rankings of Spain—has increased pressure on institutions to measure excellence against subjective, externally defined criteria (Hazelkorn, 2011). Excellence in higher education at the highest levels has arguably always had an international dimension, but today a vast number of institutions choose to benchmark against international standards, whether by competing for spots on a league table (Hazelkorn, 2011) or seeking accreditation by organizations (often in the United States and Europe) perceived to confer prestige (Eaton, 2004; OECD, 2004).

There are many positive aspects to these developments. Indeed, who can argue with the pursuit of excellence? But at a global level, the quest exacerbates the dominance of specific influences and the gaps among the “haves” and “have nots.” Responses to the various global ranking efforts are particularly notable for bringing these disparities into stark relief. Hazelkorn (2011) notes that

because rankings use quantification as the basis for determining quality and performance, they privilege older, well-resourced universities, which are highly selective in their recruitment of students and faculty and whose comparative advantages have been accumulated over time (p. 23).

Developing countries, many struggling simply to provide space for all of the university-eligible students in the population, cannot compete

equally. Yet—from Nigeria to Sri Lanka to Vietnam—the developing world is also drawn inexorably into the contest for global visibility and prestige (Hazelkorn, 2011). The economically privileged countries of the world, meanwhile, continue to strengthen and expand their knowledge system infrastructures, often at the expense of the developing world, through the recruitment of top talent. In developing and industrialized countries alike, the effort to perform well on the international rankings has, in some cases, concentrated already limited funds on just a small number of privileged institutions or functions—often favoring research over teaching or “fields and units which are likely to be more productive, have faculty who are more prolific especially at the international level, and more likely to trigger (upward) changes in the appropriate indicators” (Hazelkorn, 2011, p. 107). U-Multirank, a project supported by the European Commission, is one example of an effort to move attention away from what are perceived as simplistic and overly subjective approaches to defining excellence. The U-Multirank aims to deliver a “multi-dimensional global university ranking” focused on five key dimensions: teaching and learning, research, knowledge transfer, international orientation, and regional engagement. The goal is to make more transparent and accessible to key stakeholders the “institutional and programmatic diversity” of European higher education, with aspirations to apply this model more globally (U-Multirank, n.d.). It is uncertain if this effort will yield the intended results.

U-Multirank notwithstanding, the quest for excellence at the institutional level, as defined by international rankings and excellence initiatives, is clearly skewed toward research productivity (Altbach, 2011). No one disputes the enormous importance of research or its links to innovation, which in turn can have a powerful effect on economic performance. What is worrisome is that the emphasis on research can eclipse the importance of teaching and other functions in higher education, causing national governments to direct limited resources toward strengthening the research capacity at a small number of institutions. A more broadly conceived notion of excellence that takes into account activities beyond research might yield more meaningful long-term results for more institutions, as well as strengthen *systems* of higher education as a whole. Indeed, aspiring to the development of a

world-class system, rather than a select few world-class institutions (Altbach, 2010), is a strategic objective that deserves more emphasis in policy and planning circles.

### **Educating for Global Engagement**

Working to achieve enhanced visibility on the global stage is not the only way in which internationalization is affecting the priorities and orientations of institutions, which are also looking inward and redefining educational objectives for their students. Striving to produce global competence, or a sense of civic responsibility that extends beyond the local or even national level, is now explicit in the mission and strategic planning documents of countless higher education institutions. In many cases—for example, Duke University’s 2006 strategic plan—this effort is guided by a framework of understanding with the following orientation:

We operate in an interdependent world where what were once hard and fast borders are now permeable, where individuals are part of an increasingly global community and where problems transcend traditional boundaries. To be citizens of this world, we must be knowledgeable about issues that impact that world, such as global warming, poverty and pandemics, and conflicting cultures and proactive in using that knowledge to make a difference. (Duke University, 2006, as quoted in Childress, 2010, p. 48)

Acting on these laudable aspirations can be challenging, however. First, it can be quite difficult to articulate what terms like global competence and global citizenship actually mean or how these objectives dovetail effectively with more traditional educational objectives (Deardorff, 2009; see Chapters 14 to 17, this volume). In addition, it can be a slow and difficult process to move stakeholders to agree on exactly how the curriculum and co-curriculum should support this work, especially when higher education is under ever-greater public pressure to address so many diverse social responsibilities.

Still, internationalization as it relates to educating human resources for optimal performance in a more global knowledge economy resonates across the spectrum of higher education provision. In some ways, this has been most visible

among elite liberal arts institutions and high-powered research universities, but the interest in educating for global engagement is also visible at the level of vocational and technical education. Although typically considered a resource for highly localized education and workforce development needs, the U.S. community college sector and its counterparts in Europe and elsewhere are looking more than ever to incorporate elements of internationalization into their strategic activities. For example, the Bruges Communiqué on Enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (2010) speaks specifically about the need to internationalize the sector in its vision for the period 2011 to 2020, notably through mobility channels. Likewise, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has, since 2006, included references to global engagement in its mission statement, specifically “supporting community colleges to prepare learners to be effective in a global society” and “empowering community colleges to grow as a global force for learning by disseminating information and promoting international partnerships between American community colleges and countries seeking collaborative opportunities” (AACC, 2006).

Ultimately, moving institutions, faculty, staff, and students to see themselves and the work that they do in a larger global context is increasingly necessary in light of 21st-century realities such as economic interdependency, terrorism, and global warming, which cross national boundaries. The real work, however, lies in actually moving institutions beyond rhetoric and the mere recognition of these issues toward meaningful action that balances global and local interests in ways that make sense for individual institutions and their constituents.

### **English and More English**

Language is a central issue in any discussion of internationalization of the world’s higher education institutions and systems. In many parts of the world, the move to conduct research and deliver all or significant parts of educational programming in English is a strategic decision to increase international openness, attractiveness, and competitiveness. There are no definitive data about the extent to which English dominates the academy worldwide, but there is



a consensus that the movement is far-reaching. Two studies in Europe (Wächter & Maiworm, 2002, 2008) have attempted to analyze the trend of English-taught programs in that context. This work revealed that between 2002 and 2007 the number of English-taught programs more than tripled (from slightly over 700 to almost 2,400). At the same time, such programming is unevenly spread across Europe and “still not a mass phenomenon” (Wächter & Maiworm, 2008, p. 10), and English is unlikely to “take over” (Wächter

& Maiworm, 2008, p. 91) as the language of instruction in Europe, at least in the near future. In the European context, implementation of English-taught programs appears to be a strategic choice to strengthen internationalization efforts by enhancing attractiveness to international students, improving domestic graduates’ readiness for employment in a more global or international context, and serving to “sharpen the profile of the institution” (Wächter & Maiworm, 2008, p. 13).

### BOX 1.3 A View From Europe

*Irina Ferencz*

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Home to many of the world’s oldest universities, Europe is closely acquainted with internationalization. In fact, one of the core activities of this phenomenon, the international mobility of scholars, has a centuries-long history here. Nevertheless, only during the past two decades has internationalization moved center stage in Europe, gradually appearing at the core of institutional missions, policies, and strategies.

It remains fairly difficult, if not impossible, to talk about internationalization in Europe in generic terms. “Unity in diversity,” which has famously described much of the political and economic integration in the framework of the European Union, is equally valid in the sphere of higher education. Indeed “internationalization(s) at different speeds” may be one of the best ways to describe the European context. First, internationalization itself has been defined differently across the European higher education community—in some cases as the institutional response to the pervasive forces of globalization, in others as the very counterpart to globalization. Furthermore, European countries and the nearly 4,000 institutions of higher education there find themselves at various stages of internationalization, having initiated these efforts at different moments in time and with different resources at hand. Countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the Nordic countries are among the trendsetters in internationalization in Europe and beyond, while many other European countries are only beginning to get their feet wet in this area.

What unites most European higher education institutions is their strong interest in acquiring or enhancing their (unique) international profile and reputation, but there has been some uniformity and joint action. The Bologna Process and the initiatives of the European Union, with its mobility programs (like Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus), have fostered enormous interest in international student (and staff) mobility. The guiding principle here has been that more mobility is both a positive and necessary development. European states have been encouraged to cooperate with other European counterparts in a range of international activities, particularly in terms of mobility and creating joint and double degrees. The trend has also been to foster a friendly yet competitive approach with the rest of the world.

Support for internationalization activities has also penetrated the nation-level policy discourse. The governments of several European countries have had strategies for internationalization in place

for years now. In ideal cases, such policies are also in tune with institutional strategies in the country. National agencies for internationalization like the DAAD (Germany), the British Council (the United Kingdom), CampusFrance, or Nuffic (the Netherlands) play a crucial role in these efforts, and there is a growing tendency to develop such national-level actors across Europe. Mutual learning is in full swing in this area. For example, websites of the type “Study in . . .” have already become widespread, and so has the presence of European actors at promotional fairs and similar events around the world.

Europe currently enjoys a positive global profile. It hosts about half of the world’s mobile student population and has managed to preserve this market share over the past decade, despite growing competition and the multiplication of study destinations worldwide. Yet, there are clear national differences here, as well; about two thirds of all foreign students in Europe study in just three countries – the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. European students who study abroad tend to choose other European countries and only occasionally opt to study outside of Europe.

Many European countries are now shifting from *more* internationalization to *better* internationalization, for example, seeking to attract the best and brightest students from abroad, to forge strategic partnerships and alliances, and to measure and assure the quality of international activities. Concerns about the unintended consequences of internationalization are also on the rise, in relation to such issues as brain drain, monolingualism (English as the *lingua franca*), and the impact of internationalization indicators on public funding of institutions. Continuing to internationalize with the same level of enthusiasm will require European higher education institutions to deal effectively and creatively with these challenges.

In other parts of the world, however, English has arguably taken over, and more by necessity than by choice. In Ethiopia, for example, English is the official language of instruction in universities (although not of primary or secondary education). This policy has been considered critically important to Ethiopia’s highly ambitious plan to expand the enrollment capacity and quality of its postsecondary system. A great deal of foreign aid and expertise has been invested to this end, with English serving as the *lingua franca* of this engagement. Given that so much of the world’s global knowledge economy turns on communication in English, there is some merit to this development in Ethiopia, but there are also serious drawbacks. Many Ethiopian students and faculty are simply not operating effectively in English, putting them at a disadvantage for both teaching and learning. Furthermore, if the aim of the country’s massive push to upgrade its national higher education system is to address key Ethiopian challenges—of poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, environmental degradation, public health problems, and the like—does the widespread use of a

non-native language (often supported by curricula and materials from abroad) contribute effectively to the understanding of local problems or the cultivation of local solutions?

From a more general standpoint, de Wit (2011) has singled out teaching in English as the first of nine fundamental misconceptions about internationalization, all of which in some way reflect a situation where the means to achieve internationalization have evolved into goals in and of themselves and in the process have lost much, if not all, of their meaning. In the case of English usage, it can also lead to a series of unintended consequences and “absurd situations” that devalue internationalization and reduce educational quality (de Wit, 2011, p. 6).

How and to what extent to incorporate English—or other dominant languages, for that matter—into the higher education enterprise is under discussion in countless countries and institutions across the globe. It provides an especially vivid example of the complex considerations involved for many institutions when it comes to formulating rational approaches to “glocal” action; that is, how best to take into

account broad international perspectives and concerns as well as more immediate local needs and issues?

### Cooperative Networking

Another notable aspect of internationalization today is the pervasiveness of regional and cross-border networking in higher education at institutional and national levels. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of this kind of engagement has been the Bologna Process, an intergovernmental agreement now involving nearly 50 countries that has facilitated the effort to build a European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The EHEA aspires to “a common, Europe-wide framework of understanding around tertiary education and lifelong learning, with significant cross-border intelligibility of degrees and qualifications, and a high level of quality, attractiveness, and competitiveness on a global scale” (Altbach et al., 2009, p. 28; Bologna Declaration, 1999). The Bologna Process has attracted the interest of higher education leaders and policymakers in many corners of the world, and has served as a key point of reference for other regions (see Chapter 5, this volume). Indeed, cooperative networking and the focus on regionalization appear to be strongly correlated, as seen in initiatives such as ENLACES in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNESCO-IESALC, 2008); the establishment of the African Network for Internationalization of Education (Teferra & Knight, 2008); the African Union Harmonization Strategy, now under development; discussions among Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) members to work more collaboratively in Asia (English.news.cn, 2010); and the Catania Declaration (2006), which aims to bring more than a dozen countries that border the Mediterranean Sea into closer contact through greater “comparability and readability of higher education systems” (Catania Declaration, 2006, p. 2).

International cooperation in higher education is also seen through the countless institutional and professional organizations that have proliferated in recent years and purposefully incorporate an international focus into their membership and activities. Student networks, university and rectors’ conferences, administrators’ and practitioners’ associations, scholarly

networks, and quality assurance and accreditation bodies all figure into this discussion (Schneller, Lungu, & Wächter, 2009). It is not surprising that NAFSA, originally established in the United States in 1948 as the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, kept the acronym by which it is best known but changed the name of the organization in 1990 to the Association of International Educators to better reflect the scope of its international membership, which has swelled to more than 10,000.

International organizations with a wide range of profiles are also understood to be playing ever more important roles in higher education policy, planning, and development (Bassett & Maldonado-Maldonado, 2009). Key actors in this area include OECD, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. In addition, private philanthropic organizations—such as the Carnegie Corporation and the Ford, MacArthur, and Rockefeller foundations—as well as government aid agencies (notably, although certainly not exclusively, from northern Europe) have contributed heavily to initiatives focused on higher education, particularly in Africa. The involvement of these organizations in the higher education enterprise, particularly in the developing world, has been the subject of much critique. However, they must also be recognized for an array of positive contributions when it comes to pooling significant resources in support of higher education and drawing attention to the needs of less-developed countries when it comes to tertiary education development and sustainability.

Meanwhile, international cooperation in research also has become increasingly common and important, involving national agreements, institutional arrangements, and the activity of countless individual researchers. Central to this trend has been the rising sense that the most cutting-edge research (particularly in the high-stakes STEM fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) can be most effectively achieved when leveraging the expertise of strong international teams. This is a function of both the complexity of this kind of research—which may demand top minds in several different disciplines, all of whom are unlikely to be at the same institution or even in the same country—and the cost of highly technical, often long-term research projects, which cannot realistically be borne by one institution or country. Reductions

in international travel costs and innovations in digital communications arguably have also served to smooth the way for more international research activity. In a 2007 report commissioned by the United Kingdom's Office of Science and Innovation, the authors noted dramatic growth in the volume of collaborative papers during the 10 years from 1995 to 2005. In absolute volume of collaborative papers, increases varied from 30% for France to 50% for the United Kingdom and more than 100% for China (Adams, Gurney, & Marshall, 2007). Many of the most compelling research issues of the day are understood to be borderless, international, or even global, in their origins and effects, adding another powerful incentive for international academic collaboration.

Networking, although practical and beneficial, also presents risks and challenges. Networks can be highly elite, keen to draw in members with the best resources to share. This can make it highly difficult for stakeholders from the world's fledgling higher education systems or more poorly resourced institutions to participate or to benefit from their output. If "different" (and, notably, less affluent and influential) partners are not involved—at any level—in such cooperative activities, the agendas and discourse of these networks and partnerships may not effectively incorporate the perspectives of importance to these already marginalized stakeholders (see Chapter 9, this volume, for further discussion on partnerships). For example, some observers have raised frequent questions about who is driving the agenda for higher education development in Africa—international donors or local stakeholders (Teferra, 2008a). The prominent use of English as the language of international cooperation in higher education (research-oriented or otherwise) is another example of how the process of international engagement skews perspective, priorities, and activities toward the more powerful partners.

### International Competition

While cooperation has become a hallmark of internationalization today, so has competition. The international rankings are an obvious manifestation of this trend, as are the aforementioned efforts to attract top academic talent from around the world in the race to generate the highest levels of marketable new knowledge.

Competitive advantage brings with it prestige, influence, and greater access to funding; this plays out not only at the institutional level, but also within national higher education systems, and even at the supranational level.

Many higher education institutions today aggressively leverage their international profile as a way to stand out in an increasingly crowded marketplace of postsecondary possibilities. Most often, this involves highlighting the international dimension on institutional websites and in other promotional materials, making sure that potential students and other stakeholders are aware of the institution's work in this area. Although hardly considered groundbreaking today, the emphasis on internationalization as a unique element of the institution is a significant departure from the way that colleges and universities presented themselves 15 or even 10 years ago. Meanwhile, a very small but increasingly visible set of institutions is taking this idea further by aiming to position themselves as fundamentally global, ostensibly for innovative academic purposes but also with the aim of increasing competitive advantage. Not surprisingly the list of institutions that now include *international* in their name is growing. More substantive initiatives to strengthen international profiles and enhance cachet are also on the rise. There are a considerable number of examples, but New York University Abu Dhabi stands out as an especially vivid case in point, touted as an extraordinary experiment in international education, but also openly acknowledged by NYU president, John Sexton, as an effort to outmaneuver other highly prestigious universities in the high-stakes race for international excellence and recognition (Krieger, 2008).

National education systems are also in competition with one another, even while they may be cooperating. National governments actively pursue internationalization goals for competitive purposes that relate to excellence in research, technological innovation, economic strength, and relevance. *World-class* is a term that pervades much of this discourse. In a clear maneuver to establish world-class institutions, a wide range of countries have launched excellence initiatives in recent years. These efforts are overwhelmingly government-sponsored and focus heavily on strengthening the work of existing or emerging institutions through competitive funding schemes. They also support the recruitment and

retention of top academic talent. Examples of these initiatives include China's 211 and 985 programs, Denmark's Investment Capital for University Research effort, Brain Korea 21, and Spain's Network for International Campuses of Excellence (Behrenbeck, 2010). In all cases, the benchmarks for excellence are clearly international, in the sense that success is to some degree measured on a global scale.

Finally, competition as a consequence of internationalization can also be seen at the supranational level. Europe offers perhaps the best example of this kind of region-wide thinking, which was succinctly captured in the language of the European Union's so-called Lisbon Strategy of 2000. This called for Europe "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (European Council, 2000), in no small part through a process of strengthening various aspects of the European higher education and research landscape. By all accounts, the Lisbon Strategy fell short of many of its stated goals, but the new European Union (EU) policy that replaced it, known as ET 2020, continues to advocate for support of knowledge, training,

and innovation activities within higher education (and through lifelong learning) that serve to strengthen Europe from within and maintain its dynamic position of leadership in the fast-moving global knowledge economy. Meanwhile, the Bologna Process is also concerned with the question of Europe's ability to compete globally in higher education. An evolving Bologna external working group has for several years been exploring a number of questions related to the promotion and marketing of European higher education to the world beyond Europe. And indeed some tangible efforts have been made to achieve a European brand and facilitate a central portal for access to information on and contacts within European higher education. Still, none of these coordinated activities has gained much traction. A lack of strong European-level leadership in this area may be one reason for this limited success. The size and diversity of European higher education also defies easy generalizations; first and foremost, Bologna signatory countries must attend to their own national issues and objectives, over and above the questions of joint European promotion and marketing of the higher education sector.

### BOX 1.4 A View From Latin America

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Latin America is more a cultural category than a geographical one. Most definitions include only Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries. Although there are French-speaking countries in the region, it is less common for them to be included under the Latin American umbrella. Besides language, other characteristics that define this group of countries are common historical experiences (colonialism and independence), cultural elements, and economic and political developments. Nevertheless, Latin America has many differences of geography, race, and size. We should therefore be cautious in considering Latin America as a single monolithic region.

One of the most striking characteristics of Latin American higher education institutions is their sense of identity. This derives from a number of sociohistorical events, such as the reform movement that took place in Córdoba, Argentina, in 1918 and subsequent student and intellectual movements. By then, building a regional identity was a key aspect of the agenda. Currently, the central issues for Latin American higher education relate to competition, the relevance of the private sector, and accreditation and quality assurance, all with significant international dimensions. Internationalization itself is evident in three key areas: student mobility, cross-border education



activities, and network building and collaboration. These speak to great potential in the region but are also very real challenges.

In terms of student mobility, the region faces an asymmetric situation with respect to developed countries. A great many Latin American students go abroad, compared to the far lower number of international students who study in Latin America (with the exception of Cuba, the largest recipient of international students in the region). Unfortunately, this issue is connected to brain drain. There is also an imbalance regarding degree seeking and non-degree seeking students: The region receives more of the latter than of the former.

Meanwhile, international providers of higher education services are more and more aware of the potential Latin American market. The national public and private sectors seem insufficient to satisfy demand, encouraging new providers to focus on the region. For instance, Laureate International Universities have bought at least 23 universities in Latin America (it also owns 18 in Europe, 4 in Asia, 2 in Australia and 4 in the United States), and the Apollo group is present in Chile and Mexico. On the other hand, very few Latin American programs are competitive at the global level. Although some question the reliability of global rankings, they provide an indication of the international standing of higher education systems and institutions. It is not a surprise that very few Latin American universities are included in the three most important global rankings. Only six universities from Brazil and one each from Argentina, Chile, and Mexico appear among the top 400 in the Shanghai Jiao Tong university ranking. Only one (from Mexico) appears in the top 200 of the Times Higher Education ranking, and just nine Latin American universities (three from Brazil and two each from Argentina, Chile, and Mexico) appear among the top 400 in the *U.S. News & World Report* standings, the most recent global ranking.

Finally, in the area of establishing collaborative arrangements and building networks, most Latin American higher education institutions are signing interinstitutional agreements with as many universities as they can, but the effectiveness of this practice has been questioned. There are also attempts to collaborate regionally: for example, the Network of Macro-universities of Latin America and the Caribbean, whose purpose is to connect the largest universities of the region; the *Universia* network whose goal is to create a Hispanic-American space of socially responsible knowledge; and the Tuning project, which is looking to apply the Tuning methodology used to harmonize European higher education to the Latin American region.

Overall, the main challenge for Latin American higher education institutions seems to be that of moving toward deeper engagement with the knowledge-based economy, instead of remaining at the more traditional level of just "becoming more international" (via such mechanisms as the promotion of academic mobility, participation of cross-border providers, and inter-university collaborations and networks). It is fair to say that, even in these areas, the region lags far behind the world leaders. Catching up will require Latin American institutions to begin by enhancing regional links with a medium- to long-term vision that considers the ways these institutions will transcend traditional internationalization to participate more actively in the knowledge based-economy.

Internationalization reflects new kinds of competition within higher education today, particularly at the higher levels of the prestige hierarchy. Competition often encourages innovation and excellence, yet all nations and institutions risk getting caught up in the powerful forces of international competition without carefully

considering what outcomes are truly desirable and achievable.

### **Commercialization**

An element of internationalization that is not much researched but is beginning to receive

greater attention is the growing commercialization of international higher education initiatives. For quite some time, many universities (and some countries) have seen internationalization as an important source of revenue. Major receiving countries of international students—such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—have quantified the earnings gained when higher education is assessed as an export activity, and some strategies acknowledge international initiatives as a means of earning income to compensate for funding deficits. Recruiting students from abroad, establishing branch campuses, and implementing other initiatives are strategies often intended to earn revenue for the sponsoring institutions, even when these institutions are considered to be nonprofit.

There is also a rapidly growing for-profit higher education industry involved in a range of services including establishing new universities, recruiting students, providing language training (mainly in English), and preparing students for testing. Many of these for-profit enterprises are multinational, with activities in numerous countries. Some of the highest-profile actors in this sphere are Laureate Education (formerly Sylvan Learning Systems), Kaplan, Inc., and the Apollo Group (the parent company of the University of Phoenix) (Altbach & Knight, 2010). In addition, an illicit international market offers fake degrees and other questionable higher education services.

While the profit motive has always been an unmistakable part of the internationalization landscape, it seems to be growing in size and scope. At a global level, there remains the unresolved issue of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). While the specifics of GATS are not explored here, it is important to recognize that higher education is now discussed in a free trade context “as a commodity to be freely traded internationally.” Another topic of debate is the idea that higher education is a private good rather than a public responsibility. Altogether, these “powerful economic references place higher education in the domain of an international market and promote the view that commercial forces have a legitimate place in higher education” (Altbach & Knight, 2010, p. 120).

The diverse rationales for internationalization may draw heavily from such issues as educational quality, intellectual relevance, and institutional

strengthening, but they are not likely to be divorced from commercial potential, which is increasingly salient. The global monetary value of international higher education is difficult to assess, but it is arguably substantial, given that foreign students are estimated to have contributed \$18.8 billion to the U.S. economy alone during the 2009–2010 academic year (NAFSA, 2010). The standard warning of *caveat emptor* applies in this discussion, however. Indeed, business and education are not always easy partners. The 2010 U.S. congressional investigations into improprieties among for-profit postsecondary education providers called into question motives and practices among this group that can easily be extrapolated to an international higher education context. In the same year, all distance education providers in Ethiopia were shut down in an effort to restrain what the government believed to be poor educational provision by private institutions. This is another dramatic indication of the tensions between commercial and noncommercial interests in different higher education contexts.

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### “SO WHAT?” A FEW PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

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Twentieth-century American inventor and businessman Charles Kettering is credited with having said, “You can be sincere and still be stupid.” This pithy insight, if a little blunt, does capture an important aspect of the challenges facing senior higher education administrators today with regard to internationalization: Believing in it is not enough. Indeed, institutional leaders and managers may be deeply convinced of the relevance of internationalization, but for such beliefs to achieve meaningful and sustainable results, an informed vision and tangible resources are necessary as well. Internationalization may be effectively implemented, cultivated, refined, and sustained in many ways, and each institution needs to think carefully about the extent and the direction that this development will take. Some institutions will opt for a highly centralized approach, while others will work to embed internationalization more broadly across the institution. However, in terms of crafting the unifying vision and marshalling the resources necessary

to move substantively toward the realization of their vision, most higher education institutions will benefit from having at least one internationalization advocate situated at or near the top of the decision-making hierarchy. This increases the likelihood that the international agenda will be visible internally and externally, and puts internationalization on a par with the other core activities and initiatives of the institution. (See Chapters 7 and 8, this volume, for further discussion.)

In conjunction with the appropriate designation of leadership for internationalization, the international agenda requires “care and feeding” in the form of resources—financial, human, and intellectual. The most effectively internationalized institutions—no matter how that label may be defined—steer funding, staffing, creative energy, and expertise explicitly toward the achievement of results, whether the goals include attracting international students and scholars, developing innovative new program offerings, providing students with opportunities to learn abroad, or supporting inter-institutional partnerships.

This kind of commitment does not and cannot take place devoid of context. There is a daily (if not hourly) barrage of new information circulating about internationalization in higher education. In addition, a host of new issues emerge regularly in social, political, and economic spheres that may have a direct effect on the ways that institutions can and must think about their international profiles and agendas. To address this, senior administrators in this field today must have a coherent strategy for information management. Ideally, this should involve a balance between access to the most vital and relevant news of the day and exposure to additional sources of information that provide deeper analysis and varied perspectives that take into account long-term implications.

The fast-moving world of internationalization also requires clear thinking. The pace of new developments is dizzying, and the pressure to act or be left behind seems more intense than ever before. The international agendas that seem to survive the test of time and achieve long-lasting impacts are those that are squarely rooted in the missions of the actors involved. Quality, (mission) coherence, and sustainability are three fundamentally important elements that should be at the core of

institutional planning and decision-making with regard to internationalization.

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## CONCLUSION

Internationalization represents a phenomenon of interest to an extraordinarily broad cross-section of higher education institutions in all parts of the world. This is a notable development (particularly) of the last two decades. From a relatively marginal position on the agendas of institutions, nations, and international organizations, internationalization has acquired a significant profile at the highest levels of policymaking and institutional leadership in many corners of the world. This has been driven by a very real sense of the opportunities and imperatives inherent in the phenomenon. The perception is that much can be gained by attending to the international dimension, while real opportunities may be forfeited by failing to advance or engage with this agenda.

To be sure, the potential to bring about positive change through internationalization in such areas as relevance, quality, and even prestige is quite exciting. All signs point to the fact that it makes little (if any) sense for institutions to opt out of international engagement altogether. Indeed, internationalization is affecting what, how, where, and from whom students learn; how higher education institutions and systems conceive of their missions and roles; how research is carried out and disseminated; and how fundamental paradigms of cooperation and competition in higher education are understood and elaborated.

But there are real risks and challenges associated with these developments. Central among these are the fundamental mismatch (costly in both the short and long-term) that can occur between international aspirations, local needs, and institutional resources; the very real potential for poor planning and execution of misguided internationalization strategies; the risk of further cleavages between wealthier and poorer individuals, institutions, and countries, all approaching internationalization on an inherently uneven playing field; and (sadly) new opportunities for corruption and exploitation.

The complex and shifting landscape of internationalization, along with the speed with which new developments present themselves in the current context, makes managing

internationalization strategies (and their practical components) extremely challenging. Perhaps even more difficult is the process of articulating a clear hierarchy of interests to guide efforts in this area in a coherent fashion. Presented with a world of opportunities but only limited resources, this is a most daunting task. Making informed and creative choices about internationalization—with a clear sense of the interplay between risks and benefits, opportunities and imperatives, obstacles and resources—requires unique skills and talents, real vision, and sustained commitment.

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