

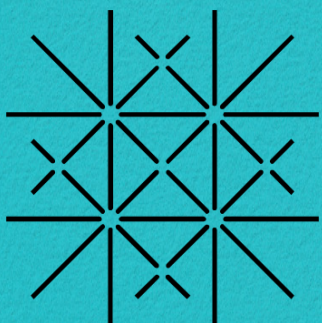
---

2014 Edition

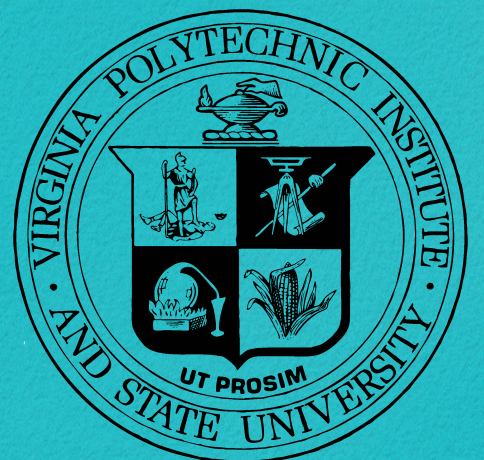
---

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Future of Higher Education:  
Preparing for Change



UNI  
BASEL





# GPP MANUAL 2014

© 2016

Jointly published by Universität Basel &  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Concept and layout by Justin D. Shanks  
email: [jshanks@vt.edu](mailto:jshanks@vt.edu)

This publication follows:

[GPP Manual 2010](#)  
[GPP Manual 2011](#)  
[GPP Manual 2012](#)  
[GPP Manual 2013](#)





# INTRODUCTION

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PROGRAM

### **A US-Swiss Program for Future Academic Leaders**

A partnership between Virginia Tech in the US and the University of Basel in Switzerland, the Global Perspectives Program is aimed at preparing future academic leaders for the challenges of an increasingly diverse and globally focused higher education (HE) sector. Through exchange and firsthand experience, GPP offers masters, doctoral and post-doctoral students the opportunity for reflective comparison of the two countries' HE sectors and the chance for individuals to develop global competencies and intercultural communications skills.

# GPP MANUAL 2014

## **Future of Higher Education: Preparing for Change**

The central theme during 2014 edition of the Global Perspectives Program asked participants to contemplate issues and challenges pertinent to our common future in the global higher education arena. Rooted in research, but with an eye toward the future, the 2014 GPP cohort dedicated specific attention to four key areas:

1. the impact of technology on teaching, learning, and research
2. globalization and internationalization
3. professors as public intellectuals
4. new international agendas for higher education post-Millennium Development Goals

This publication presents written contributions from each member of the 2014 GPP cohort. Participants were free to report on some aspect of the year's central theme or select another topic pertinent to global higher education. In toto, the contributions ask important questions and seek in-depth answers to some of higher education's more pressing inquiries.





## FOREWORD

As noted earlier, the 2014 Global Perspectives Programs (GPP) focused on the future of higher education and preparing for change. Some participants wrote about four key thematic areas identified within the cohort: (1) technology, (2) globalization, (3) professors as public intellectuals, and (4) post-Millennium Development goals. Other participants selected a topic pertinent to their own research interests. Collectively, the articles represent a rich diversity of interests and incorporate reflections and commentaries on a variety of topics.



It is always a challenge to consider the future of higher education within our rapidly evolving global society. The Global Perspectives program was designed to provide opportunities for current graduate students and post-docs from Virginia Tech and the University of Basel to explore their roles and responsibilities as future faculty members or non-academic professionals within the context of global change. Besides the specific knowledge gained by each individual, the participants gained valuable experience as a member of an international team exercising both collaborative research and intercultural communication skills. Participants demonstrated keen interest in shaping the future of global higher education and many assumed a variety of leadership roles throughout the program.

Our understandings are informed by our education, our experiences, as well as the academic and sociocultural contexts in which we live. GPP brings individuals together in a creative academic space that encourages examination of their various perspectives. Importantly, GPP provides an opportunity for immersive engagement in a journey where process is actually more important than product. Please enjoy reading the following selections that explore important ideas, lessons, and questions. But, be sure to read with an eye on the ways in which each author was transformed by the experiences of the 2014 Global Perspectives Program.

Karen P. DePauw

Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education, Virginia Tech



## GPP @ UNIVERSITÄT BASEL

The programme incorporates five components; an input seminar on the HE systems of Switzerland and the US, the hosting of the Virginia Tech delegation in Basel, a joint seminar in Riva San Vitale, Ticino, visits to HE institutions in the US and a conference held at the Swiss Embassy in Washington at the programme's close.

GPP 2014 was the fifth year the programme has run at the University of Basel.

While in the US it is a goal of the programme to visit a broad range of HE institution types. US HE institutions visited by Swiss participants in 2014 included: Northeastern University, MIT, Boston College, University of Virginia, New River Community College, George Mason University and our programme partners, Virginia Tech.

As an mixed-disciplinary programme, GPP enables a vibrant inter-faculty dialogue. In 2014, programme included participants from Developmental Biology, Faculty of Law, Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research, Die klassisch-philologischen Fachbereiche, Swiss Tropical & Public Health Institute, and University Hospital Basel.

Find out more about the Global Perspectives Programme at [www.globalaffairs.unibas.ch/gpp](http://www.globalaffairs.unibas.ch/gpp).





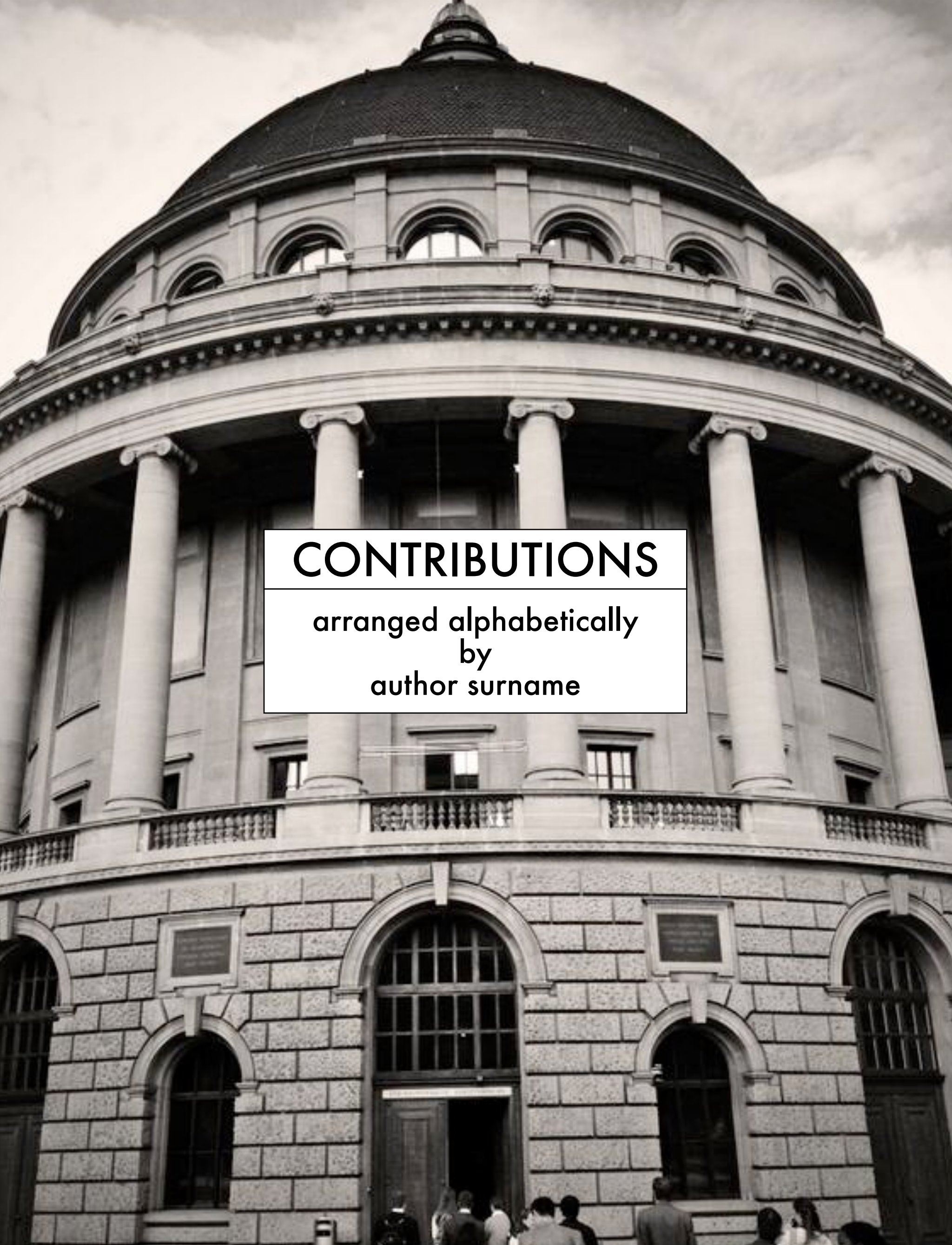
## GPP @ VIRGINIA TECH

The Virginia Tech Future Professoriate Global Perspectives program was developed to provide VT graduate students with opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of global higher education, especially in Europe. In order to be selected to participate in the summer program, graduate students must have completed two courses taught through the Graduate School: GRAD 5104 - Preparing the Future Professoriate and GRAD 5114 - Contemporary Pedagogy. After selection for this highly competitive program, participants meet monthly during the spring semester to increase their understanding of higher education in Europe, the Bologna Process, and global graduate education and research with focus on Switzerland and Italy.

The 2014 global experience included visits to selected universities in Switzerland, France, and Italy. In addition to these visits, the trip included daily seminars, cultural excursions, and a joint seminar with UniBasel participants at VT's facility in Riva San Vitale, Ticino. The experience concluded with the Global Perspectives conference held at the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC in June.

For more information about past, present, and future GPP initiatives, please visit the GPP website ([graduateschool.vt.edu/GPP](http://graduateschool.vt.edu/GPP)), blog ([blogs.it.vt.edu/globalperspectives](http://blogs.it.vt.edu/globalperspectives)), Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/GlobalPerspectivesProgramVirginiaTech](http://www.facebook.com/GlobalPerspectivesProgramVirginiaTech)), Twitter feed ([twitter.com/GPPVT](http://twitter.com/GPPVT)), or YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/user/GlobalPerspectivesVT](http://www.youtube.com/user/GlobalPerspectivesVT)).





# CONTRIBUTIONS

arranged alphabetically  
by  
author surname



VALENTIN BALTZER, MLAW, LL.M.

# GET CONNECTED – BE CONNECTED

## Initial Remarks

“Get connected” is a catch phrase certainly since the beginning of the digital revolution in the early 1990s which was intensified through the enhanced possibility of using mobile devices in the last ten years. What we really can do once we got connected is still very much explored today. The GPP Program 2014 of the University of Basel and Virginia Tech offered here stimulating insights with regard to higher education and how it might change in the future.

The setting of the GPP Program allowed that views could be exchanged with American colleagues at Virginia Tech and other institutions in higher education. Furthermore, the program also enabled to exchange views with colleagues of other faculties and departments within the University Basel emphasizing that a true global perspective starts with understanding the local one but does not end by just crossing the next boarder to be able to claim the attribute international.<sup>1</sup> A few observations gathered through this experience will be shared in this essay.

## The Use of Web Technology in the Higher Education Classroom

Today, web technology offers a wide range of possibilities to enhance the classroom experience of students in higher education institutions. What is known for a long time is the asynchronous use of web technology through course webpages where students can see or download the course material (or parts of it) and course announcements on or from a webpage. Apart from this static approach there are also ways how students can approach course content in a dynamic way for example through online quizzes, games and surveys. These kinds of web applications can also be used in a synchronous way: A teacher has for example through so called “clickers” the possibility to make during her or his lecture (and even while speaking) surveys and quizzes which students can fill out with their mobile devices right away. The teacher thereby gets instantly a feedback if the students understood what she or he is talking about or if further explanations are needed.

The last stage is finally to give up the physical boundaries of a classroom entirely and teach a course or even an entire degree online. Nowadays, there are multiple specialized providers of so called Learning Management Systems (“LMS”)<sup>2</sup> for this purpose. An LMS allows organizing a course from the start to the end and includes several features such as video streaming, conferencing, communication and exam tools.

In addition to the modes of how the course content can be delivered, web technology offers many ways how students can communicate and collaborate for example through shared documents and



chats but also blogs or the (today probably already old fashioned) use of email. Furthermore, online databases and virtual libraries offer student access to a huge amount of specialist literature usually for no additional charge to their tuition fee. Through the rise of affordable and convenient e-book readers the purchase of hardcopy books often becomes obsolete. On the other hand, this leads to the fact that in a modern university students are expected to have at least a laptop to be able complete their coursework.

An interesting observation is, that the use of web technology in the higher education classroom seems much less frequent in Switzerland (and probably also in whole continental Europe) than in the U.S. Where could be the reasons for this? There is certainly not much difference in the availability of web technology available in higher education institutions as such. The University of Basel, for instance, offers a wide range of web tools which cover basically all the mentioned above.<sup>3</sup> However, U.S. institutions generally seem more student focused than their Swiss counterparts simply for the reason because students are an important income factor. Therefore U.S. universities usually react closer on student demands and are organized in a more central way to achieve this. As a result, U.S. universities as an institution feel at the moment more the need but are also better fit to adapt an online strategy<sup>4</sup> -- To develop and pursue an online strategy a certain top-down element given through the more centralized organization appears to be essential according to Charles Kilfoy, to assure a certain degree of coordination but also education to teaching staff for a successful online product.<sup>5</sup>

This prerequisite is probably not naturally given in the typical Swiss university which is usually highly decentralized and fragmented. Moreover, Swiss universities are rather faculty centered institutions. It is no surprise, that the use of web technology in higher education seems today very often limited to the adoption of web technology which facilitates the teaching process for professors (for example with easy and quickly editable course webpages) rather than the learning process for students (for example the use of “clickers”). With this background it is seems understandable, that online courses do not reach the same level in Switzerland as in the U.S. at the moment.

## **Effects of Web Technology in the Higher Education Classroom**

In first line web technology enlarges – as we have seen before – the toolset for teaching classes. However, web technology has not only different ways ready to deliver content but also allows to communicate with more people individually. While this can be an upside for the learning environment and consequently the progress students can make in a class, this also means a much bigger involvement of the teaching staff. It is no surprise that teaching staff report that their communication with the students (and consequently probably their workload and stress level) has increased through the use of social media in the classroom.<sup>6</sup>

What is true for the teaching staff can also be found on the side of the students: The classroom 2.0 is not something that happens only every week on a Monday afternoon from 4 to 6 pm. The classroom is everywhere at any time. Classes are literally enhanced in time, meaning that students can/have to



occupy themselves with the class and the teacher the whole week. Of course this gives also students less time to rest. In addition it is a concern, that with the increased communication level of the classroom 2.0 the distraction of the students at the same time seems increased.<sup>7</sup> This might suggest that the quality of the communication with the use of web technology in the classroom perhaps decreases.

On the level of the institution the keyword is “modularization”: Web technology allows universities to offer students more customized and flexible in time courses and degrees. This is mainly possible because the delivery of content through the internet has rather low transaction costs and is scalable much easier than through the physical delivery of course content.

## **Learning Online: Fewer Boundaries**

A distinct feature of the internet is that it breaks geographical boundaries: It does basically not stop at the border of a country. Have universities been competing in research on a global basis since a long time, web technology extends that global competition also to the field of education through online courses and degrees. The reasons why you should not be able to pursue a degree from a university from the other side of the world instead of one closer from where you live become less evident.<sup>8</sup> Along with this, educational institutions have to face that branding gets more and important to be able to distinguish one from another and address their target group.

The limiting factor of space to educate people can be overcome with online courses. This helps to battle the challenges of the trend, that more and more people are seeking degrees from a higher education institution in the future.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, online studying is more accessible for people with disabilities or for people who need the flexibility because of their family situation. Boundaries on the side of the faculty are also diminished: What is true for the students with regard to accessibility and flexibility is also true for the teaching staff. Especially, in online courses it is truly possible to have a real international and the most suitable faculty without the need to take into account where they live.

## **Online Courses and Degrees Get More and More Credibility**

Traditionally there were reservations against distance learning and online courses and degrees. The established universities were first rather reluctant to adopt an online strategy (probably also because the technical prerequisites were not until long ago really sufficient). However, this continues to change dramatically at least since well-established names in the U.S. academic landscape (M.I.T., Harvard, Stanford, University of California, University of Pennsylvania, Duke University etc.) started well financed Massive Open Online Course (“MOOC”) platforms (edX, Coursera, Udacity).<sup>10</sup> Online education gained credibility and was able to profit from the halo effect of these institutions. In Switzerland online learning is still a niche product, even though the awareness that online education can be a valuable alternative to the traditional ways of education seems to increase.<sup>11</sup>



## Knowing How to Study and Teach Online

Knowing how to study and teach online is not just about knowing and enabling you to operate an LMS. For sure this is an important part and also the reason why online course providers usually assure 24/7 technical support and try to give comprehensive training especially also to their teaching staff in this respect. But it is not the only part: Studying and teaching online is different to the traditional educational setting mainly because the social interaction has totally different rules. The social environment is an important part of the learning environment though.<sup>12,13</sup>

An advancement of online degrees as compared to traditional distance learning can be seen in the availability of social media which can serve to mimic the traditional social interaction in a classroom. Teaching staff but also students need to be prepared for this. Even though one could claim, that the so called digital literate generation knows the necessary behavior already by heart, an interesting observation shows, that this might for example not be fully true: Social media in Switzerland seems to be used almost exclusively for leisure activities. In the U.S. on the other hand it is also used for professional purposes (For example to share study or work related newspaper articles, write blogs about professional topics, or use professional communities. As scientists might do when using a specialized platform like ResearchGate [[www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)]). However, a professional use of social media would be important to really create a stimulating learning environment but also to unleash the true power of being digital literate also in a professional way.

## Be Connected

The mentioned understanding of being digital literate is actually at the core of “being connected,” understood as being able to engage in meaning full communication over web technology. Why is this important? A vast amount of communication and opinion forming is done on the internet today. Communication over the internet (and especially also the communication through social media<sup>14</sup>) has become a cornerstone in western democracies. If people want to make their ideas understood in this discourse, it is not sufficient anymore just to be able to give speeches, write newspaper articles or books. In my opinion the imbalance of the use of social media for leisure and the use of social media for professional purposes could be one of the reasons for the sometimes mentioned lack of quality in today’s political discourse.<sup>15</sup> After all, professionals should know how to master the existing web tools. Was it around 150 years ago recognized to be essential that everyone is able to read for a functioning democracy, digital literateness – as a step further – seems essential today. Ironically it is this time rather the academic world who needs to catch up. It is the universities who have to make their contribution here by educating their students how to use web technology not only for leisure but also in a professional way, exactly in the same way as it is unquestioned that they show their students how to write scientific articles or use scientific databases. Finally, also from professors digital literacy should be expected. There is no excuse for being digital illiterate anymore – be connected!



## Notes

1. This was especially addressed by the Rector of the University of Basel, Antonio Loprieno, in his speech on 28 May 2014 at the University of Basel: In the case of Basel the local perspective is anyway the international one and vice versa.
2. LMS is sometimes also called "Course Management System", "Pedagogical Platform" or "E-Learning Platform". Well known LMS are for example Blackboard, Moodle and Canvas. For a more comprehensive list of LMS and further information see [edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Learning\\_management\\_system](http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Learning_management_system).
3. See [urz.unibas.ch/content.cfm?nav=4&content=92](http://urz.unibas.ch/content.cfm?nav=4&content=92). However, for a bit more inspiration what else could be possible: Virginia Tech has a facility called "The Cube" in The Moss Arts Center on its campus in Blacksburg, Virginia which allowed projects like OPERAcraft (see [www.unirel.vt.edu/audio\\_video/2013/12/121313-cfa-operacraft.html](http://www.unirel.vt.edu/audio_video/2013/12/121313-cfa-operacraft.html)).
4. For three basic models how an online strategy could be implemented refer to Charles Kilfoy, "Building a Practical Faculty Training and Support Model for Today's Online Learning in Higher Education," (unpublished essay), (Kilfoy, Online Learning in Higher Education), p. 3.
5. Charles Kilfoy, Senior Director of Distance Learning & Educational Technology Northeastern University Online, during his speech on 16 June 2014 at Northeastern University, Boston.
6. Seaman, Jeff and Hester Tinti-Kane. *Social Media for Teaching and Learning* 2013, Pearson Learning Solutions and Babson Survey Research Group, Boston, MA. 2013. ([www.pearsonlearningsolutions.com/higher-education/social-media-survey.php](http://www.pearsonlearningsolutions.com/higher-education/social-media-survey.php)).
7. Ibid., p. 6.
8. This is especially true for continental Europe where students typically select a university according to its geographical position near their home town.
9. In December 2014 the Federal Office for Statistics published a full report with the title "Szenarien 2014-2023 für das Bildungssystem" featuring detailed discussion of scenarios for future student numbers in Switzerland. See for more regarding the prognosis on student numbers from 2014-2023 for Switzerland the statistics of Swiss Federal Office for Statistics [www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/15/08/dos/blank/15/03.html](http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/15/08/dos/blank/15/03.html).
10. Pappano, Laura, "The Year of the MOOC," *The New York Times*, 2 November 2012 ([www.nytimes.com/2012/11/04/education/edlife/massive-open-online-courses-are-multiplying-at-a-rapid-pace.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/04/education/edlife/massive-open-online-courses-are-multiplying-at-a-rapid-pace.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&)).



11. Miltz, Marvin, "Training für Tausende," *Handelszeitung*, Zürich, 29 September 2012, ([www.handelszeitung.ch/ausbildung/training-fuer-tausende-672622](http://www.handelszeitung.ch/ausbildung/training-fuer-tausende-672622)).
12. Garrison, Randy D. and Heather Kanuka, "Blended Learning: Uncovering its Transformative Potential in Higher Education," *Internet and Higher Education*, 7 (2004), Elsevier, Paris/Toronto, p. 95-105.
13. From a faculty perspective, Kilfoy argues it is not only important for online schools to simply create online courses but also create an online faculty. See Kilfoy's *Online Learning in Higher Education*, p. 4. for additional details.
14. Sunstein, Cass R.; *Republic.com 2.0*, Princeton 2007, pp. 145.



MATT CHAN

# PERSPECTIVES ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Decisions made at university governance affect student lives greatly since the majority population of a university is students. Yet often times these decisions are made by administrators and faculty. To balance this, universities often employ provisions to include student involvement in university governance, at least in an advisory capacity. In some universities, graduate students are given the opportunity to distinguish themselves from undergraduate representatives in university governance. However, it is convenient for graduate students to focus on their studies and never venture out from their labs and offices, or even their own academic unit. Under such circumstances, it is not difficult to imagine that there might be limited participation from graduate students in university governance and administration. However, the principle of shared-governance is that all stakeholders may participate in decision making, since each stakeholder are the most informed of their constituents' needs.<sup>1,2</sup> In universities that employ a shared-governance structure, it is imperative the graduate students participate and made their voices heard.

Over the years, the governance structure at Virginia Tech has evolved into a shared governance system that strives to ensure that all stakeholders in the university have opportunities to participate and give input.<sup>3</sup> Each of the four main constituents on the Virginia Tech campus – Undergraduate Students, Graduate Students, Faculty, and Staff – has its own governance organization. These organizations select representatives to populate multiple levels of the university's governance structure. The Board of Visitors, being the politically appointed body with final authority on all university policies, has non-voting representatives from all of the four aforementioned major constituencies. The University Council, which act as the final deliberative body recommending university policies to the President and the Board of Visitors, has its voting members populated two-thirds by the aforementioned university constituency members, and the rest by various administrators. In turn, smaller commissions and committees with similar compositions support the Council.<sup>4</sup> In theory, this system would allow for all four major constituencies to have firsthand knowledge and participation in university policy formation and developments. However, in practice this posts a few problems. This system requires effective communication between the all the members within the governance bureaucracy. For example, if a graduate student representative at University Council fails to report back to their graduate student community the Council's proceeding, then the community would have no knowledge of anything that transpired that may have vital relevance to them.

Another problem is that this governing structure assumes that the four aforementioned constituencies group more or less encompasses everyone within the university, which is not true. Postdoctoral



associates, as well as research scientists, are generally not represented within university governance.<sup>4</sup> The Faculty constituency generally only represents traditional tenure-track faculty members, with little to no representations given to adjunct faculty, or other faculty that are not in a continued appointment track.<sup>5</sup> Another one of the most debilitating aspects of this system also comes of its strength. Virginia Tech's governance system has multiple layers of complex bureaucracy that ensures sufficient amount of checks and balances preventing abuses. However, any progress within governance requires significant time and efforts from all stakeholders, often with large amount of perseverance in major policy formation and/or amendment. This is particularly challenging to graduate students (although, no doubt to other as well) because the culture of graduate studies discourages activities and commitments beyond their academic pursuits.<sup>6</sup> This in turn, becomes a vicious cycle to the university governing system because it relies on committed participation from all constituents.

University governance structures can vary greatly from one institution to another, even within the United States. Globally, these governance structures can range from complex layers of bureaucracies with participants from all communities in the institution, to a sparse body operated mostly by administrators.<sup>2</sup> This diversity can be readily observed even within a single city. Of the two universities in the city of Zurich, Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, or ETH Zurich, has a similar structure in place as Virginia Tech. The University Assembly is comprised of representatives from four core constituencies and advises the university administration on policies.<sup>7</sup> However, the four core constituencies are grouped differently from Virginia Tech, reflecting the differences in educational practices between Switzerland and the United States. ETH Zurich categorizes university personnel into Faculty, Scientific Staff, Students, and Technical and Administrative Staff. The key difference between ETH Zurich's categorization to Virginia Tech is a matter of how graduate students are represented. At Virginia Tech, all graduate students, no matter if they are master students or doctoral students, are grouped within the graduate student constituents. However, at ETH Zurich, doctoral students that are actively doing research are considered Scientific Staff, and are grouped together with research assistants, postdocs and all other non-professorial scientific staff in the institution.<sup>8</sup> All other students, graduate or otherwise, that are not actively doing research fall within the Students constituency. ETH Zurich's categorization of constituencies therefore provides a route and also incentives for some graduate students to interact with research personnel (e.g. postdocs) and pursue their topics of interest in university governance together. Whereas in Virginia Tech such routes and incentives do not exist. Other than the constituency, the governance structure at ETH Zurich is similar to Virginia Tech, in that it provides broad representation but requires relatively high level of commitment and participation from constituency representatives for the system to operate effectively.

In contrast to this, the University of Zurich has a vastly different governance structure. The University of Zurich has the University Senate, which is comprised of all of the professors in the university, with additional community members.<sup>9</sup> These community members are split into four constituencies: Privatdozentz (these are faculty who aren't professors but are given the right to supervise doctoral



students), Non-professional Staff, Students, and Technical Staff. However, each constituency is only allocated seats in the University Senate that are equal to 3% the number of Professors. Hence, professors heavily dominate the Senate, since all professors are *ex officio* members of the Senate, and all other members' seats are adjusted accordingly. In addition to this asymmetric representation, during GPP14's visit to University of Zurich, we were informed that the Senate only non-ceremonious power is to elect the president and the vice presidents. The senate can issue "statements" regarding on any university policy, but these statements are not binding and possess no real power for change. Hence, any real policy changes seem to only occur at the administrative level, and the more prestigious professors are all guaranteed a forum to express their opinions by default.

Students often are the most impacted population in a university when new policies are formed or revised. Even policies that may not directly affect students, such as tenure and promotion policies or staff benefit policies, may ultimately impact students in an indirect but significant way because of the nature of university as an educational institute. Involving students in the process of policy formation and revision would ensure the end product be most beneficial to students' experiences and progress in the university. Without participation and feedback from student, administrators in a university may enact policies that may potentially be damaging to student experience. In addition, participation in university governance is excellent training for students in leadership, critical thinking, and communication that are otherwise not possible in a classroom setting. A recent example would be the general education revision at Virginia Tech during the 2014-15 school year. The administration at Virginia Tech was poised to completely revamp the general education requirements for all undergraduate students over a multi-year planning and consulting process.<sup>10</sup> There was considerable dispute coming from some of the faculty towards the end of the approval process in governance.<sup>11,12</sup> But because students were involved in the process, they were able to express their opinions and support of the curriculum revision and in an informed and timely manner.<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, the students' input was instrumental in the final approval process of the general education revision.<sup>14</sup> Without this input, it is very possible that the proposed changes be trapped within an editing quagmire with different faculty and administrators holding very different opinions.

The landscape of higher education is rapidly changing. University governance often is slow to respond to the changes a university itself faces. Often times the nature and demographics of a university changes over the years, but its governance system stays static. The result of this stagnation is that there would be significant population within a university without representation or voices within governance. A recent example of this is the research faculty at Virginia Tech. These faculty members, including post-doctoral associates, have extremely limited venue and voice within governance, but are just as susceptible to impacts of new policies or revision of policies as traditional tenure-track faculty. As universities strive to become more learner-focused, their governance systems must also reflect this. The day of "administrator/faculty knows best" should be buried in the past. University governance should strive to engage all its constituents, especially students, in joint effort to create a community that best serves the mission of a university: to inspire, discover, and educate.



## References

1. Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities | AAUP. at <<http://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>>
2. American Association of University Professors: Policy Documents and Reports. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).
3. About University Council | University Council | Virginia Tech. at <<http://www.governance.vt.edu/about.html>>
4. Constitution and By-laws | University Council | Virginia Tech. at <[http://www.governance.vt.edu/uc\\_constitution\\_and\\_by-laws.html](http://www.governance.vt.edu/uc_constitution_and_by-laws.html)>
5. Chapter 02 - Policies and Procedures for All Faculty | Provost's Office | Virginia Tech. at <[http://www.provost.vt.edu/faculty\\_handbook/chapter02/chapter02.html](http://www.provost.vt.edu/faculty_handbook/chapter02/chapter02.html)>
6. Cultivating the 'Whole' Graduate Student. at <<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/10/12/grad>>
7. Boards, university groups and commissions. at <<https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich/organisation/boards-university-groups-commissions.html>>
8. AVETH: Academic Association of Scientific Staff at ETH Zurich. at <<http://www.aveth.ethz.ch/>>
9. University of Zurich: Senate. at <<http://www.uzh.ch/en/about/management/senat.html>>
10. Virginia Tech Pathways to General Education | Virginia Tech. at <<http://www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/>>
11. Recommendations for revision to Pathways proposal, 11/17/14. at <[http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2014-2015/UCCLE\\_pathwaysrevisionrecommendations\\_hausman\\_12\\_4\\_2014.pdf](http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2014-2015/UCCLE_pathwaysrevisionrecommendations_hausman_12_4_2014.pdf)>
12. Faculty Senate Statement on the Revision of General Education at Virginia Tech, 1.20.2015. at <[http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2015-2016/facultysenate\\_statement\\_Pathways\\_1\\_20\\_2015\\_edited.pdf](http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2015-2016/facultysenate_statement_Pathways_1_20_2015_edited.pdf)>
13. Student Government Association Letter Regarding on Pathways Proposal. at <[http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2014-2015/SGA\\_Pathways\\_11172014.pdf](http://www.registrar.vt.edu/documents/governance/2014-2015/SGA_Pathways_11172014.pdf)>
14. Virginia Tech University Council Minutes, 2015.4.6. at <[http://www.governance.vt.edu/univcouncil/ucminutes\\_04-06-15.pdf](http://www.governance.vt.edu/univcouncil/ucminutes_04-06-15.pdf)>



SINA DELL'ANNO

# PERSPECTIVES ON STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

“Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.”

~ **Robert Frost**

Little is left, a faint voice would sigh nostalgically, of the spirit that once animated university as a palladium of free thinking; and the last hint of ingenuous passion for knowledge is crepitating as we are heading forward, “ready for change”, “beyond 2015” to the “higher education of the future”. Traveling to the USA for me meant living with these commentaries from somewhere in my epigastrium, which kept on and on with an undertone of growing repulsion, unimpressed by the enchanting songs of academic spin doctors and their multimedia commercials praising corporatization of university and academization of society to a resounding TINA-ostinato.

The progressing changes we witnessed while we dipped into an academic system, that presented itself as the consequential continuation of the partially lagging behind European institutions, could easily be condensed to a grotesque portrait: Economy has its firm grip on the minds of academic leaders, transforming universities into training institutions for job market-conformable human resources (employability subjects), based on an ever growing bureaucracy, a kraken-like administration preventing faculty members from their intended intellectual activity: Standardization of teaching and the market-oriented, Darwinist fight for third-party funding (survival of the fittest, not the boldest thinkers), overarched by a control system of rigid and continued evaluation methodically erases every unmonitored clearance, where proper intellectualism could take place. Struggling to perform as free thinkers in their very own discipline, how could we expect professors – nowadays better known as managers of research and knowledge – to raise their voice and reach out as “public intellectuals”, as one subtopic of this year’s GPP suggested?

Driven by a youthful enthusiasm to ,go where it hurts’, and discursively tease out the little Sartre or Foucault in all these faculty members, that had made themselves more or less comfortable under the tyranny of economy, appealing to their honor as the intellectual elite in a time calling for criticism on so many levels, I started discussion with my fellow GPP participants, only to stumble at the first step of my seemingly inerrable mission: The small group of Uni Basel and VT students that formed to investigate the “role of professors as public intellectuals” for a start faced serious problems of definition. While on part of the American side, Sartre was at best identified as a rather unappetizing tongue twister, I found myself fixated by aghast gazes when admitting I had never heard of Carl Sagan



(who appeared to be an all too solemn astronomer everybody knew from the TV show with the dancing stars). It quickly turned out that the commonly accepted term of the “public intellectual” in the new world denoted an exceptionally committed expert (normally in natural science) spreading his knowledge via mass media – concerned probably with the problem of simplification and the entertainment value of the matter he wishes to present, but far from using his (intellectual) authority to criticize the present situation of the world. And although public outreach could be part of an academic tenure track, in an environment of merciless competition among (future) faculty members, communicating your research to laypeople inevitably appeared as a waste of time you could have spent distinguishing yourself in the scientific world.

But as even more concerning than these general hurdles struck me the omnipresent conviction that the main reason for a member from academia to reach out to a broader audience than the students in an auditorium or the specialist readers of scientific journals was a semiconscious urge to justify one’s intellectual activity by enthusiastically praising its enormous profitableness. “You see, it’s out there; every breath you take, you’re inhaling these fungi” Dr. Lawrence’s fateful voice rang in our ears, that morning at Virginia Tech’s Institute for Bioinformatics, only to conclude his presentation with an even more elevated “and thus we make the world a better place” clause directly adapted from the savior slogans of Silicon Valley, it seemed. Far from mocking the commitment of a passionate scientist, I couldn’t help suspecting that behind this rhetoric of exigency lay a latent, an internalized pressure of self-legitimization. And despite my own emphasis on the social responsibility of those who benefitted from the privilege of higher education, this desperate call for approval violently conflicted with the idea of an autonomous subject in his responsible involvement as a citizen – fungi or not. For even the fervent pamphlet published in the January/February edition of *Academe* “The Case for Academics as Public Intellectuals” – 368 likes after all – culminated in a quintessence with the central phrase: “Through such engagement [as public intellectuals; SDA], we tell stories of our disciplines and our institutions as we want them to be told rather than as people outside the academy would tell them.” While Sartre and Foucault, as well as Albert Einstein – strengthened by their intellectual authority as renowned academics – explicitly stepped beyond the realm of their disciplines to engage with society, today’s faculty members primarily seem to face the challenge of rehabilitating the image of their profession, struggling for attention in a society suffering from information overload. Publicly engaged academics keep busy in the symbolic destruction of the unconscious ivory tower, exhibiting beautifully colored cell structures and building IT-equipped soap boxes for kid’s events; but with this “don’t hate us, we’re nice” campaign, do they really convey to people what university can be; do they change views of the world, change society? Where influence is proved, it is either on a higher political level – “I can get the governor on the phone if I want to”, as Harvey F. Lodish would assure us on the top floor of the Whitehead Institute – or in the close entanglement (“partnership”) with a specific sector of the job market: Northeastern University would sell itself proudly as Google’s and Microsoft’s special training center. But how would a political influence on the distribution of research funds or the fast and partially online production of high-performance human capital help to “strengthen democracy”, as the *aaup*-manifesto (see above) proclaims? What is the social utopia behind the idea of connecting

university to the communities? Going back to the pretendedly dismissed soapboxes and the auto-controlled kids at VT's Center for the Arts, we find the intuitive sympathy for such an effort of public outreach lying in our deep understanding for the marvels of wonder (a phenomenon you can only phrase tautologically) which these kids must experience by getting involved in science in such a delightful way. It is the charm of understanding, composed of an overwhelming amazement and insatiable curiosity, the unconditional desire to comprehend, which is enacted in such situations. And instead of compensating the costs for these events with the human capital thereby hooked on, the manpower recruited for our highly specialized industry, we should remember that the seemingly purposeless activity of wondering and striving for knowledge not only had to lie at the heart of the founding idea of university, but must be a crucial aspect in the biography of every passionate thinker.

Beyond the horizon of this relentless economy we as institutions as well as individuals have to situate ourselves in, there is an irreducible trait of our self-understanding as thinking human beings which prohibits total subjection under a diktat of success and augmentation of capital: the adventurous side of intellectualism, which Hannah Arendt worded *Denken ohne Geländer* (thinking without a banister). Shouldn't it be obvious? When research, particularly the prestigious cutting edge research means finding answers to questions that haven't yet been asked, or thinking the unthought, it implies in the first instance, at a crucial moment before the yield of the result is estimated, to engage in an experiment with undetermined outcome. This hazard of ending up somewhere your imagination couldn't have foreknown, the risk to never see the world again the way it before just seemed to go without saying is the subcutaneous artery of what university at its best can be: a place of uncaged, recklessly anti-careerist thinking. Needless to mention that study regulations, the rigid requirements of standardized training pathways quantified in modules and ETCS-points will as much impede the experience of unburdened intellectual activity as proliferating bureaucracy and fixed performance standards turn our professors into stolid but compliant service providers.

So can university today be more than the devoted supplier of our ever-changing job markets, taking a technocratic pride in the IT-based virtualization of education, in online courses and media labs? Can it be more than just the execution of a bureaucratic apparatus? I claim that there is a utopian, an unseen university living on under today's circumstances (no, I do not mean the one in the *Discworld*) – and I am deeply grateful to have been part of it these weeks in May/June 2014. Even if my belief grew, that these institutions on the leash of economy, these “brands” incurably obsessed with innovation and progress just might no longer be the exclusive and ancestral place of the university-experience, I could satisfy myself that wherever curious people meet with the desire to understand each other and the world a little better, where passionate intellect and reflective skills unite, university takes place. Be it at a shabby red garden table during an informal *Kaffee und Streuselkuchen* break with your professor, be it aloof from the physical world in an online-classroom – or on the nightly veranda of the Irving House at Harvard, where a many-voiced, quick-tempered babel for little more than an hour epitomized the collective spur to actually understand the very opposite of what one had so far just taken for granted; time and again this summer I found myself gambling with my most cherished ideas, exposing them to



adversarial world views, sending them wrestling with disputants head and shoulders above my own daring theses – and even if it sometimes got me to the edge of desperation, everything was outweighed by the excitement of consistently thinking different (©GPP, not Apple). Spontaneous, ephemeral, delocalized; without fixed expectations, anti-hierarchic and unregulated, university still happens whenever dialogue is sought between the curious and the passionate about knowledge. Those who understand to unite people in wonder and discussion to these days remain the most important intellectuals. Maybe this may not be the tenure-harried professors of our universities, maybe they are more likely to come from the high-educated but low-paid academic underclass, or they might even be almost entirely detached from their academic background – like twitter-philosopher @Nein.Quarterly on his #FailedIntellectual Goodwill Tour, who piques us daily in our scattered new media existences with aphorisms such as: “Remember, friends: All linguists diacritic. All Hegelians dialectic. And all Twitter addicts die alone.” It is in this joyfully committed, airily serious ambiance the Global Perspectives Program 2014 was most notably set in, that I was fortunate to experience university in all its ambiguity of reckless thinking – higher education not primarily training leaders, but shaping individuals.

KEVIN GEYER, PHD

# ENGAGEMENT BEYOND CAMPUS: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

“A university training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end;  
it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society...”

~ **John Henry Newman (1852)**

Intentional or not, universities have the effect of influencing a student’s social awareness and engagement through the shared experiences which result from immersive working (and often living) environments. American college education is commonly considered a rite of passage for young adults on their journey not only towards a sustainable and rewarding career, but also social maturity that develops from interacting with diverse peers while navigating steep academic hurdles. Professors can play a pivotal part in this social education by acting as mentors and role models, thereby contributing towards the “intellectual tone” of society.

However, faculty are also poised for impacting an even broader community that extends beyond the campus. Many institutions have recognized this potential and even cultivate a mentality of social responsibility that aims to address the complex needs of both local and global communities. In fact, achieving tenure within the American higher education system often requires excellence in not just teaching and research, but also efforts towards community outreach and social engagement (Perry 2014). During our 2014 GPP experience, I was interested in making comparisons between the American and European perspectives of how universities, and professors in specific, perceive and act upon social responsibilities, whether as a job requirement or moral obligation.

## **Interpreting Social Responsibility**

Before our experiences in Switzerland, France, and Italy began, I believed that researching this question of social responsibility would lead me to generate a rather straightforward list of the variety of events that European universities employ to engage with broad communities. I was unsure whether these events would be more or less prevalent than seems common in American institutions, and also whether professors would feel pressure at all to become involved from administrators. While American professors generally recognize the importance of outreach, these efforts are often felt secondary to other obligations (Perry 2014).



Once I began questioning into the social responsibility of European professors, it was immediately apparent that the interpretation of this term was going to be highly variable. Overall, smaller and applied universities responded to such questions with direct, tangible benefits for the public that in-house research was addressing. On the other hand, larger academic institutes tended to respond with more indirect, philosophical thoughts on ways the university was performing outreach. These latter “osmosis effects” seemed to suggest that a primary public good is the mere presence of the university and on-campus educations that are provided (Rodin 2001). One aspect of the European higher education system that I believe had a strong impact on these interpretations of social responsibility was the public funding of education. Taxes provide the backbone of university support, as opposed to the private (e.g. alumni) donations which American institutes largely depend upon. This difference has created a perception of higher education as a European right, as opposed to an American privilege. In consequence, some European universities believed that their duty was to directly engage with the community (e.g. UZI), while others simply recognized a public right to attend classes (e.g. ETH, SUPSI). Because little financial responsibility ties American universities to the public, I believe that American interests in outreach originate primarily from basic moral obligations, although this sentiment was also obvious among some European professors we met as well.

## **Social Responsibility, In Action**

A diversity of outreach programs was apparent from all of the universities we visited. Programs ranged from local events to global services with target audiences including individuals/families, corporations, and even governmental bodies. All outreach was believed to ultimately benefit the individual, however, as improving the overall quality of life seemed to be a unifying theme regardless of the specific partners in cooperation.

Some highlights of specific programs include Scientifica (a fair/market where researchers from the University of Zurich could present their ideas to the public with hands-on demonstrations), Children’s University (an event with free lectures and courses offered to kids, also at U. of Zurich), and Polimi’s Polisocial program (discussed more below). Outreach was never stressed as a specific requirement of professors at any university, although most institutes could provide examples of how the public was engaged, either directly or indirectly, through university activity. The University of Strasbourg, for example, discussed their efforts to become a greener campus using recently awarded federal funds as a primary benefit to the public. Such indirect benefits might be further classified as “osmosis effects,” where a specific societal need is not necessarily being addressed but instead the physical presence of the university is seen as beneficial to the local community. SUPSI and UZI in southern Switzerland both indicated rather indirect means of outreach as well (in addition to more applied projects). SUPSI stated via pamphlets that outreach involved cooperation with companies and support to the broader region included “market research, infrastructure building, and risk analysis.” UZI stated that little interest had been placed on global-scale social responsibility, although the founding of a new medical school was anticipated to increase institutional prestige, which would ultimately benefit the surrounding community. Specifics for how this might come about were only hinted at.

Polimi's Polisocial program deserves some elaboration as a standout program that was unlike any other we encountered during our GPP visits. Created just recently, Polisocial aims to 1) promote academic social responsibility alongside teaching and research, 2) keep the university abreast of societal needs, both local and global, and 3) develop a responsible citizenry more aware of, and able to respond to, ethical challenges (Polisocial: The Polytechnic for Now). Funding comes from Italian tax money that is specifically designated by citizens to be used for this program. In the past few years, an annual pool of approximately one million Euros has been generated, a testament to the popularity and support for this program by the general public. Polimi awards internal proposals that apply for portions of this money based on the listed criteria above. Recent Polisocial projects have included empowering Malawi communities for development of sustainable energy, social/environmental revitalization of regions of Pakistan, and water resource management within Tanzania. Projects broadly fit within two categories: Projects @ Teaching in the Field and Projects @ Research in the Field. The former offers hands-on field training through workshops, special courses, seminars, and debates while the latter (generally on larger scales) provides opportunities for experimentation and research. These programs also frequently fund graduate students, further adding to the list of beneficiaries.

## Conclusions

Based on the schools we visited during the 2014 GPP study abroad, I would conclude that many stark differences exist between European and American perceptions of social responsibility. The largest difference appeared to be in the apparent lack of outreach required of European faculty. Although it may be highly valued, such activity was not obviously significant towards attaining tenure (as in most American universities). Instead, social responsibility is frequently believed to be an understood requirement of the university as a consequence of public funding for education. The direct partner of cooperation is also frequently a business or governmental agency rather than individual or community, although the ultimate beneficiary is anticipated to be the individual (whether directly or indirectly through enhanced quality of life).

Regardless of the motivations of outreach, most activities were reminiscent of those used by American institutes to accomplish the same goals. Programs specifically designed to engage children seem popular, as well as public lectures/seminars focused around pressing local needs. Polimi's Polisocial program was a definite highlight among European outreach activities, both in the national scope of funding and the local/international scope of engagement. An American equivalent to such a program doesn't exist, to my knowledge.

Investigating this topic has provided a lot of personal context around the idea of social responsibility. I wonder whether American professors would feel more invested in performing outreach (beyond a feeling of moral obligation) by increased university funding from public funds. As traditional funding sources become more scarce, it's possible that a shift either away, but more likely towards, private donations will occur that may further distance faculty from the ever-changing front of pressing societal needs. I also wonder whether a national "Polisocial" program would be successful in America. While



primary research at universities (including that which both directly and indirectly benefits the citizenry) is largely funded by tax dollars distributed by governmental agencies, little is earmarked specifically for outreach programs. Such an approach could yield tangible results (e.g. enhanced infrastructure) and additionally bridge the communication gap that currently exists between professors and the public that is to blame for negative perceptions of distant “ivory tower” researchers and their messages.

## References

Newman, John Henry. 1852. The idea of a university.

Perry, David. 2014. 'But does it count?' The Chronicle of Higher Education. URL: <http://chronicle.com/article/But-Does-It-Count-/147199/>

Polisocial: The Polytechnic for Now. 2014. URL: <http://www.polimi.it/polisocial>

Rodin, Judith. 2001. Common cause: Investing in the community. Presidency 4: 28-35.

KATHERINA GIEDER

# THE CHANGING FACE OF DIVERSITY IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

“Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without.”

~ **William Sloane Coffin Jr.**

A central challenge related to the concept of diversity lies in the elusiveness of its definition. Diversity has no single definition. Traditionally referred to with negative connotations, diversity historically meant difference, oddness, discord, contradiction, and disagreement. The term evolved with the rise of modern democracies to reference virtuous characteristics that are essential to achieving unity, giving rise to this term being commonly used today to refer to uniqueness, distinction, variety, strength, and resilience (Barnhart, 1988). Although the importance of diversity to modern human society is universally recognized, its role in shaping society is multifaceted because different groups attach a wide array of different values to the various aspects of diversity. Consequently, diversity is viewed as an essential component in society that also poses a challenge because of the myriad perceptions on its role in shaping society.

This notion of diversity as a fluid concept was one of my first realizations upon visiting various universities in Switzerland, France, and Italy over the course of the GPP program. No two universities seemed to refer to diversity in the same way, some focused on diversity within program and course offerings, while others emphasized diversity in research, and still others promoted diversity in terms of support services and academic infrastructure. I realized that to understand diversity within a European higher education context, I would have to make a conscious effort to remove the notions of diversity ingrained in me from a North American perspective. The common notions of inclusivity, community, cross-cultural understanding, and equity that are so deeply woven into the identities of most North American educational institutions were noticeably absent from the European universities I encountered. This difference is intimately tied to the different historical experiences and political cultures of North America and Europe. North America's history is primarily defined by a history of discrimination against African Americans and women, and a political culture that strongly emphasizes individualism and freedom. Conversely, notions such as community and equity are built into the historical and political culture of many countries in Europe, particularly Switzerland because of its long history of multi-lingual and multiculturalism that defines the country. Much of the emphasis on diversity in the universities visited over the course of the GPP program consequently were focused on the university institution rather than the composition of the student body, with the exception of an occasional focus on promoting gender equality.



Despite these different perspectives on diversity, its importance to higher education remains the same. Diversity, whether it pertains to a student body, faculty, university programs, or academic infrastructure, affects multiple aspects of institutional operation at a variety of levels. Furthermore, this manifestation of diversity is not limited to the educational institution itself but extends to the larger socio-political sphere of the surrounding community. Even further, as globalization increasingly creeps into every aspect of society, drawing communities, including higher education communities, ever closer together, diversity also plays a role in shaping educational institutions on a global scale. Thus, on this broad level, diversity in higher education is a key factor in the spread of intellectual ideas and property from a vast array of sources around the world, contributing to a high level of academic research and quality of educational institutions.

Within Europe, the notion of diversity in the higher education system is currently evolving as a result of changes brought about by Bologna Process (Benelux Bologna Secretariat, 2009). Increased standardization and mobility have allowed more international students to enroll (primarily at the graduate level), not only from neighboring countries but also from overseas countries including China, India, Nigeria, and Iran to name a few. Another key driver of this change in the graduate student cohort is a move towards increased collaboration and partnerships with commercial entities. Globalization has spread into academic research as large multinational companies are increasingly providing grants to academic researchers. Swiss universities are not immune from this phenomenon. As social media continues to bring academic researchers and companies from around the world together to solve complex problems, so too are students recruited from all corners of the globe (Hulsman and van Vught, 2009; Bohonnek et al., 2010).

This changing student demographic will undoubtedly introduce many challenges to the European higher education system. Some of these challenges have already begun to surface, namely in understanding this change and making diversity transparent in European Higher Education (Hulsman and van Vught, 2009; Bohonnek et al., 2010). The structure and services of some higher educational programs will undoubtedly change to accommodate a newly defined diverse student body, and may already be transitioning, as evidenced by many of the universities we visited recently switching to certain high level courses being offered in English rather than German, French, or Italian. Whatever changes are to come, one thing remains clear; this new face of diversity that is currently surfacing in European higher education is promoting increased research collaboration, academic expertise, and high quality education on a global scale.

## **Literature Cited**

Barnhart, R. K. (ed.). 1988. *Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*. H.W. Wilson Co.

Benelux Bologna Secretariat. 2009. *Bologna Beyond 2010: Report on the development of the European Higher Education System*. Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Ministerial Conference. 32 pp.

- Bohonnek, A., A. F. Camilleri, D. Griga, K. Muhleck, K. Miklavic, D. Orr. 2010. *Evolving diversity: An overview of equitable access to HE in Europe*. Camilleri, A. F., K. Muhleck (eds.). Menon network.
- Hulsman, J. C. and F. van Vught. 2009. Diversity in European Higher Education: Historical Trends and Current Policies. Chapter 2 in van Vught, F. (ed.). *Mapping the Higher Education Landscape. Higher Education Dynamics*, 28: 17.



JAKE GROHS

# WRESTLING WITH THE WHY? AND THE WHO? OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Institutions of higher education are truly enigmas, full of seeming contradictions. Yet, for most, the experience of higher education is mediated by one's enrollment or employment with a small handful of institutions, likely very similar to one another. Through the Global Perspectives Program (GPP), participants were encouraged to stand above and beyond those narrowly defined lenses and explore different systems and other institutions with open eyes, ears, and minds. For me, one of the startling reminders was that when remaining from a singular perspective, battle lines are easily drawn – one's gut reaction philosophy can quickly determine what about the institution is sacred and what needs reform. Moreover, those singular perspectives can also blind us to the sacred or the broken things that are otherwise hidden in plain sight. Yet, the beauty of other perspectives is that they add depth and complexity to that which is otherwise an oversimplified rendering. So, in the spirit of both the host who learns of home anew through a visitor's eyes, and the visitor who learns from the newness of travel, this paper endeavors to explore and appreciate higher education as an enigma. What follows is an intertwined bundle of thoughts about tensions within higher education that I wrestled with throughout the GPP experience. Though my own thoughts are often confusing and contradictory, I progress with hope that wrestling with tensions is indeed an important endeavor. In the words of Parker Palmer as he identifies critical habits of the heart he deems of paramount importance to higher education, "We must cultivate the ability to hold tension in life-giving ways" (Palmer, 2011). With that in mind, the following sections explore complexities and contradictions within the Why? (Purpose), and the Who? (Access) of higher education. Though I attempt to explore them as distinct below, they are intimately related and it is near impossible to discuss one without bumping into the other.

## **The "Why?" of Higher Education**

In "College at Risk" from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, author Andrew Delbanco (2012) claims a newer economically driven instrumental view of higher education has become more dominant in recent press than the more historical views of education as a liberating force to free the heart and mind. While not necessarily mutually exclusive in practice, common rhetoric seems to pit the two as polar opposites – a choice of efficiency, competitiveness and marketability versus a broad liberal arts education pursuing knowledge for its own sake and developing good citizens. As quoted in "College at Risk," former President Bush said "Education is how to make sure we've got a work force that's productive and competitive" and President Obama had a similar claim in 2009, "Countries that outteach us today, will outcompete us tomorrow" (as quoted in Delbanco, 2012). Contrary to that, advocates for more traditional framings of education as designed to produce good humans, good

citizens, need simply point to the lack of critical discussion among the general populous to demonstrate a need for the civic aims of education and the development of well-rounded individuals. And yet, these two framings so often pit against one another, are both over-simplified and even seem to treat those involved in education as merely objects to be acted upon – tools to be sharpened or citizens to be trained. In his book *Pedagogy of Freedom*, educator and activist Paulo Freire argues that educational ideology framed from fatalism ultimately “humiliates and denies our humanity” (1998, p. 27). Freire claims that we often forget human free will and choice within the institution:

My role in the world is not simply that of someone who registers what occurs but of someone who has an input into what happens. I am equally subject and object in the historical process. In the context of history, culture, and politics, I register events not so as to adapt myself to them but so as to change them, in the physical world itself. I am not impotent (p.73).

In this paradigm, the “Why?” for education is for us all to inspire and awaken our curiosity for learning and our courage to advocate for change. It is even quite clear that core functions of many universities (i.e., teaching, research, public and professional service) can all be encompassed by this liberating democratic activist view of education itself. And yet, even if institutions and the people who comprise them wholeheartedly believe that aspirational purpose of higher education, in practice, it never seems to be fully realized. Adam Kahane discusses this phenomenon in his book *Power and Love: The Theory and Practice of Social Change* where he argues that “we often assume that the context in which we create is an empty world: an open frontier, a white space, a blank canvas. In general this assumption is incorrect” (2010, p. 4). In the context of exploring a pure purpose for higher education, it is suddenly clear that there is no singular purpose nor can one be easily rewritten and adopted overnight; the present situation cannot be divorced from the history that wrought it nor individual institutions from their own unique identities. This characteristic of institutions is discussed by Berger and Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). They believe that humans, who ultimately comprise institutions, develop roles and habits that over time and interaction with others become both historical and objective (institutionalized). In their argument, “this means that the institutions that have now been crystallized (for instance, the institution of paternity as it is encountered by children) are experienced as existing over and beyond the individuals who ‘happen to’ embody them at the moment” (1966, pg. 58). This view of institutions sheds light on their contradictory nature – they are created and perpetuated by human agents and as such are moldable, but not infinitely so because of crystallization over time. Freire discusses this same notion (but focused on an individual) as he claims, “we know ourselves to be *conditioned* but not *determined*. It means recognizing the History is time filled with possibility and not inexorably determined – that the future is *problematic* and not already decided, fatalistically” (1998, p.26). Thus, just as Freire argues we as individuals (students, faculty, staff, administrators) must reclaim our agency within the context of our world, by extension, so too must institutions.



Lest it seem I have drifted too far from “College at Risk” and the GPP experience, let me be direct and specific in some tentative conclusions from the rabbit trail of evolving purpose, social change, and institutions. What was immediately apparent in discussions with colleagues throughout Swiss universities was that we all have opinions about the purpose of higher education (e.g. job creator, liberator of the mind), the purity of the word *public* in public institution and in considering education as a public good (i.e. does private money from corporations or non-governmental organizations somehow bind or taint differently than governmental *public* funds?), and the role to which institutions should cave (or adapt) to outside pressures about what higher education should be or do. These discussions were spirited, respectfully contentious, and both well informed and ignorant all at once – signs of a good constructive widening of ideas and beliefs. We were and are passionate about improving higher education. Yet, with so many apparent barriers, progress seems slow and starting from scratch seems better (though impossible). What is tough to remember in this motivated yet frustrated space is that this is exactly where we need to be. It is the simultaneous balance and tension of being both subject and object, as individuals, and higher education as a global institution. Frustrated because we must acknowledge and accept what is – not fatalistically – but in full open consideration of our context. In the United States, we cannot forget that there are real economic pressures related to colleges and universities both in access (which I’ll discuss shortly) and in the financial sustainability of individual institutions. I share some of our Swiss colleagues concern about the commercialization of US universities and the commodification of education, but I cannot forget that it is currently so. And, that it is currently so because previous human agents of institutions led it to be so. Yet, I do not need to fatalistically accept it as always so. To return to our earlier images, I must walk forward with the tension of the both/and when it comes to job creator and liberator of the mind. One of my fervent conclusions is that aspiring higher education change agents should not be purist martyrs to singular ideals (no matter how pure and utopian) but rather aware, critically reflective agents capable of taking steps to where we want to be without forgetting where we currently are. And, making many mistakes in the process. After all, it is what makes us human and capable of learning – in Freire’s words, “it is our awareness of being unfinished that makes us educable” (1998, p.58). We must shift our thinking to recognize the inevitable missteps of our institutions and grow from them, and in so doing, reclaim ourselves as proactive and not just reactive.

## **The “Who?” of Higher Education**

With Freire’s reminder of the humans involved in education, it begs another question, just who is included in the “we” of higher education? In US higher education, one can trace the history of the Morrill Land Grant Acts to see the first expansion from the initial audience of the rich white male elite. Yet somehow at the same time we were making such strides in an ever more inclusive campus, we were simultaneously blinded to any critical consideration of the socioeconomic status of students on our campuses. In her article “Equalizers No More” in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Suzanne Mettler (2014) claims that the system is in deep trouble:

Over the past 30 years, it has gone from facilitating upward mobility to exacerbating social inequality. College-going, once associated with opportunity, now engenders something that increasingly resembles a caste system: It takes Americans who grew up in different social strata and widens the divisions among them.

One of the obvious culprits is the ballooning cost of higher education. At Virginia Tech (regularly regarded for its affordability), tuition and fees for a Virginia resident 10 years ago would have cost \$2,919 per semester while a student in 2014-2015 will pay \$6,009 per semester for this academic year. A recent *US News and World Report* claims that textbook costs have also soared by 82% over the past decade (2014, Bidler). Even though I was familiar with the high levels of government funding for Swiss universities, there is still no preparation for the US student upon hearing the, by comparison, near-free tuition rates at the universities we visited. The Swiss (and many other people of Europe) place such value through both word and deed in the idea of education as a public right – it is truly impressive. Just as I was closing the book on my mound of evidence pinning college cost as the primary culprit of the worsening social inequality perpetuated by US universities, I began to ask more questions of our colleagues about access specifically. I was surprised to hear that despite Swiss universities being affordable, some still felt there was a cultural divide for those who go to university and who do not. I don't want to overdraw conclusions from just a few data points, but this does seem to offer fascinating insight on the problem of access in the United States. What it would suggest is that, while affordability remains critically important, we must simultaneously focus on the equally as massive social and cultural pressures that (un)intentionally narrow the views of particular youth. The essential task of addressing those pressures will force us to confront deep-seated issues about how families, teachers, and society as a whole, lifts up or limits because of race, ethnicity, gender, and parental educational level (to name a few). We in institutions of higher education will also have to look at our own communication about whom it is we seek (and consequently, who we don't). It is with that introspective question of “Who?” that my head once again spins amid extremes. On one seeming pole is universal access – welcoming arms from the institution to anyone who believes they want to advance their learning beyond high school. Though the “best and the brightest” seems contrived, the opposite pole of universal access does seek to establish some standard for entrance, some means of just and equitable exclusion to create an intentional community. While in Riva San Vitale, I drew a small sketch in my journal of a boundary separating the “included” from the “excluded” along with the question mark on the boundary itself. The image has haunted me since. One can travel through time and see that boundary change towards greater inclusion, but where has it landed now? Are institutions of higher education really drawing upon the pools we want to or think we are drawing from? Or, are there hidden factors that we are unintentionally using as exclusion criteria?

## **Final Thoughts**

Though I have settled on no definitive answers through my study of the purpose of higher education and the issues surrounding access, I have come to realize that answers are not specifically the point. Rather, I see that my reflections have established context for the critical issues – essential context that



will help me to frame the issues with the depth they warrant as I move forward in striving for positive change within higher education.

I am deeply grateful to our colleagues at the Swiss universities and particularly from the Universität Basel. Though I did not specifically quote from any encounters, each presentation and each heated debate inspired me to keep letting ideas swirl around my head. In so doing, I feel I was able to examine US issues afresh and from a slightly different perspective - thank you so much for that GPP-Basel. Finally, to Dean Karen DePauw and Justin Shanks for their dedication to the VT GPP cohort, thank you – I have learned and grown so much from this experience and will continue to do so.

## References

- Bidwell, A. (2014). High textbook prices have college students struggling. *US News and World Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.usnews.com>
- Delbanco, A. (2012). College at Risk. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com>
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. (P. Clarke, Trans.). Lanham, Maryland.
- Kahane, A. (2010). *Power and Love: A Theory and Practice of Social Change*. San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Mettler, S. (2014). Equalizers No More: Politics Thwart Colleges' Role in Upward Mobility. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com>
- Palmer, P. J. (2011). Higher education and habits of the heart: Restoring democracy's infrastructure. *Journal of College and Character*, 12(3), 1-6. doi: 10.2202/1940-1639.1823

JEN HENDERSON

# RESPONSIBILITY IN CONTEXT: THE ROLE OF ETHICS IN GLOBAL GRADUATE STUDENT EDUCATION

“We know all we need to about ethics in nanotechnology research,” one scientist told our group. We were sitting in his lab in Switzerland, talking about the importance of his science in society, when I asked about the kinds of issues they might encounter related to research ethics and social responsibility.

Surprised at his response, I glanced at my colleagues, all Virginia Tech graduate students on a study abroad course to learn about different global perspectives on the future of higher education. A few people met my look, eyebrows raised. We know all we need to know about ethics? What did this mean?

He went on to explain a bit, perhaps noting my confusion. “We know about lab procedures and issues related to teaching research ethics. We’ve even had some philosophers scientifically show that there’s nothing new to be learned about ethics in nanotechnology.” I squirmed a bit in my chair, uncomfortable at the thought that any scientific enterprise would know all it needed to about the multiple dimensions of ethics: What about social responsibility? New technological advancements? Who should decide what ought to be developed or not? And how to train future scientists to grapple with the value-laden issues, political, social and ethical, that will arise in the future?

Thinking back on this scientist’s comments later that day, I wondered if perhaps the way I’d framed my question had predetermined the constraints of this person’s response. That is, by asking directly about ethics in the lab, I had likely shaped the nature and extent of his response. If I had asked about what he thought his responsibility was to society, for example, or how he grappled with funding requirements, or how nanotechnology played out in public discourse, I might have had a more robust response, one that demonstrate the complexity I suspected surround any lab. What I concluded is that the problem I’d identified in this scientist’s response revealed my own biases about ethics—my own framing of the issue. That is, we were together exploring murky issues subject to differences in problem definition.

This paper explores a few different definitions, commitments, and justifications of ethics across universities our group visited in Switzerland.<sup>1</sup> One goal is to understand the contingent nature of ethics within a university or college setting; another is to qualitatively and anecdotally compare different expressed interests in ethics education across academic levels, from small technical colleges to large



liberal arts universities. I suggest that different contexts—scales of educational institutions, for example—constrain how ethics is defined and pursued. The motivation for this project is my own involvement in the implementation of Virginia Tech’s Resolution 2012-13B, or ethics requirement, initiated by the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies. This resolution assures that there exists in each graduate student’s course of study a scholarly ethics and integrity component. Intended to give departments maximum flexibility in designing requirements appropriate to their students’ needs, the resolution nonetheless requires attention to four broad areas of emphasis (Virginia Tech, 2014):

1. Plagiarism and other violations of the Graduate Honor Code;
2. Proper use of professional conventions in citation of existing research and scholarship, accurate reporting and ownership of findings, and acknowledgement of contributions to the work;
3. Ethical standards in teaching, mentoring, and professional activities; and
4. Available avenues for reporting alleged misconduct.

What is important in this resolution is that every graduate student (and their respective departments) is responsible for demonstrating an understanding of multiple dimensions of ethics and academic integrity. The value of such a systemic attention to ethics can’t be overstated. Continual practice with ethics, even through something as seemingly deceptive as conversation, strengthens a student's awareness of and ability to critically think in ethical frames. As Weston (2001) noted of this “learning by talking”:

Effective dialogue reflects an ethical relationship: it reflects ethical attitudes toward others and a commitment to shared solutions...Ethics is not only or even mainly about holding the ‘right opinions about controversial issues. Much more important is how we engage such issues. Ethics lives just as much in the ongoing process. (218)

The analysis of ethics herein is by no means exhaustive or definitive—there is no possible definitive analysis. Ethics is contextual, situated, and subjective. Instead, this paper represents a small sampling of perspectives from multiple universities toured during the 2014 Global Perspectives course. My recommendations are meant to offer one graduate student’s desire to be more prepared to engage with ethics on a global scale.

## **Ethics Definitions**

According to the bioethicist and author David Resnik, “ethics are standards of conduct (or social norms) that prescribe behavior...[and] ethics as a field of study is a normative discipline whose main goals are prescriptive and evaluative rather than descriptive and explanatory” (14). As a society, then, we live according to certain values that shape our assumptions about the way we structure and ought

to structure our existence; these are expressed in explicit rules and regulations often governed by laws, as well as tacit assumptions that are adjudicated in public opinion, our social circles, and within the context of our relationships. Even within a scientific laboratory, ethical virtues play out as norms of procedure and practice. How ought we run a lab? How should we train new scientists? How to reward successes or discourage unwanted behaviors? What instruments lead to discoveries? How do we know when something we've uncovered is a fact? These are normative questions that get worked out in social exchanges between scientists, within scientific societies, and in academia. In the 1960s, sociologist Robert Merton articulated the idealized virtues of science—that is, what science ought to be. His norms included values such as communalism, which means that discoveries are common property of the whole community, and disinterestedness, which is about individuals foregoing personal gain to act in ways that benefit the community (Merton, 1973).

Ethics can be broken down into more narrow fields of study, morality, for example, or aesthetics. Relevant to this paper, ethics within an academic environment are often broken into issues of academic integrity, which might include responsible conduct for research, plagiarism and cheating, and publication practices. Different disciplines, however, focus on aspects of academic integrity and scholarly research relevant to the research they generate. Culturally, differences can occur in what values a particular discipline emphasizes (such as citation practices, which vary across many countries) and the policing and sanctioning of violations (May et al, 1998). That is, from a global perspective, ethics in academia looks as different as the colors and textures of multicultural foods. Even when there are similarities across universities, the expressions and terms for these values may differ. For example, in one school, the conversation may revolve around medical research and practices of patient care whereas this same value (care/harm) may be discussed in another university as an aspect of social responsibility.

## **Switzerland Cases**

Perhaps the educational frame most familiar to students in the United States is the large, liberal arts university. The University of Zurich is the largest university in Switzerland with more than twenty-six thousand students in whom university faculty hope to instill a sense of responsibility to the public and “self-reflection in society.” Connecting society with knowledge production in this sense suggests that the university feels an ethical obligation to create educated citizens who will help “disseminate knowledge in a methodological and critical manner” and who will feel compelled “to think and act independently” in how they respond to the needs of society (University of Zurich). To this end, the university has opened twelve museums and offers several public lectures each year about the work being conducted on campus. While some critics who work with Public Engagement of Science literature (Bucchi, 2005) would argue that lectures, museums, and other forms of passive dissemination of expert knowledge are ethically questionable in their assumptions about “the public” as deficit model actors, these efforts do demonstrate a certain level of responsibility for societal issues.

More impressive are the ways in which ethics is systemically integrated throughout the university through the Center for Competence, which includes three interdisciplinary foci. 1) social issues, which include justice and human dignity through the theology department; research ethics, which is managed by the philosophy department; and biomedical concerns, which also includes environmental issues and medicine. What these areas seem to demonstrate is an acknowledgement that ethics is multiple and complex, unable to be adjudicated by one governing body, such as the Institutional Review Board. Instead, several disciplines take ownership of varying aspects, often within the purview of their expertise. Further, the university offers a postgrad certificate in advanced studies and applied ethics, which allows more sustained focus on how ethical issues intersect with real problems in society. Aside from the thematic emphasis on ethics, concerns over research integrity, mentoring of junior faculty, and academic freedom are spread throughout different units on campus, with no one overarching governing body.

Virginia Tech shares some overlap with University of Zurich and more technical universities, such as the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, or ETH, also located in Zurich, Switzerland. As a technical school focused largely on applied issues in society, the ethical context is different. ETH notes that its goal is to give faculty enough freedom to determine their own research agendas and to “take responsibility for it.” One interpretation of such an emphasis is that in an applications context scholars ought to consider the impact their work will have not only on the problems that their technological developments will address but the populations who will benefit or not from these solutions. Their website goes on to note that this academic freedom can “then create fertile ground for successful science, provided it is enriched with truthfulness, self-criticism, transparency and fairness” (ETH). This set of values was evident in the presentations we encountered by scientists working on issues related to their respective research. It seems that the emphasis on ethics is more in terms of scientific practice itself rather than direct effects of their work on society. In fact, during one presentation, the faculty member noted that “outreach really isn’t that important,” in terms of the university’s evaluation of a person’s ability to receive tenure. He continued, “Outreach can’t substitute for research or scientific publications; as long as you have something in [the category of outreach] on your tenure materials, you’re fine.”

In terms of a university-wide ethics agenda, the focus is mainly on methodological ethics: animal welfare and human subjects research. To this end, faculty members must animal welfare officers and “trusted intermediaries” within the Ethics Commission of the university to make sure that their research protocols follow standards established by the canton and the Therapeutic Products Act. Faculty members whose methods do not include human or animal subject research must follow a much more vague notion of research integrity based on actions “that are underpinned by integrity” and the successful demonstrations of expertise (ETH, 2014).

While a brief visit to a university is too little evidence for generalizations, it seems that from our visits to institutions of different types (liberal arts, technical, community colleges) that the larger, more liberal



arts universities see ethics as something more akin to the role of education in society itself. In Switzerland, for example, a direct democracy, nearly two-thirds of all students in the public education system go on to vocational apprentice model schools. A smaller constituency go on to university, which includes a rigorous process of testing and selection. In fact, at ETH Dr. Anders Hagstrom noted that of those 25% who attend university, only 65% make it to their second year of the bachelors degree. Still, every presentation at Swiss universities emphasized that education is a right and that all citizens are allowed to attend any university once they complete high school. It is this ethical viewpoint of education as a right and responsibility that seems to be more common within the liberal arts universities. In a technical university, the ethical values get attached more strongly to the internal methods and mechanisms of research, while the connection with society is mainly through industry and technology transfer. They do, however, note “social responsibility equals maintaining an open dialogue with the general public because complex issues require the sharing of information between science, business, and society.” Again, faculty do offer public presentations of their work, but it is not clear exactly how an open dialogue occurs—that is, a two-way recursive conversation.

## **Recommendations**

Definitions of ethics in a university context vary both within and across academic systems. In a business school, for example, emphasis on ethics might involve fiscally responsible practices and honesty in all transactions. At a medical school, ethics is bound to the Hippocratic Oath, “Do no harm,” and the attending norms of doctor / patient trust and confidentiality. At a large university, such as Virginia Tech, ethics often takes the form of student obligations to academic integrity in their respective work and to research subjects, should they conduct qualitative or participant-based scholarship. Yet, even within Virginia Tech, certain departments may be better equipped to prepare their graduates to behave ethically, through coursework, mentoring, and workshops that address issues related to being a good academic and scholarly citizen.

While most universities acknowledge the importance of ethics in multiple forms for their students (e.g. social responsibility, human subjects approval, lab procedures), only a few had expressly integrated ethics into their curricula in ways that would assure graduate students have exposure to it. In the literature on ethics and graduate education, the consensus is that for this type of emphasis on values and norms to be relevant to students, efforts must be more systemic and integrative (CGS, 2006; Resnick, 1998; Weston, 2001). It should be included and discussed explicitly in discussing laboratory procedures, in framing relationships between authors on a paper, in conversations about whether certain technologies ought to be developed for society, in courses on the role of the public intellectual, and in the execution of scholarship in publication and dissemination. That is, faculty should be as attuned to the context of learning as they are the content.

This gets to the issue of normativity in graduate education. What kind of world ought we create through our educational praxis and what methods ought we use to create that world? This question assumes that all of us share a common vision for the kind of scholar citizen we believe graduate

education ought to produce. Even if there are differences across cultures in the particular values and norms that attend to education, there seems to be significant agreement that the purpose of education is to improve the lives of those around us and to grapple with the implications of our work in ways that are critical, respectful, and ethical.

## Notes

1. We also visited universities in France and Italy, as well, but for brevity's sake I'll only focus on two universities in Switzerland.

## References

- Bucchi, M. (2008). Of deficits, deviations and dialogues: Theories of public communication of science. *Handbook of Public Communication of Science and Technology*. New York: Routledge, 57-76.
- Council of Graduate Schools, (2008). *Global perspectives on research ethics and scholarly integrity: Proceedings of the 2008 strategic leaders global summit on graduate education*. Washington, D.C., 154 pp.
- , (2006). *Graduate education for the responsible conduct of research*. Washington, D.C., 46 pp.
- ETH. (2014). Ethics and animal welfare. Retrieved on August 17, 2014 from <https://www.ethz.ch/en/research/ethics-and-animal-welfare.html>.
- May, L, Collins-Chobanian, S., & Wong, K. (1998). *Applied ethics: A multicultural approach*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 654 pp.
- Merton, R. (1973). The normative structure of science. *The sociology of science: Theoretical and empirical investigations*. Merton, R. (Ed). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 267-278.
- Resnik, D. (2008). *The ethics of science: An introduction*. New York: Routledge, 221 pp.
- Profile. The University of Zurich. Retrieved September 2, 2014: [http://www.uzh.ch/about/portrait/portrait\\_en.html](http://www.uzh.ch/about/portrait/portrait_en.html)
- Weston, A. (2001). *A 21st Century ethical toolbox*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 406 pp.
- Virginia Tech, (2014). Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2012-13B Resolution to Include a Scholarly Ethics and Integrity Component in Graduate Education. Blacksburg, VA.

CONNIE JONES, MSW

# ALL ABOUT COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the United States (U.S.) higher education system, college counseling centers are common and standard on college and university campuses. As a doctoral student in counselor education at Virginia Tech, one of the many things that I set out to understand when I began the Global Perspectives journey was how mental health was perceived by the European higher education system, particularly in Switzerland, France, and Italy. I also was interested in discovering if the universities that we would visit while in Europe had counseling centers on site and which, if any mental health field degree programs are offered at the different universities (i.e., counseling, social work, psychology)? In the U.S. an individual can choose to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees in counseling, social work, and psychology. In this paper, I will share what I learned about the counseling profession in Europe and counseling centers at European universities.

## **Counseling in Switzerland, Italy, and France**

After speaking to the professors, students, and staff at the universities that we visited in Switzerland, Italy, and France it became clear that psychology seemed to be the most prestigious and prominent mental health profession in Europe. Counseling in Switzerland is an up and coming profession that is constantly vying with psychiatrists and psychologists for its place in the helping profession. Counselors in Switzerland are attempting to establish a professional identity and distinguish themselves from the other mental health professions (Thomas & Henning, 2012). Swiss counselor education programs do exist, but they are far scarcer than psychology programs. There are private counseling associations and institutes in Zurich, Geneva, and Ticino (Thomas & Henning), although I was not able to visit these private associations and institutes while in Switzerland, I was elated to discover that they existed. The first master of arts in counseling program was started in 1997 at Webster University's, Geneva campus. The program is taught in English and most of the graduates of this program choose to work in the U.S. It is important to indicate that similarly to the U.S. mental health system, some psychiatrists, psychologists, psychoanalysts, and psychotherapists are also formally trained in counseling skills, making it even more difficult for counselors to establish a professional identity and distinguish themselves from other helping professions. Another factor that contributes to the difficulty in establishing a separate identity is when the term *counselor* is translated into French and German it means *advisor* (Thomas & Henning). The word *advisor* is contradictory to the counseling profession's framework. The Swiss Association for Counseling (SGfB) was established as the only national association covering regional and linguistic interests and is committed to the development and quality of psychosocial counseling in Switzerland.



There are similar patterns found in Italy and France. The counseling profession is also a new profession in Italy and psychology is the prominent mental health profession. In Italy the English term of counseling is used instead of the Italian translation, because the translated term does not have the same meaning as the English term. There are no counselor education preparation programs in universities, rather counselors are trained in professional associations programs that include up to 500 hours of instruction (Remley, Bacchini, & Krieg, 2010). Most counselors are employed in private practices, agencies, and by the government, they are not employed in schools (Remley et al.). It is important to indicate that most European schools do not utilize school counselors, because the purpose of primary and secondary schools is to emphasize academics therefore, there is not a focus on counseling services such as career, personal, or academic counseling. Anything besides academics are seen as a "personal matter", that is meant to be taken care of at home with an individual's family. This varies from what we see in the U.S. as there is typically a school counselor placed in every elementary and secondary school. In the U.S. the counseling profession is regulated by the state government, but in Italy all professions are governed on a national level (Remley et al.). Currently the counseling profession is not a recognized, regulated profession and psychologists are not supportive of having the counseling profession becoming regulated as this would cause competition for them. Similarly to Switzerland, other professions have completed the training to be counselors, such as: professional educators, social workers, teachers, psychologists, and psychotherapists.

As mentioned previously, there is not a term with an equivalent meaning to counseling in French; the closest translation means, *advice* (Bernaud, Cohen-Scali, & Guichard, 2007). This definition is conflicting with what counselors provide and the premise of their work. When referring to counseling in France, more than likely individuals are referring to counseling psychology. Career counselors and schools counselors are referred to as, "career and school counseling psychologists" (Bernaud et al.). There are many counselors in France, but most of them are from other professions and provide counseling, such as: nurses, teachers, and social workers. There are only a few individuals that practice counseling as a profession that have professional training (Bernaud et al.).

## **Counseling Centers at Universities Visited**

European educational culture focuses on academics and leaves personal issues or "private matters" for the individual and the individual's family to work out. This difference is due to cultural factors. In most European countries, including Italy the children tend to live with their parents until they complete college and marry (Remley et al.), so they typically go to a university or college close to their home and have family support. In the U.S. this is rarely the case; oftentimes children leave home when they are 18 and move to a new location that is not near their parents home. Due to being away from family, their support system may be strained and they may need more student services. Also in the U.S. most colleges and universities have dorms on campus that mandate that undergraduates must reside in them their first year and may choose to continue for the additional years. This is different than the

European higher education system, because having dorms are not a standard part of their system. Most students live at home and attend a college or university in their community.

The University of Zurich and ETH Zurich share a center for psychological counseling services. This center provides academic and mental health counseling services to any student enrolled in either university. The services are free and confidential and because of the language diversity, services are offered in German, French, English, Italian, and Spanish. Psychologists are the mental health providers at the center. I found this to be one of the most comprehensive counseling centers out of the all the universities visited. The description of this college counseling center was very similar to something that one may see in the U.S. ETH Zurich also has a career counseling center to assist the students when they begin to search for and plan for a career. There are psychological services offered to students that attend USI by the Association of Psychologist of Ticino. These services are not free of charge, but they are covered by complementary health insurance only when provided by a professional psychotherapist approved by the Ticino canton. I was not able to discern if the University of Strasbourg provided counseling services to their students, but I was able to discover that they do require and organize a medical, psychological, and social examination for each student within the first, three years of attending the university. The University of Basel also has psychological services provided for anyone that is experiencing any type of disorder, including psychological support during physical illness. Lastly PoliMi, provides university counseling to lend support to students while dealing with academics, and to discuss special needs and requests to aid in academic support. I am unsure if they provide anything more than academic counseling, such as mental health counseling. Although I am unsure if all of the universities and colleges in Switzerland, Italy, and France provide college counseling as a student service, I am sure that there are counseling centers within the communities and cantons in which students can receive services if needed.

## **Conclusion**

It was interesting to learn about the differences between the U.S. and European system when it came to mental health and mental health services offered at universities. Even though there are blatant differences in the how mental health is perceived and treated in the higher education systems, I understand both systems and that culturally the different approaches work for the U.S. and Europe. Although, I was interested in learning about how mental health was perceived by the European higher education system and if college counseling centers were located at the universities that we visited, I learned from and embraced the entire Global Perspectives experience. I was able to further my knowledge concerning the Bologna process, learn new pedagogical methods, and engulf myself in cultures that were so very different from mine. I was able to identify differences and similarities between the U.S. and European higher education system, and learned that both systems contribute wonderful concepts and ideas to the global world of higher education. Being able to connect globally with professors and other graduate students was such monumental experiences that broaden my horizons and open my eyes to what we can achieve when we bring our different perspectives together and work toward common and obtainable goals.

## References

- Bernaud, J. L., Cohen-Scali, V., & Guichard, J. (2007). Counseling psychology in France: A paradoxical situation. *Applied Psychology: An Internal Review*, 56(1), 131-151. doi: 10.1111/j.1464-0597.2007.00281.x
- Remley, R. P., Jr., Bacchini, E., & Krieg, P. (2010). Counseling in Italy. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 88(1), 28-32. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2010.tb00146.x
- Thomas, R., & Henning, S. (2012). Counseling in Switzerland: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 90(4), 505-509. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6676.2012.00063.x



# ACADEMIA AGAINST GLOBAL POVERTY: HOW UNIVERSITIES (CAN) CONTRIBUTE TO POVERTY ERADICATION

## Introduction: Post-2015 MDGs

Sustainable development, which implies meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,<sup>1</sup> is defined as one of the three main pillars of the United Nations. In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted and 193 United Nations member states agreed to achieve the following eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015:

1. eradicating extreme poverty and hunger;
2. achieving universal primary education;
3. promoting gender equality and empowering women;
4. reducing child mortality rates;
5. improving maternal health;
6. combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases;
7. ensuring environmental sustainability; and
8. developing a global partnership for development.

One of the most topical themes of contemporary international discussions is the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which aims to determine a set of global development targets that will succeed MDGs. The UN has defined 12 illustrative Post-2015 Goals:

1. end poverty;
2. empower girls and women and achieve gender equality;
3. provide quality education and lifelong learning;
4. ensure healthy lives;
5. ensure food security and good nutrition;
6. achieve universal access to water and sanitation;
7. secure sustainable energy;

8. create jobs, sustainable livelihoods, and equitable growth;
9. manage natural resource assets sustainability;
10. ensure good governance and effective institutions;
11. ensure stable and peaceful societies;
12. create a global enabling environment and catalyze long-term finance.<sup>2</sup>

These Post-2015 Goals may be combined into four basic groups:

1. political sustainability,
2. social sustainability,
3. economic sustainability, and
4. environmental sustainability.<sup>3</sup>

There were also five transformative shifts formulated as fundamental conditions for achieving the Post-2015 Goals:

1. leave no one behind;
2. put sustainable development at the core;
3. transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth;
4. build peace and effective, open and accountable public institutions;
5. forge a new global partnership.<sup>4</sup>

The Post-2015 Development Agenda should be adopted by the UN Summit in September 2015.

Our working group focused the theme Higher Education Beyond 2015.<sup>5</sup> In the spotlight of our discussions were six questions, formulated by the Association of Commonwealth Universities:<sup>6</sup> Why does the Post-2015 agenda matter for higher education? How are universities already addressing local, national, and international issues? How can universities prepare to respond to the Post-2015 agenda? What partnerships should universities establish to achieve their objectives? How can universities champion their contributions to wider society? How relevant and realistic are the Post-2015 Goals likely to be? We came to the conclusion that the relationship between higher education and Post-2015 Goals is complex and embraces several aspects: first, higher education itself represents an absolute goal of development (the third Post-2015 Goal is to provide equality education and lifelong learning); secondly, higher education serves as an essential means for the fulfillment of the Post-2015 MDGs.

My report will further concentrate on how and to what extent higher education can assist in poverty eradication recognized as the first fundamental development goal in both UN lists, MDGs and

Post-2015 MDGs. In this context, two important issues will be analyzed: first, whether universities can participate in the global struggle against poverty; and secondly, how law schools can facilitate ensuring the basic right to freedom from poverty.

## **What Can Universities Do for the Fight Against Poverty?**

There is a deep correlation between poverty and a level of education. It has been recognized in international human rights law and practice that poverty reduces considerably the access of a person to an adequate education. At the same time, receiving a good level of education is one of the most important conditions for freedom from poverty and a decent standard of living. The human right to education received its international recognition in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (art. 26) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (art. 13-14). According to the Covenant, the right to education includes the minimum core right to free, compulsory primary education for all as well as rights to secondary and higher education that is free and accessible to all, that should be realized progressively. The Rio+20 Conference's outcome document reaffirms that full access to quality education at all levels is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication, gender equality and full participation in society. It emphasizes "the need for ensuring equal access to education for persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, local communities, ethnic minorities and people living in rural areas" (par. 229).<sup>7</sup> UN member states should establish fair, stable, transparent and predictable legislative and institutional frameworks for quality education systems that comply with international human rights standards and ensure non-discriminatory and equitable availability of education, at all levels. They are responsible for eliminating illiteracy and providing secure access to free primary education for all, as well as possessing an obligation to develop legal guarantees for equitable access to secondary and higher education by the progressive introduction of free education at both levels.

As a result of highly interesting and very productive discussions in our working group, the university's functions, which promote realization of Post-2015 MDGs, have been formulated. In this report, I present my interpretation of these functions in connection with their relevance to the first Post-2015 Goal – poverty eradication.

1. *Research.* Universities should foster a cross-disciplinary research on global poverty and mechanisms of its elimination (among such interdisciplinary research centers one can mention, for example, the Global Justice Program at Yale University, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, the Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research at the University of Salzburg, the Project on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights), advance faculty's cooperation with other poverty-focused research centers as well as their associations aimed to enhance their impact on poverty (for instance, international associations Academics Stand Against Poverty and Global Alliance for Justice Education).



2. *Education.* First and foremost, universities should facilitate the access of people living in poverty to higher education by means of scholarships, organizing free university courses and advanced training available for all members of society (for example, the edX online courses founded by Harvard and MIT), and creating special courses for poor populations. Additionally, in order to grow new generations of socially responsible professionals, universities should refocus themes and revise teaching methods, while placing emphasis on practice oriented courses and clinics focused on issues of poverty, sustainable development, human rights and social justice.
3. *Social mission.* Universities should strive to enhance their social responsibility and usefulness and, in particular, to stimulate students' and faculty's work aimed to assist people living in poverty directly or through cooperation with non-governmental organizations.
4. *Adherence to humanistic values.* One of the most important missions of universities is to be a keeper of high ethical standards corresponding to MDGs and Post-2015 MDGs and to bring them into society.
5. *Public authority.* In order to change reality and to provide actual help to those living in poverty at local and global levels, universities should further an effective outreach of the results of its faculty's poverty-focused research.<sup>8</sup> This can be done by broadening the public audience, and including human rights organizations as well as national and international policy makers. Universities can display their public authority in the form of an independent expert opinion. It is a high privilege and a great advantage of universities in that they can retain independence from any political, economic and religious influences, and should not be dedicated to any values besides scientific truth.
6. *Cooperation* with other higher education and research institutions. Universities are able to improve higher education in developing countries through organizing study and teaching exchange programs, as well as providing advanced training for foreign faculty.

## **Law Schools' Impact on Poverty Eradication**

Law schools' participation in the process of global poverty alleviation is especially relevant and essential. On the one hand, working experience in a public interest sector is a key element of a legal education, and is indispensable for future lawyers. On the other hand, lawyers have necessary knowledge and skills to improve the position of those living in poverty. Contemporary law schools enable their students to take part in various social justice initiatives dealing with poverty eradication strategies. Among many forms of poverty relevant legal education one can distinguish the following:

1. Human rights institutes and interdisciplinary research centers that involve students in practical research on poverty related issues and socio-economic human rights under supervision of the faculty.

2. Courses with elements of practical work, such as participation in collaborative projects with governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in assisting those living in extreme poverty.
3. Human rights clinics aimed at providing a legal support to clients who are unable to hire attorneys directly or in cooperation with NGOs and public interest lawyers.
4. Internships in intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations working for the human rights protection of people living in poverty (for instance, the United Nations Development Programme, the Center for Economic and Social Research, the International Movement ATD Fourth World, FIAN International etc.).
5. Pro bono work for poor communities (providing quality legal services, consulting about human rights, litigation in national and international human rights courts etc.).

The fundamental intention of these social justice initiatives is to bridge theory and practice and to allow law schools to realize their core mission of social service. These initiatives have several important functions.

First, they enable to render direct assistance to those living in poverty, promote human rights and social justice, as well as accountability for poverty eradication on the part of state and non-state actors at global, regional and local levels.

Second, law schools receive an opportunity to support human rights practitioners in their struggle against poverty, while using resources of the faculty and students and applying interdisciplinary methodologies in their collaborative projects.

Third, social justice initiatives enable students to learn “by experience” from outstanding human rights experts, and to perfect their theoretical and practical lawyering skills (legal research and writing, examining real cases, documenting violations, interviewing, negotiating, counseling, drafting reports, oral and written advocacy, etc.) and apply them in practical human rights projects. Through introducing students to challenges they will face in their future careers and by developing innovative solutions, universities prepare a new generation of eminently qualified public interest lawyers.

Last but not least, social justice initiatives further positive changes of the legal profession through enhancing young lawyer’s commitment to Post-2015 MDGs as well as their awareness of the obligation to provide legal services for those living in poverty.

US law schools have a huge experience in organizing these social justice initiatives, which may be very useful for schools of law in Continental Europe. Recently, there were very successful attempts to incorporate them into the life of law schools in many West European countries<sup>9</sup> and in Switzerland,<sup>10</sup> which I believe should be continued. Until poverty eradication remains the most pressing global

problem and the fundamental goal of the Sustainable Development Agenda, there is an urgent necessity to develop various forms of poverty-focused legal education.

## Notes

1. Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development adopted by General Assembly resolution 42/187 (1987).
2. A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development. The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (2013) - <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>.
3. The Report to the Secretary-General “Realizing the Future We Want for All” (2012).
4. A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development. The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (2013) - <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>.
5. I thank all participants of the working group for their excellent work and insightful comments. Especially, I would like to thank Sarah Ulrich for her corrections of the English version of my report. All remaining errors are, of course, mine.
6. The World Beyond 2015. Is Higher Education Ready? - <https://beyond2015.acu.ac.uk/about/six-questions>.
7. The Future We Want - The Outcome Document of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development (2012).
8. An interesting overview of the University of Basel’s outreach activities see in: Lachenmeier M. A Closer Look at Outreach Activities of Higher Education Institutions for the Local Community // Global Perspectives. Comparative Views of the Swiss and US Higher Education Systems With a Focus on Evolving Roles of Universities and Their Connections With Society. 2013. P. 67-73.
9. For example: Tiedemann P., Gieseck J. (Hrsg.) Flüchtlingsrecht in Theorie und Praxis. 5 Jahre Refugee Law Clinic an der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen. Nomos-Verlag, 2014; Olàsolo H. Legal Clinics in Continental Western Europe: The Approach of the Utrecht Legal Clinic on Conflict, Human Rights, and International Justice // Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law). 2010. Vol. 104. P. 98-101; Wilson R. J. 1) Western Europe: Last Holdout in the Worldwide Acceptance of Clinical Legal Education // German Law Journal. 2009. Vol. 10. № 7. P. 823-846; 2) Clinical Legal Education in Dutch Legal Culture: Clashes of Tradition, Tolerance, and Progress in Global Law’s Capital. 2010. - SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1695137>.



10. Truth Commissions: A Law Clinic in Geneva - <http://www.cassese-initiative.org/global-activity/law-clinic.html>.

## **Bibliography**

Academics Stand Against Poverty - <http://academicsstand.org/about/>

Barry M.M., Dubin J.C., Joy P.A. Clinical Education for This Millennium: The Third Wave // Clinical Law Review. 2000. Vol. 7. P. 1-75.

Bloch F. S. (ed.) The Global Clinical Movement: Educating Lawyers for Social Justice. OUP, 2011.

Global Alliance for Justice Education - <http://www.gaje.org>

Human Rights Clinic. Columbia Law School - <http://web.law.columbia.edu/clinics/human-rights-clinic>

International Human Rights Clinic. Harvard Law School - <http://www.law.harvard.edu/academics/clinical/clinics/ihrcl.html>

International Human Rights Clinic. NYU School of Law - <http://www.law.nyu.edu/academics/clinics/year/intlhumanrights>

International Human Rights Law Clinic. UC Berkley School of Law - <http://www.law.berkeley.edu/ihrcl.htm>

Lachenmeier M. A Closer Look at Outreach Activities of Higher Education Institutions for the Local Community // Global Perspectives. Comparative Views of the Swiss and US Higher Education Systems With a Focus on Evolving Roles of Universities and Their Connections With Society. 2013. P. 67-73.

Legal clinic - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal\\_clinic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_clinic)

Lewis R. Clinical Legal Education Revisited - <http://www.law.cf.ac.uk/research/pubs/repository/212.pdf>.

Olàsolo H. Legal Clinics in Continental Western Europe: The Approach of the Utrecht Legal Clinic on Conflict, Human Rights, and International Justice // Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law). 2010. Vol. 104. P. 98-101.

Sen A. What is the Role of Legal and Judicial Reform in the Development Process? - [http://issat.dcaf.ch/index.php/fre/content/download/2331/20258/file/What%20is%20the%20role%20of%20legal%20and%20judicial%20reform%20in%20the%20development%20process%20Sen%20\(2000\).pdf](http://issat.dcaf.ch/index.php/fre/content/download/2331/20258/file/What%20is%20the%20role%20of%20legal%20and%20judicial%20reform%20in%20the%20development%20process%20Sen%20(2000).pdf).

Tiedemann P., Giesecking J. (Hrsg.) Flüchtlingsrecht in Theorie und Praxis. 5 Jahre Refugee Law Clinic an der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen. Nomos-Verlag, 2014.

Truth Commissions: A Law Clinic in Geneva - <http://www.cassese-initiative.org/global-activity/law-clinic.html>

Wilson R. J. Western Europe: Last Holdout in the Worldwide Acceptance of Clinical Legal Education // German Law Journal. 2009. Vol. 10. № 7. P. 823-846.

Wilson R. J. Clinical Legal Education in Dutch Legal Culture: Clashes of Tradition, Tolerance, and Progress in Global Law's Capital. 2010. - SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1695137>.

The World Beyond 2015. Is Higher Education Ready? - <https://beyond2015.acu.ac.uk>

The World Beyond 2015. Is Higher Education Ready? - <https://beyond2015.acu.ac.uk/about/six-questions>

MATT SCHROEDER

## SO, YOU WANT TO BE A FACULTY MEMBER: WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

When you begin looking for a job in the “real world,” one of the first things that you will examine on the job description are the responsibilities of that particular position. Sometimes this list can be quite lengthy, while other times can be rather straight forward and logical. When we consider the realm of academia, it gets a little messier. What are the roles of a faculty member? What are their responsibilities on a daily basis and how does it all tie together when we think about promotion and tenure? For the purposes of this project, I chose to examine the similarities and differences between the roles of faculty members in the United States and Europe. This by no means is a comprehensive list, but it does serve as a basis for understanding.

Most university faculty have earned a Ph.D. When we consider the faculty responsibilities in the United States, it really depends on the type of institution. We think about universities within the United States having three main responsibilities: research, teaching, and extension. The degree to which a particular faculty member is involved in each area greatly depends on the individual and their particular appointment. At a large research institution like Virginia Tech, a tenure track faculty position normally is about 60-70% research, 20% teaching, and the remaining percentage for extension. However, there are some faculty members that are 100% teaching or 100% extension, though not always on a tenure track. On the flip side, a small liberal arts school might be the direct opposite with 60-70% of the role in teaching and only 20% for research. However, when applying for a faculty position at any institution in the United States, the specific appointment will be clearly defined and explained. Promotion and tenure process, therefore, also greatly depends on the particular appointment and the institutional guidelines. Thus, colleges (faculties) within the university have begun to examine what a particular appointment means and how it relates to promotion and tenure. In some cases, a faculty member may not have a teaching appointment, but may teach an online class. Though it does seem messy at times, university professors have three main responsibilities: research, teaching and extension in some variety.

In examining the European institutions that we studied, there do seem to be some similarities, but also some differences. Research, like large institutions in the United States, did seem to be the main faculty responsibility at many of the European institutions studied. However, at many of the institutions, teaching did seem to have more emphasis than what we experience at a large research institution. At UniBasel for example, all professors are required to teach. One of the administrators at University of Zurich emphasized, “We have the privilege to teach.” In many ways, this attention to and importance of teaching resembles the approach typically seen only at small, liberal arts school in the United



States. Extension or outreach in Europe is much different than the United States. At the applied university, Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana (SUPSI), extension does not really exist as part of their responsibilities. However, at a cantonal university like University of Zurich, extension does exist and is quite important. Conversations with professors and administrators routinely indicated that cantonal universities have a responsibility to serve the general Swiss public. At Politecnico di Milano, a large Italian research institution, they created a faculty outreach program called PoliSocial that professors were actively involved in.

Upon the completion of my studies in Europe, I find myself still curious about a couple of issues. I was quite surprised that many of the European schools were not more concerned about extension and outreach. Receiving either federal funding or cantonal funding, I would think the government would require more specific guidelines for helping the general public. I was also surprised by what seemed to be a lack of teaching roles or pedagogical training for Ph.D. students. Though graduate students in the United States many times have a choice in the direction of their graduate responsibilities, it seemed as though European graduate students were solely research focused.

In conclusion, the roles and responsibilities of faculty members in both the United States and Europe seem to be quite similar. The variation and degree to which each faculty member is involved in a particular area greatly depends on the university and the faculty member.

MARIA STACK

# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION

As higher education has evolved, quality assurance and assessment have become more of a focus. In most of the universities we visited, we saw that tuition and fees are steadily increasing for students in Europe, while government funding is decreasing. Along with this, higher education is increasingly global, providing more options for students and creating greater competition among universities to attract these students. Furthermore, technology is also making it possible for students to participate in courses, like MOOCs, from around the world. With these changes affecting higher education, many stakeholders, such as students, professors, and the public, are asking for assurance that universities are preparing students for the future.

To address some of these concerns in Europe, 29 countries introduced the Bologna Process in 1999 and later established the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Primarily, the goals of the Bologna Process were to allow for student mobility and access among member countries. Although not initially a major component of the Bologna Process, in subsequent meetings, quality assurance has been a focus. At the Salamanca declaration in 2001, quality, along with accountability and autonomy, were declared as fundamental aspects of the university's responsibility to society and the public (EUA, 2001). In the Berlin Communiqué (2003), quality was further emphasized, "The quality of higher education has proven to be at the heart of the setting up of a European Higher Education Area. Ministers commit themselves to supporting further development of quality assurance at institutional, national and European level." Two years later at the Bergen Communiqué, education ministers declared that universities could enhance the quality of the educational actives through systematic internal quality assurance measures that inform the university's external quality assurance (Bergen Communiqué, 2005). During this meeting, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, as proposed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), were adopted.

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance attempted to develop "an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance" (ENQA, 2009). Importantly, the standards serve as a reference for good practice at universities, but do not explicitly state how universities must go about achieving these standards, as described:

The EHEA with its 40 states is characterized by its diversity of political systems, higher education systems, socio-cultural and educational traditions, languages, aspirations and expectations. This makes a single monolithic approach to quality, standards and quality

assurance in higher education inappropriate. In the light of this diversity and variety, generally acknowledged as being one of the glories of Europe, the report sets its face against a narrow, prescriptive and highly formulated approach to standards (ENQA, 2009).

The authors of the Standards and Guideline acknowledge that both ‘quality’ and ‘standards’ have different meanings based on local context of higher education. Even within the quality assurance community there are differing opinions in regards to the relationship between universities and external evaluators. Some feel that external quality assurance is a matter of consumer protection, thus there should be a clear separation between the external evaluator and the university. Others in the quality assurance community see a more collaborative approach, with the external evaluators able to give advice and guidance as a way to improve education (ENQA, 2009). In establishing the Standards and Guidelines, the authors endorsed the idea of the European University Association (EUA), which states, “the purpose of a European dimension to quality assurance is to promote mutual trust and improve transparency while respecting the diversity of national contexts and subject areas” (EUA, 2003).

## **My Observations**

In researching how the quality assurance movement came about in Europe, I repeatedly saw autonomy and context, both at the university and country level, mentioned as focal points. Thus, it is not surprising that while visiting universities across Switzerland, France, and Italy, each university had slightly different approaches to quality assurance and assessment based on the culture of the university. For example, at the Politecnico di Milano, the presenters mentioned several ways the university evaluates teaching and research quality. Teacher evaluations, given to students at the end of each course, are synthesized and made public on the university’s website. Students are able to search the online database by professor and course and see whether a ranking of “high,” “medium,” or “low” is given for the course. To evaluate research at the university, a committee of foreign universities was asked to conduct a peer review of research in 2008. On PoliMi’s website, the cost associated with this review—380,000 Euros—was listed directly under the results (Politecnico di Milano, n.d.). In both the teaching and research evaluation, it is interesting to see how transparent the assessment process is.

At the University of Strasbourg, the presenters described the French system of external university evaluation as carried out by the Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education (AERES). In looking at the AERES website, I found it interesting that the evaluation methodology that AERES chooses is “based on self-evaluation by the institution which presents its results and projects followed by an external, independent, collective and transparent review by experts drawn from the same communities as the assessed groups” (AERES, 2013). Again, the focus is somewhat based on the context of the university, rather than a standard for all universities. Based on several evaluation criteria, such as “Organization and life of the institution” and “Involvement in training through research,” each university is given a grade of either A+, A, B, or C. This grade is then published and used by accrediting organizations and funding sources. Because these grade rankings remained for



five years, universities called for a change to the system. Recently, AERES has switched to a written “comments” system and increased the areas to focus its evaluation.

In Switzerland, universities are also evaluated externally; in this case, an independent organization called the Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OAQ). Interestingly, while the quality assurance reviews are mandatory, the Swiss accreditation system functions on a voluntary basis, unlike the rest of Europe (OAQ, 2014). When we visited the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI), the president mentioned that the university is attempting to add a faculty of medicine. In order to do so, they must have a reference university for validation and recognition of the diplomas. In their brochure, he says, “Bearing in mind the limits of the local structures and medical resources, the need to avoid segregation, the legal obstacles and the need to gather both political approval and approval from one of the Swiss faculties of medicine, the most realistic scenario is that of a Master’s course organized in close collaboration with one or more faculties from across the Alps” (USI, n.d.). This highlights the shared interest among academic faculties, rather than competition between universities.

## References

- Bergen Communiqué. (2005). The European Higher Education Area: Achieving the goals. Retrieved from [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/QF/050520\\_Bergen\\_Communique.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/QF/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf)
- Berlin Communiqué. (2003). Realising the European Higher Education Area. Retrieved from [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/about/Berlin\\_Communique1.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/about/Berlin_Communique1.pdf)
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education [ENQA]. (2009). ENQA report on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Retrieved from [http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ESG\\_3edition-2.pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/ESG_3edition-2.pdf)
- European University Association [EUA]. (2001). Salamanca convention 2001: The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area. Retrieved from [http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/SALAMANCA\\_final.1069342668187.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/SALAMANCA_final.1069342668187.pdf)
- European University Association [EUA]. (2003). Graz declaration 2003. Forward from Berlin: The role of the universities. Retrieved from [http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/COM\\_PUB\\_Graz\\_publication\\_final.1069326105539.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/COM_PUB_Graz_publication_final.1069326105539.pdf)
- Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education [AERES]. (2013). Criteria for the evaluation of research institutions: The AERES standards. Retrieved from <http://www.aeres-evaluation.com/>
- Politecnico di Milano. (n.d.). Peer review. Retrieved from <http://www.polimi.it/en/scientific-research/research-areas/peer-review/>

Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education [OAQ]. (2014). Academic accreditation in Switzerland. Retrieved from [http://www.oaq.ch/pub/en/03\\_01\\_00\\_akkredit\\_hochschul.php](http://www.oaq.ch/pub/en/03_01_00_akkredit_hochschul.php)

Università della Svizzera italiana [USI]. A glimpse into the future of USI [Brochure].

BARBARA SZCZERBA & VAHAP AYDOGAN

# IMPACT OF FREE-KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ON RESHAPING SOCIETY

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

~ **Nelson Mandela**

“Self-education is, I firmly believe, the only kind of education there is.”

~ **Isaac Asimov**

An average student enters the education system in primary school, which is followed by secondary school and/or high school. Depending on the individual interest and socioeconomic conditions, one can continue with higher education at the University. During this education pathway, students are becoming more and more specialized in certain field and they mostly focus on very related topics. To break these disciplinary boundaries some universities, including Virginia Tech, started to place more emphasis on education within integrative STEM programs (combined science, technology, engineering and math classes). Unfortunately, in most cases, the access to this academic knowledge is granted only to small groups. Due to development of Internet-based teaching methods, more students can obtain knowledge by joining huge virtual classrooms and earning a degree without even being physically present at the University. But the premise is that on-line courses have normal fees, as well as entry requirements. Therefore, the majority of our population will never have an opportunity to obtain any academic degree. We should also remember that learning, as the main part of human intellectual development, should not be restricted to the certain period such as school years. But is it possible to access the state-of-the-art knowledge easily, to fight with the commodification of knowledge and provide an alternate or enhanced educational paradigm?

Modern society has experienced a unique transformation over the last decade, mostly due to the Internet's influence. Initiated for improving communication, Internet became a huge part of our everyday life. One can use it to buy, sell, entertain, socialize, and importantly also to teach and learn. There is no doubt that it has had an enormous contribution to our perception of the World as the Global Village. With the help of Internet, people connect, communicate and access massive amount of information. However, it is also very easy to become overwhelmed with this massive amount of knowledge, especially without the right guidance, solid structure and with unknown information quality. Therefore, we now start to appreciate the utility of open educational resources, well-arranged collections of various pedagogic materials, originating from institutes from all over the world. Specifically, massive online open courses (MOOCs) are the emerging free online knowledge providers, which cover a broad spectrum of topics and are mostly supported by professional



educators. In addition, engagement of great institutions like MIT, Harvard and other well-known institutions also brings the assurance that provided materials are prepared according to highest education standards. Apart from transferring knowledge and allowing participants to discuss topics, MOOCs allow course participants to solve problems as a group and test their progress. Beside of traditional education, MOOCs can be used as additional free resources to public, and everyone can benefit freely by learning individually or collectively at any time. Moreover, this is also the way of giving the chance to everyone who might not have the opportunity to attend some classes at the specific universities. MOOCs enable people to gain information and to discuss it, without restrictions including time difference, place of residence, age, or nationality. Since our Internet-influenced world becomes more united than before, MOOCs basically overcome the existing obstacles for the learners such as passing borders, place limitations in universities and etc.

There is no doubt that information transfer has a major role in development of technologies, economies, societies and governments. Free sharing of knowledge by MOOCs has the possibility to influence our society in terms of the level of information passed between people. Moreover, popularity of MOOCs can contribute to common acceptance of the idea that everybody is allowed to expand interest in many different fields and there are no limits in interaction with people from extremely diverse backgrounds, from all over the world. We believe that MOOCs give the possibility to everyone to share one's interests, learn new topics and eventually to contribute to better society. Since there is no pressure to join any course or debate, people proceed with real interest and passion. We have a tool now to use this potential of diversity for a positive outcome. One way of contribution is giving the possibility to people from different background to communicate, learn from each other, combine their knowledge and improve the process of developing better products or solutions. Moreover, people can discuss global issues and share their knowledge and experience, which might increase the awareness and solve many problems better than before.

Summarizing, without any place, race, age, sex, salary, and academic background restrictions, people can form groups that are not limited by almost any factor and potentially create a new combination of ideas, and a global audience. The only thing one needs to join MOOCs of interest is access to the Internet. Everyone can profit from it. This is the true beauty of the MOOCs concept. Furthermore, it also reduces the traditional education system limitations, which were mentioned earlier. We cannot predict what (if any) will be the impact of MOOCs on the conventional teaching system. However, it is certainly a great additional resource for those who want to learn more and discuss their projects. Being more diverse might lead to new ideas and concepts, which can also lead to new innovations; therefore MOOCs can eventually lead to higher living standards in the future. We believe that MOOCs have a potential to shape our future in a better way in the sense of learning, sharing, collaborating, creating and contributing to the general society.

MALLORY B. TAYLOR

# THE AFFECTS OF CHANGING WAISTLINES: HOW WILL HIGHER EDUCATION CHANGE TO COMBAT THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC

How do the expanding waistlines of the global population affect the future of higher education? What can be done to address the obesity epidemic in global higher education? What alternatives are there to the system used in the United States? Is the system used in the United States a role model for other countries to follow? What can the United States learn and take away from their more healthy global partners in higher education? Each of the questions above aim to scratch the surface of understanding the obesity epidemic in the United States, and specifically how higher education institutions are attempting to combat the epidemic.

During the my time abroad with the Global Perspectives Program (GPP) my eyes have been opened to see how diverse a culture's outlook on fitness, health, and wellness can vary dramatically from that of my own country. The differences between the two cultures and lifestyle choices are drastically different and would lead one to believe they have had a direct impact on the health and wellness of those specific populations. I believe that gaining new or different perspectives and outlooks is imperative to seeing the problems that lie right under our noses every day. As such this article will provide my views and reflections in regards to the United States and Global obesity epidemic.

These differences may seem minuscule and unimportant to some but their impact can be seen in numbers. For example, in the United States where one's car is the primary means of transportation, that is not the case for most Europeans. Europeans take advantage and pride in their electric powered transportation system, which promotes sustainability, mobility, and reduced consumption. Aiding in this transportation difference, Switzerland, France, and Italy all have well established and connected public transit options (i.e. train, metro, bus) that are used on a daily basis. Thus, the decrease of the amount of dependence placed upon cars, and the increase in the amount of walking to transit stops, stations, etc. Even the most rural of areas (i.e. Riva San Vitale) are home to a train station that provides transportation to the largest cities and transit stations.

Another observation made highlights one of the leading causes for obesity in the United States is the regular (daily/weekly) consumption of fast food. Although many American fast food chains have made their way to Europe (McDonalds, Burger King, etc.) the amount of fast food intake by Europeans from my personal observations seems much less than in the United States. Along with the issues of consumption of fast food in the United States comes the intake of large quantities of sugar-sweetened

beverages. Coca-Cola and Pepsi both have a presence in Europe but you won't find "Big Gulps" of Coke for Europeans to drink in one sitting. The idea of "convenience foods" also is a major cultural difference. Where one would find every snack and soda brand in their own individual vending machine in the states, one vending machine seems to meet all the needs of the European consumer. The majority of vending machines offer food of substance as well as healthy options i.e. sandwiches, fruits, vs. the candy bars, chips, and cookies offered in the majority of U.S. vending machines. From my observations it seems that European countries visited place a much higher level of importance on fresh, local, healthy food and drink options, instead of fast food or foods with copious amounts of fat, preservatives, and/or sugar.

Fitness facilities have a strong presence in universities and colleges in the United States, most of these facilities offer not only cardio and weight lifting equipment but they also are home to many sporting groups (i.e. recreational sports, intramural sports, club sports, etc.) and group exercise classes. The majority of the European campuses visited throughout the GPP course proved to have a strong fitness and/or sports sector to the university. The University of Zurich and ETH have a membership with the Academic Sports Association Zurich (ASVZ), a nonprofit organization that provides sports and fitness programs for all students, employees, and alumni. ASVZ offers over 120 varieties of sports and sports clubs (archery, fencing, skiing, ice hockey, etc.). It's important to note that not all of the universities we visited had such amazing offerings at Zurich and ETH. The universities of USI and SUPSI have partnered together to offer USI-SUPSI Sport Services, which aims to promote physical and sport activities among students, teaching staff, and employees of the universities. USI and SUPSI may not be on the cutting edge of fitness but their offerings are still making a difference by providing students, faculty, and staff with the means to stay active and healthy.

With all of these observations in mind I reflect back to the question posed in the title of the article: "how will higher education combat the obesity epidemic?" This is a loaded question but it is also full of potential, promise, and opportunity for change. The observations made during my time abroad helped to open my eyes to the potential that higher education has to make a difference and combat the obesity epidemic. Whether this is through student service offerings of fitness facilities, sports programs, etc. these higher education institutions are in the perfect spot to make a difference for the future generations. My observations also provided a sense of promise that universities and colleges worldwide, regardless of their cultural differences see that health, wellness, and high quality of life are all important to provide to their students, faculty, and staff. Finally my observations showed there is indeed an opportunity to change and reverse the obesity epidemic within our countries, nations, states, cities, towns, and universities.



JOY THOMPSON

## PREPARING FOR CHANGE FROM THE BOTTOM UP: BLACK STUDIES, OR THE LACK THEREOF, IN SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, AND ITALY.

Every country has a history entrenched in various forms of collective human struggles and victories. The United States of America has a past primarily characterized by centuries of racial oppression and tension. The oppression has effectively seeped into this country's fundamental infrastructures such as the police force, employment opportunities, housing, and for this paper's focus, education. While we've seen improvement, the American educational system is fraught with prejudice, systematically relegating Black people to second-class status, often omitting their narratives and contribution to this country. For years, a European based history is what was presented, available, and passed down to all Americans, from the cradle to college. Historical highlights such as presidential elections, wars, and White cultural movements were the mainstays in subjects like History and Social Studies. But this deliberate hiding of the complete and accurate American story is what prompted students and professors to protest and vehemently advocate for Black studies programs to be instilled in U.S. higher education. Finally, the first Black Studies program was established at San Francisco State in 1969. We now have African American or Africana studies program in over 45 colleges and universities across the country. Even Ivy League universities like Harvard, Yale, and Brown have robust doctoral programs in African American studies. But this was not a top-down effort. The university executives did not initiate this revision, it took students being fed up with the status quo to come together and not only prepare for, but demand change.

In choosing to investigate Black studies programs in Europe, I realized that Switzerland, France, and Italy did not possess the unique racial history like the United States; therefore I knew this would be somewhat challenging.

A long, but peaceful flight, and one unexpectedly smooth layover later, I was "across the pond." Between gallivanting on the cobble stones of Zurich, with its posh boutiques and restaurants to enjoying the scenery and risotto across from ancient edifices like the Duomo di Milano, to leisurely morning bike rides in the dreamy, picturesque Riva San Vitale, I did not experience any racialized encounters where I was deliberately or unintentionally being made to feel inferior based on my skin color. However this observation and experience could be exclusionary at best and naïve at worst, because I was occupying a very privileged position for those two weeks. This equal treatment could have stemmed from me being sandwiched between a pack of White graduate students, in which we were experiencing the best of the best – everywhere. From resting our bones at elite hotels to eating

and drinking the finest foods and wines at premier restaurants to attending first class personalized tours and seminars hosted by esteemed university administrators, I was constantly in positions that your typical native (of any ethnicity) doesn't relish everyday in Europe. However, had I been an African or Caribbean immigrant, working a job simply trying to make ends meet in my new surrounding, perhaps my view of a non-racialized Europe would be totally different. But in our down time, I was able to notice racial subtleties like people of color—being the primary stock of cab drivers, cooks, and janitors – in Zurich in particular. As I floated along, in the sea of white faces, I had a faint sense of hopelessness in really believing that there would be any Africana programs available on the campuses we visited. Mostly, with the exception of one university, my intuition was correct.

The University of Zurich offered a plethora of cultural programs that students could obtain a bachelors or masters in: Japanese, Indian, Arabic, Chinese, Latin, and Eastern Asian art studies were all available, along with various other options. While every single culture seemingly known to man was on that page, there was not one mention of Africa. Black studies (or similar programs) were not available at Italy's Politecnico di Milano or Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana (SUPSI) nor France's University of Strasbourg, or Switzerland's Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH). While the aforementioned universities are an astounding pillar of educational success in their own right, none of them provided any platform to truly study the Africana diaspora or the Afro-European experience. I was curious as to why there was this void, but didn't think there was any opportune moment to inquire. While I could have pressed for answers, to be honest, I didn't feel comfortable enough delving into this topic with STEM scholars, university officials that were not sociologist/anthropologist, or with university officials that simply may not have to answer to such a broad themed, complex question. Overall I concluded that the lack of Black studies stemmed from the lack of demand for it.

After all, Black American students fought for this and demanded that Africana and African American studies be a discipline in higher education. If European students want to see more Black studies programs, they will have to demand it as well. However, I was pleased to learn that the University of Basel, Switzerland's oldest university had the elaborate Center for African Studies. This is the only place where students can obtain a masters or doctorate in Africana studies in the entire nation of Switzerland. The relationship that University of Basel has with Africa is impressive and inspirational. A portion of their 'About us' page reads:

“There are good reasons to study Africa. If one gets engaged with the continent at a deeper level, hardly any of the usual recipes turn out to be reliable. Today, the multiple demands put to those who deal with Africa or its people cannot be covered or communicated within a single discipline. Where the usual interpretations fail, new knowledge is called for. In Basel, knowledge about Africa has been accumulating for decades.”

It's very straightforward, functional, and unpretentious, making it clear that the administrators of Basel intuitively understand the important reasons to study Africa. With in-depth areas that take a closer look

at Africa's history, social anthropology, society and culture, it boasts a colorful array of possibilities and opportunities for the scholar interested in learning more about the continent. I'm sure the director of University of Basel, an Egyptologist, feels very at home in a place that acknowledges Africa as a continent worthy of educational attention.

In the wake of America's police brutality on communities of color and overall unequal treatment in quality of life -across the board, it was nice to step away and be a foreigner in a different land.

In closing, the struggles of Black people have led to more academic visibility of their stories, not just for Black people, but for Hispanics, Asians, and even the LGBTQ community. I'm not quite sure what the Afro-European struggle will lead to, and if it will ever translate into a field of study deemed worthy enough to be instilled in more universities across Europe. In preparing for change, no matter what country we're referencing, I believe it will primarily come from those who are prepared to change it, not from those that are satisfied with the way things are.



SARAH A. ULRICH

# IMMIGRATION AND ACADEMIA: A RECENT POPULAR INITIATIVE AND ITS EFFECTS ON SWISS UNIVERSITIES

As higher education has evolved, quality assurance and assessment have become more of a focus. In most of the universities we visited, we saw that tuition and fees are steadily increasing for students in Europe, while government funding is decreasing. Along with this, higher education is increasingly global, providing more options for students and creating greater competition among universities to attract these students. Furthermore, technology is also making it possible for students to participate in courses, like MOOCs, from around the world. With these changes affecting higher education, many stakeholders, such as students, professors, and the public, are asking for assurance that universities are preparing students for the future.<sup>1</sup>

Roughly one-quarter of Switzerland's population is foreign born, with around 1 million European Union (EU) citizens living in Switzerland, while another 230,000 cross the border each day in order to work.<sup>1</sup> According to Anders Hagström, Director of Global Educational Affairs at Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich, this large population influx was the "right problem to address, but [the initiative] was the wrong tool."<sup>2</sup>

This initiative may have particularly large impacts on Swiss universities, especially with respect their ability to recruit international students, researchers and professors, as well as their ability to secure funding through international European agreements.

## **Impacts on Students**

As of 2011, 38% of all university students in Switzerland were internationals.<sup>3</sup> In a country where higher education is considered a right (that is therefore heavily subsidized by taxes), this high percentage of non-tax paying students poses a significant problem. However, since Switzerland has few natural resources, some of its main exports are education and intellectual property. This dilemma is being addressed at the graduate level at the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) by charging foreign Masters students €4000 per year, double the €2000 annual fee for Swiss Masters students.<sup>4</sup> However, it appears that little is being done to directly address the cost of foreign undergraduate students, who make up the majority of foreign students studying in Switzerland.

It is possible that perceived difficulties in obtaining residential entrance to Switzerland will deter foreign students from studying there, thereby reducing the amount of tax monies spent on them. A decrease in

international students is of particular concern at USI, which is the most international of all Swiss campuses. As the only Italian-language university outside of Italy, USI has a student population of some 65% foreign-born students.<sup>5</sup> According to USI president, Piero Martinoli, the university would not be able to survive without international students.<sup>6</sup> Since the number of international students attending Swiss universities is particularly high, any limitations on students could greatly change the makeup of campuses. However, it remains to be seen how the government will implement the law, especially with respect to international students.

## Impacts on Faculty

With respect to recruitment, perhaps the gravest concerns are those surrounding Switzerland's ability to attract professors and researchers from abroad. Although the full legislation has not yet been released, it remains unclear whether or not the initiative would make it more difficult for foreign academics to enter the country, or would make it difficult for them to remain in Switzerland. Currently, two-thirds of Swiss academics are internationals, which would make any constraints on foreign recruitment strongly detrimental to Swiss higher education.<sup>3</sup> As a result, Swiss academia strongly condemned the referendum in its entirety. Prior to the vote, university rectors and higher education presidents, along with the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, and the Swiss National Science Foundation issued the *Manifesto for an Open Switzerland* which states,

All signatories to the manifesto speak with one voice: the freedom of movement of individuals with the European Union is the best way for Switzerland to ensure excellence in education and research. A vote in favour of the popular initiative "Against Mass Immigration" could jeopardise the success of scientific research in Switzerland.<sup>7</sup>

## Impacts on Research Funding

The Chronicle for Higher Education reported on a poll showing that 74% of Swiss people were in favor of maintaining existing agreements with greater Europe. However, negotiations between the EU and Switzerland concerning participation in these programs were immediately halted in light of the referendum results.<sup>8</sup> In place of the existing agreements, Switzerland lost its status as a full participant in Erasmus+ and was demoted to "third country" status. This is considered a transitional solution by Erasmus+ management, until the details of the immigration bill are finalized. The special conditions for a country with "third country" status are as follows:

- Swiss partners may not take on the project coordinator role,
- the proposal must be submitted by a non-Swiss applicant to the national agency of the programme in question,
- Switzerland is not counted as a partner for the purposes of the required minimum number,

- as a “third country”, Switzerland is permitted to participate only if it offers skills of knowledge in the areas that are crucial to the educational value of the project that no member state can offer.<sup>9</sup>

The Erasmus+ guidelines go on to note that the final “added value” clause is very important, and if the board is not convinced that this criterion is met, funding will be denied to all participants in the project. In addition, for an approved project, no Swiss participants may travel outside the country for the purpose of collaboration, and no other participants may visit Switzerland to collaborate.<sup>9</sup> It is clear that future participation in Erasmus+ will be more difficult for Swiss citizens, especially with regard to participants’ abilities to communicate in person, or visit labs and facilities of collaborators.

## Ongoing uncertainty

The exact way in which the referendum will be enacted when it is written into law remains to be seen, and opinions voiced during the Global Perspectives Program varied. Rector Antonio Loprieno of the University of Zurich stated that there was no uncertainty in that foreign students not have a problem remaining in Switzerland for the duration of their studies.<sup>10</sup> However, it was clear from Johannes Wilberz, a German student attending the University of Basel, that the students themselves feel differently, and are uncertain about their ability to stay in Switzerland while completing their studies.<sup>11</sup> Clearly, there is a disconnect between administrative perceptions of the referendum, and the student body. On the other hand, other students felt that the law would never actually go into effect. Valentin Baltzer, a Swiss law student at the University of Basel, stated that it was likely that when the time came for the law to take effect, the government would hold another vote, asking whether or not it should be implemented. He felt that most people would oppose implementation, and the law would never be realized.<sup>12</sup> Until the government releases a draft bill, it will be difficult to assess the future effects on students, faculty, and research funding.

## Notes

1. Rabesandratana, Tania. "Swiss Vote to Curb Immigration Could Hamper Research." *Science Insider*. Sciences AAAS, 10 Feb. 2014. Web. 22 July 2014.
2. Hagström, Anders. Personal communication. 26 May 2014.
3. "Swiss Immigration Vote Already Impacting Education - ICEF Monitor – Market Intelligence for International Student Recruitment." ICEF Monitor, 11 Mar. 2014. Web. 22 July 2014.
4. "Fees and Grants." USI - Master's Degree - Fees and Grants. Università Della Svizzera Italiana, n.d. Web. 22 July 2014. <<http://www.master.usi.ch/en/study-related-information/tuition.htm>>
5. Martinoli, Piero. "Welcome to USI Università Della Svizzera Italiana." Università Della Svizzera Italiana, n.d. Web. 22 July 2014.



6. Martinoli, Piero. Personal communication. 2 June 2014.
7. "Manifesto for an Open Switzerland." *Manifesto for an Open Switzerland*. Swiss National Science Foundation, 21 Jan. 2014. Web. 22 July 2014.
8. Gardner, Michael. "Controversial Swiss Immigration Vote Threatens Education Partnerships." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. University World News, n.d. Web. 22 July 2014.
9. *Special Conditions for Swiss Project Partners in 2014*. Ch Foundation for Federal Cooperation, n.d. Web. 22 July 2014. <[http://www.ch-go.ch/repository/proxy/oi-files/10232/Web\\_Sonderbedingungen\\_Drittland\\_en.pdf](http://www.ch-go.ch/repository/proxy/oi-files/10232/Web_Sonderbedingungen_Drittland_en.pdf)>.
10. Loprieno, Antonio. Personal communication. 28 May 2014.
11. Wilbertz, Johannes. Personal communication. 28 May 2014.
12. Baltzer, Valentin. Personal communication. 28 May 2014.

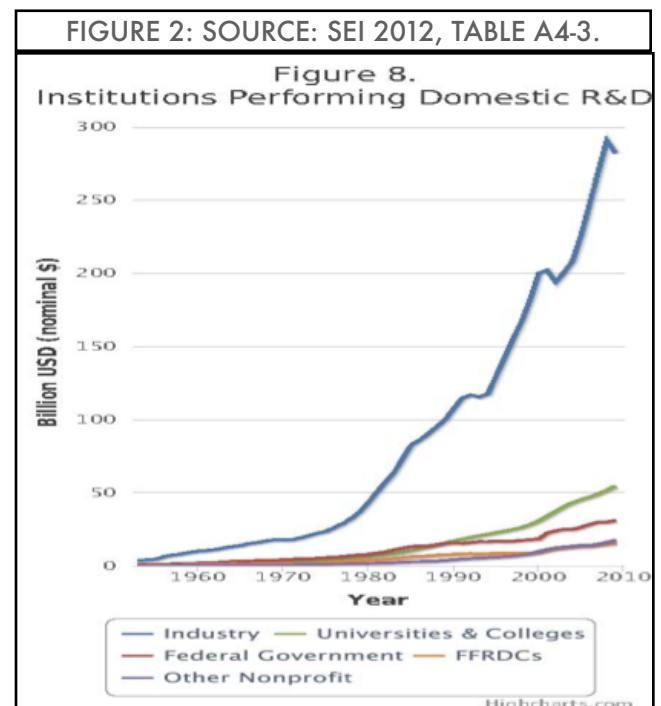
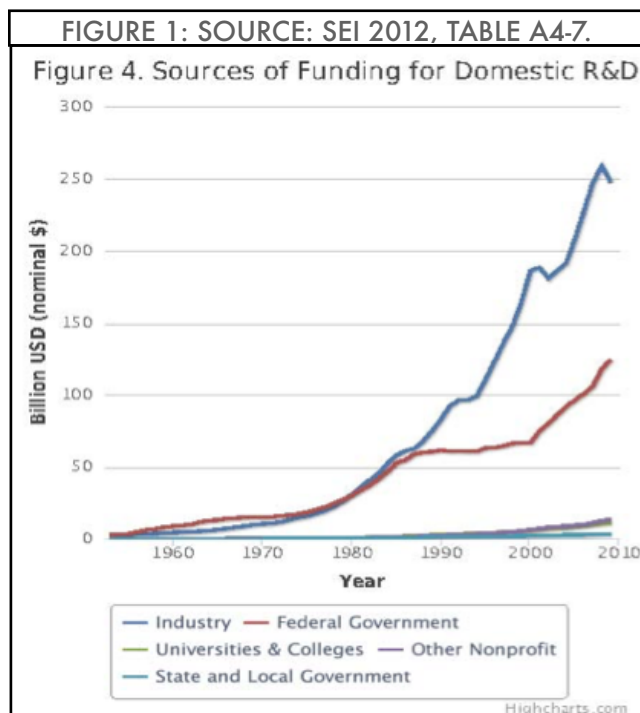
# RESEARCH AND SOCIETY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

## Global Perspectives Program 2014 (GPP14)

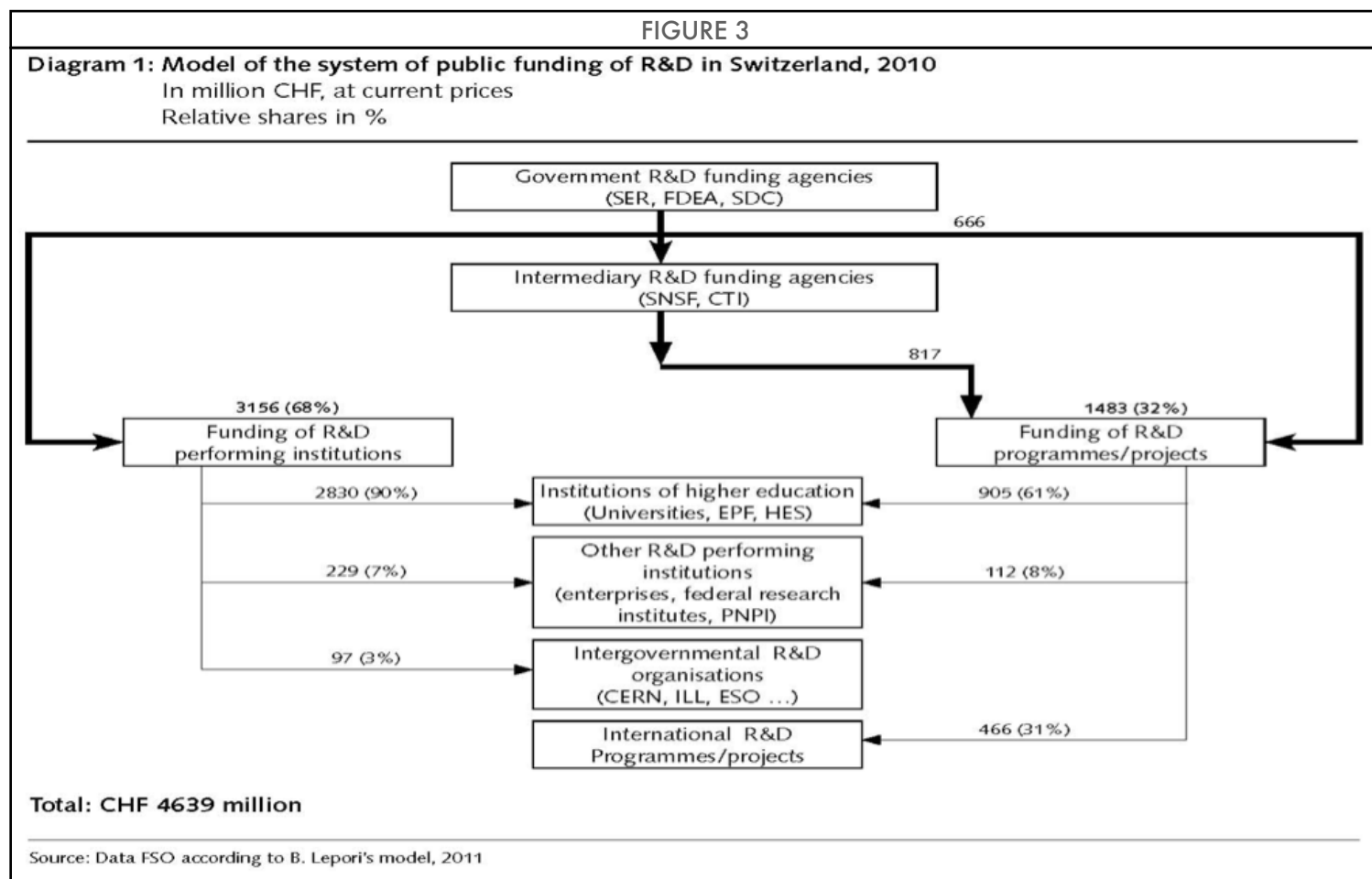
Being a Salvadorian and American citizen has given me the privilege of living in two countries. Having access to higher education in both countries and participating in GPP14 has increased my knowledge of the dynamic relationship between higher education and society. GPP14 was a learning and life-changing experience at both personal and professional levels. This unique and enriching program helped me to realize the fundamental role of research for solving society's problems as well as society's complimentary role for sponsoring such research. Rooted in community based participatory research, my MPH and PhD research has taught me that engaging and moreover making a community a partner increases retention on research and also empower communities to solve their own problems. GPP14 brought me to a new level of understanding regarding the interaction among higher education, research, and society.

## Research and Development: Where is the funding coming from?

In U.S, Research and Development (R&D) is being found from different parts of society<sup>1</sup> (Figure 1) and universities have 23.7 percent of their R &D development funded by the federal government is conducted by universities (Figure 2)



In Switzerland, university funds are awarded by: (a) basic grants coming from the Swiss Confederation to the higher education institutions (b) regular budgets, which are part of the federal institutes of technology (ETHZ and EPFL) and (c) by the cantonal governments (Figure 3).<sup>2</sup>



## Communicating Sciences: A Moral Obligation

R & D are funded by society, does it mean universities are moral obligated to communicate their science to societies? Or we can have a consequentialism view<sup>3</sup> (moral rightness depends only on the total net good in the consequences) and assume that as long as we (scientists) know it will be good for society, should it be enough? Under my point of view scientists are moral obligated to communicate their research. Society, who will be directly or indirectly be involved either as sponsor or recipient of the research's results, has the right of knowing where the money will be invested and how the results of the research will impact them.

## Communicating science to Lay People:<sup>4</sup>

Communicating science to non-scientists and non-experts requires scientists to communicate their research using non-technical jargon, illustrative examples, and approachable language. It sounds easy, but it can be a real challenge!

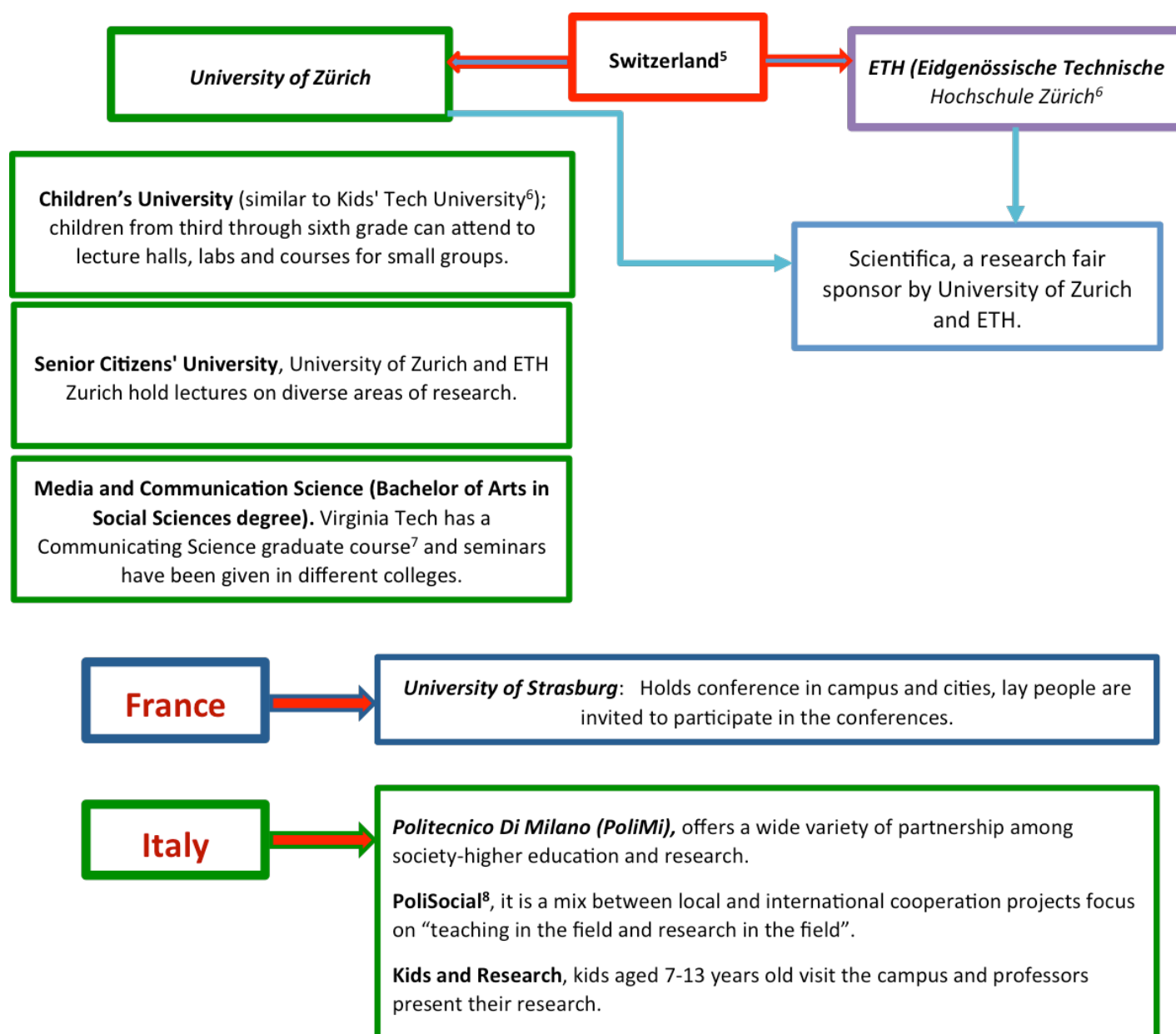


Communicating science, also under my point of view is not just about communicating research findings; it is about involving all stakeholders (from lay people to scientists) in a process that will bring benefits to everyone.

Scientists communicate science to other scientists and non-scientists through articles, popular press magazines, news releases, and conferences (oral and poster presentations). Communicating science to non-experts goes beyond to scientific presentations. GGP14 provided us an up-close look at how science is being communicated to society in different European countries (Italy, France and Switzerland).

## Communicating Science: Observations from Universities Visited

Higher education in Europe has taken a step forward on communicating sciences to societies and on satisfying societies need through research. The following are some of the examples of communicating sciences to lay people:



## References

1. The Sources and Uses of U.S. Science Funding. Available at: <http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/the-sources-and-uses-of-us-science-funding> Accessed August 13 2014.
2. Public Funding of Research in Switzerland 2000–2010. Available at: <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/04/22/publ.html?publicationID=4917> Accessed August 13 2014
3. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Consequentialism. Available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/#WhaCon> Accessed May 6, 2013
4. Burns, T. W., O'Connor, D. J., & Stocklmayer, S. M. "Science communication: a contemporary definition" *Public Understand. Sci.* 12 (2003) 183–202.
5. University of Zurich. Public Lectures and Events. Available at: [http://www.uzh.ch/outreach/events\\_en.html](http://www.uzh.ch/outreach/events_en.html) Accessed August 13 2014
6. Kid's Tech University. Virginia Tech. Available at: <http://kidstechuniversity.vbi.vt.edu/> Accessed August 14 2014
7. Communicating Sciences. Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology. Virginia Tech. Available at: <http://www.icat.vt.edu/content/communicating-science> Accessed August 14 2014
8. Polisocial. Politecnico Di Milano. Available at: <http://www.polisocial.polimi.it/us/what-we-do/> Accessed August 14 2014

MICHEL VARGAS

# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY: HOW UNIVERSITIES ARE RESPONDING

For many of us, as active members of the learning community, education is considered a public good. We strive to promote the development of people and their well-being. Consequently, our efforts focus on fulfilling our social responsibility in order to best serve the needs of society. Borders and physical distances are no longer obstacles. More than ever, we are connected throughout the world due to various advances in the digital arena. Correspondingly, our commitment needs to expand further from local communities to global ones. It is imperative to create globally relevant partnerships for development that target communities that need us most. This important task can only be achieved through a deeper understanding of other cultures and their worldview.

Participation in the Global Perspectives Program (developed by Virginia Tech's Graduate School in 2005<sup>1</sup>) was an extraordinary opportunity for me to be exposed to this type of rich learning experience. Our diverse group not only had opportunities to examine differences in European and US academic practices, but we were also able to immerse ourselves in the local culture. Both aspects allowed us to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges facing contemporary higher education (HE). The 2015 Global Perspectives Program (GPP) exposed participants to the significance of diversity as a source of enrichment as well as importance of an improved HE tailored to the needs of 21st century learners.

This article presents observations regarding how the seven universities we visited in Switzerland, France, and Italy are responding to challenges associated with fulfilling their social responsibility in a global society. My aim throughout GPP was to comprehend how universities understand this important topic, as well as their plans and actions moving forward. To start this exploration, we must briefly discuss three important concepts behind this challenge: society, internationalization, and globalization.

## **Society, Internationalization, and Globalization**

According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, society is defined as “people in general thought of as living together in organized communities with shared laws, traditions, and values.”<sup>2</sup> This definition allows us to emphasize the transformation that has been taking place in our world: we are becoming one global society. Now is a time when we can define ourselves as global citizens with shared laws, traditions, and values. We have built this global society during several years with the help of different technologies and tools that have eliminated physical boundaries and borders. As we move further

along this process of integration, several challenges are arising. In terms of HE, institutions are walking down one of two paths toward integration: (1) internationalization or (2) globalization. Consequently, it is appropriate to clarify the difference between internationalization and globalization in order to understand how each directly impacts a university's actions regarding their social responsibility.

During our visit to Universität Basel (University of Basel), Rector Antonio Loprieno explained these two concepts. First, he pointed out that internationalization denotes only an association with another HE institution in another country through agreements, partnerships, exchanges, etc.<sup>3</sup> The main reason for internationalization, as expressed by Maurits van Rooijen, is to improve a university's quality by providing international opportunities for students and professors while also enhancing recruitment. Meanwhile, globalization is the process of total opening to a world's perspective where borders play no role at all.<sup>4</sup> In other words, HE globalization means to integrate and embrace the whole world as our community with globally focused responsibilities and commitments.

## **The Journey**

In general, European universities are primarily funded by local and central governments. According to de Dominicis et al. (2011), government provides 70% of the total income of European research-active universities.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, European universities tend to approach social responsibility mainly with regard to local and national communities. Nevertheless, European universities are realizing there exists a need to expand boundaries and move towards a more integrative process. Below, a brief summary of my observations of how select universities in Switzerland, France, and Italy are addressing their global social responsibility:

- Universität Zürich (University of Zürich) focuses in internationalization. Their main objective in the social arena in response to this integration process focuses on capacity building in Uganda and Rwanda. This translates into training Ph.D. students in their facilities and faculty development through partnerships with local institutions of HE.
- Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH) shares the same approach – internationalization, but with no visible social impact in a global perspective. ETH pursues a goal of improving their local and national community through partnerships with top-ranked HE institutions.
- Université de Strasbourg (University of Strasbourg) is evolving and undertaking a globalization scheme. They have developed joint graduate programs with other institutions around the world, as well as collaborations for community development worldwide. Université de Strasbourg is reinforcing its mission of service to the public in a global arena with limited resources.



- The geographic location of Universität Basel (University of Basel) has shaped its institutional character in terms of internationalization and globalization. As Rector Loprieno explained, UniBasel is “international by nature with a global aim.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the university is trying to evolve and contemplate an approach of globalization, while maintaining its social impact within the local (which due to geography is also international) community.
- Politecnico di Milano (Polytechnic University of Milan) has a strong will to fulfill their social responsibility both locally and globally. As such, globalization (as opposed to internationalization) is their approach to 21st century HE. In this regard, in 2012 the university created PoliSocial, an academic social responsibility program in collaboration with Fondazione Politecnico di Milano (Polytechnic University of Milan Foundation). The aims are to “promote and encourage new multidisciplinary approaches attentive to human and social development” in order to “contribute to increase quality of life, reduce poverty and inequality for the local and international communities.”<sup>6</sup> It is interesting that these projects are funded through donations of taxes to the Fondazione Politecnico di Milano by the local and national communities and subsequently allocated by the university. Such a structure allows for flexibility and high impact in terms of global development.
- Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana - SUPSI (University of Applied Sciences of Italian Switzerland) is entirely focused on addressing its local and national societal needs. Consequently, they are not pursuing a global perspective.
- Università della Svizzera italiana - USI (University of Italian Switzerland) has a vision of educating mainly international students, while targeting local and national needs. Similar to SUPSI, USI does not seem to have an explicit global target. Nevertheless, USI is supporting social responsible initiatives and awareness through their academic programs.

## Remarks

From these observations, I conclude that the seven different universities recognize social responsibility is an intrinsic challenge that HE must address. Additionally, these universities understand the importance of having a global presence. Nevertheless, approaches differ depending on the cultural background and funding sources of each university. When compared to private HE institutions, it is evident that public institutions face additional funding challenges when attempting to fulfill social responsibility. Nonetheless, as demonstrated by Politecnico di Milano, public HE institutions can and should work on novel approaches to balance local and global needs.<sup>7</sup>

Our nature is to challenge paradigms and strive for continuous improvement. In the end, we must overcome a key challenge – securing access to education and opportunities with equity and equality worldwide.<sup>8</sup> Returning to the question that arose at the beginning of this experience "Would it be possible for a university to have social responsibility without borders?" The answer is a responding YES, we can and we should!

## References

1. Global Perspectives Program. <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/GPP>. Accessed on August 2, 2014.
2. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/society>. Accessed on August 2, 2014
3. Loprieno, A. 2014. Globalization versus Internationalization in Higher Education. Oral presentation for the GPP14 participants. May 28, 2014.
4. Van Rooijen, M. 2013. What does globalization really mean for higher education? <http://www.eaie.org/blog/what-does-globalisation-really-mean-for-higher-education/#.Uw-3sijrrCo.twitter>. Accessed on August 2, 2014.
5. de Dominicis L., Pérez S.E., Fernández-Zubieta A. 2011. *European University funding and financial autonomy. A study on the degree of diversification of university budget and the share of competitive funding*. European Commission, European Union.
6. Polisocial. <http://www.polisocial.polimi.it/us/about-us/>. Accessed on August 2, 2014.
7. Najam, N. 2014. “Universities challenge – Balancing local and global” <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2014030916293016>. Accessed on August 2, 2014.
8. MacGregor, K. 2014. “Interesting times ahead as higher education goes global” <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=2014050215572842>. Accessed on August 2, 2014.

# THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PEER REVIEW IN SCIENTIFIC PUBLISHING

Peer review is the system by which a pre-publication research manuscript is evaluated by independent experts from the same field (i.e., peers). First introduced in the 1950s, peer review has since become the normal practice and is now adopted by most scientific journals. Peer review aims to maintain quality and credibility of published research works. Since its widespread adoption, peer review has been generally successful.

However, peer review system is far from perfect. There is growing criticism from the science community about the traditional peer review process. Critics bemoan peer review's slow pace, tendency toward favoritism, and lack of transparency. It is very likely the closest "peers" in a field of research are direct competitors. As such, they won't have much difficulty in recognizing which lab a paper comes from, even if the authors are anonymized. Also, comments from reviewers are usually only visible to the authors and the editor, but could be very useful for the wider audience.

The fast growth of social media provides an ideal platform for publicly accessible research discussion that can involve a large number of people. There are examples of blogs being used by scientists to comment on papers (both in draft and published formats). As the scientific community continues to increase its use of microblogging sites such as Twitter, new social networking websites dedicated to and designed for scientists are also emerging.

## **Pre-Publication Peer Review**

Various attempts have been made to integrate social media tools into the pre-publication peer review process. In most attempts to leverage social media for pre-publication peer review, manuscripts are screened by the editor, made directly accessible to a small peer community, or provided to a selected audience. Throughout the process, authors and reviewers are encouraged to interact in open discussion. Ultimately, the editor will make the final decision regarding publication.

In 2006, *Nature* undertook an open peer review trial for four months. For the authors whose manuscript was not directly rejected by the editor, *Nature* allowed authors to have their manuscript displayed online for public comments in addition to the traditional pre-publication peer review process. The outcomes of this trial were not encouraging. Of the 1,369 papers reviewed during the trial period, only 71 (5%) agreed to be posted for online public commenting. Furthermore, 33 of the 71 manuscripts received no comments at all. In its report of the trial, *Nature* noted, "Despite enthusiasm

for the concept, open peer review was not widely popular, either among authors or by scientists invited to comment.”<sup>1</sup>

The general lack of comments is unsurprising. Most scientists are unlikely to review other people’s work unless explicitly asked to do so or the pre-publication research happens to align with their own interests. One notable attempt to overcome this problem has been made by Peerage of Science. With this online service, scientists receive points for writing reviews of other papers. The points-for-reviewing is an important component because points are required in order to upload your own manuscript for review. “He who wants his manuscripts reviewed, reviews other manuscripts in return.”<sup>2</sup>

## **Post-Publication Peer Review**

Although post-publication peer review sounds like a recent idea, it is actually nothing new. Some journals have utilized post-publication peer review in the form of technical comments and letters to the editor for years. However, due to the limitations of the traditional editing, proofing, and printing process, post-publication peer review still has all the drawbacks attributed to traditional pre-publication peer review. Social media, on the other hand, has created new pathways for direct and open post-publication peer review.

Social media played an important role in several recent cases of post-publication corrections. There is even a blog called Retraction Watch, which is dedicated for reporting paper retractions. Perhaps the most noticeable case of post-publication peer review via social media is the retraction of papers published in Nature about STAP cell.<sup>3,4</sup> Just days after the papers were published, several scientists began questioning results in blogs and online forums. As a result of such post-publication peer review, serious problems have been identified in the papers. As biologist Paul Knoepfler explains, “A big hat tip goes to post-publication review and social media for helping move on from STAP ... Without social media, the STAP papers would in all likelihood remain unretracted through 2015.”<sup>5</sup>

Compared with integrating social media into pre-publication review, there are some trying to make a more radical change to the system. Some approaches publish papers immediately upon receiving them and thereafter put the entire reviewing process online. For example, online journal Philica (launched in 2006) works just this way. Reviews remain anonymous and are displayed together with the articles, giving readers an open look at reviewer feedback, criticism, and/or guidance about the manuscript. F1000research (launched in 2013) is using a similar approach – authors are allowed to revise their paper as discussion goes on, and revisions are tracked with a versioned system.

Still though, others argue that “post-publication peer review cannot do the entire job of filtering the scientific literature right now...(but) an extraordinarily valuable addition to, not a substitute for, the familiar peer review process that journals sue before publication.”<sup>6</sup> As biologist and blogger Zen Faulkes explains, “Social media is just the biggest research conference in the world.”<sup>6</sup>



## Conclusions

It is unlikely that traditional peer review will be replaced anytime soon. Nevertheless, it is clear that scholarly publishing is experiencing ongoing reform. It is encouraging to see new efforts to improve peer review. I am eager to see how social media will shape the scientific publishing system, to facilitate the production of more and better research, and to spread knowledge to more people.

## References

1. Greaves, S. et al. Nature's peer review trial. *Nature* 444, 1–5 (2006).
2. Online Social Network Seeks to Overhaul Peer Review in Scientific Publishing. at <<http://news.sciencemag.org/2012/01/online-social-network-seeks-overhaul-peer-review-scientific-publishing>>
3. Obokata, H. et al. CORRECTIONS & AMENDMENTS Retraction : Bidirectional. *Nature* (2014). doi:10.1038/nature13599
4. Obokata, H. et al. CORRECTIONS & AMENDMENTS. *Nature* (2014). doi:10.1038/nature13598
5. Perspectives on STAP cell Nature paper retractions. at <<http://www.ipscell.com/2014/07/perspectives-on-stap-cell-nature-paper-retractions/>>
6. Faulkes, Z. The vacuum shouts back: Postpublication peer review on social media. *Neuron* 82, 258–260 (2014).

ERIC M. WETZEL

# THE BUILD UP: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND SWITZERLAND

Globally, institutions of higher education are at a developmentally complex time. Global demand for higher education is exceeding supply, competition for funding is creating a greater emphasis on attraction and retention of the “best” students, institutional branding is playing an ever increasing role, and ranking systems are more prevalent than any time in history (Stockley 2011). To stay competitive in such an intensive global market, universities around the world are constantly renovating and building new facilities in order to attract and retain students and faculty. This research paper will compare the execution of campus development between the United States and Switzerland by exploring universities within each country. Comparisons will be made by evaluating funding sources, decision making, and the role of the federal & state (canton) government. The data collected for this research is heavily based on Q&A sessions with individuals employed at the specific universities described in this paper.

## **Campus Development in the United States (Public Universities)**

In the United States there are roughly 3,000 four year, degree granting institutions (National Center for Education Statistics 2012). Public institutions of higher education have many distinguishing factors that represent their individual cultures (i.e. campus, size, research focus); however, when a public university decides to build or renovate a facility, the process among all institutions is fairly similar. Often, universities will maintain a master plan that dictates the campus development goals for a set period of time, usually between 5-10 years. These master plans are generally reviewed by a Board of Directors, who decide which projects should be executed, delayed, or deleted. When the Board decides to move a project forward, the State commits a certain amount of money to the project. The funds set aside for the project are revised based on engineering and construction costs. Once the funds are secured, the university assigns a project manager and the project is designed and advertised for bid. Although this process is fairly typical, it should be noted that substantial gifts provided by donors can have an influence on project sequencing within the master plan. For a more detailed example of campus development in the United States, the next section will evaluate the process that Virginia Tech uses to initiate a construction project.

## *Virginia Tech*

The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, better known as Virginia Tech (VT), is an institution of higher education in Blacksburg, Virginia, USA. During the 2013-2014 school year, Virginia Tech was home to 23,976 undergraduate students, 4,647 graduate, and 448 professional students (Virginia Tech 2014). As of June 2, 2014, Virginia Tech had roughly \$640,000,000 (581,932,800 CHF) worth of construction projects in some stage of construction or renovation (Building and Grounds Committee 2014). Similar to most institutions of higher education, VT utilizes a master plan that is reviewed by the Board of Visitors (BOV) every 6 years. During the master plan review, the BOV executes a schematic campus layout with new facilities, develops a tentative program schedule, and a rough budget for all the construction and renovation projects identified within the master plan. Upon completion of the master plan review, the projects that were given priority begin. Funding from the State of Virginia and VT are combined and distributed based on the needs of the projects. Project managers are assigned by VT and the project is designed and advertised for bid. Figure 1 summarizes the process stated above.

## **Campus Development in Switzerland**

Based on the research completed for this paper, campus development in Switzerland is heavily based on two factors, available space and government subsidy. Similar to some of the more urban campuses in the United States (e.g. NYU), many of Switzerland's campuses are in densely populated areas. Because of the landscape, Swiss universities often renovate current facilities or procure existing buildings to fit their campus expansion needs. In some cases, expansion requires the development of a satellite campus. This requires a great deal of commitment by the university and Canton (state), as new infrastructure, commuting, and faculty issues all need to be addressed.

Funding for campus development varies greatly among universities in Switzerland. Swiss universities are heavily subsidized by the government and therefore require coordination with the Canton or Federal Government for expansion. Through the research, it became apparent that each Canton had a different method for distribution of funds. The following sections will provide insight into four universities in Switzerland and how each of those universities address campus development.

### *ETH Zurich*

ETH Zurich (ETH) is a university located in the Zurich Canton, downtown Zurich. It is home to more than 18,000 students, including 3,900 doctoral students (ETH Zurich 2014). ETH is different from most universities in Switzerland due to its funding source. ETH is one of only two Federal universities in Switzerland and therefore does not obtain money from the Canton, but rather the Swiss government. Each year the Swiss government distributes 2.5 billion CHF to ETH Supervisory Board. The Board reviews and distributes the funds between ETH Zurich and Ecole Polytechnique Federal de Lausanne, the other Federal institution in Switzerland. At this point the governing body of each university

distributes their funds based on academic need, research needs, proposals, and construction/renovation needs. Once the funds for construction and renovation are distributed, projects can begin.

### *The University of Zurich (UZH)*

The University of Zurich (UZH), located in the Zurich Canton, downtown Zurich, is a large university with roughly 26,000 students (University of Zurich 2014). UZH, like most universities in Switzerland, is a Canton university, meaning the university is funded by the State, not the Federal Government. When UZH requires campus expansion, the university submits a proposal to the Canton. Historically, the Canton does not distribute funds for building or renovation, but rather builds or renovates space on the universities behalf. Once the space is completed, the university obtains the rights to the facility. Recently, the university has asked the Canton for more autonomy in building and has a master plan to develop a satellite campus.

### *University of Basel (UniBasel)*

The University of Basel (UniBasel) is comprised of roughly 11,000 students and is located in the Basel Canton. Similar to UZH, UniBasel is a Canton university that requires a proposal to obtain new facilities or renovated space from the State. However, upon completion of a project, the university does not retain the rights to the facility. Although the university has autonomy of the equipment and space within the structure, the Canton retains the ownership of the building.

### *University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Italian Switzerland (SUPSI)*

SUPSI is an institution of applied sciences located in the Ticino Canton in Southern Switzerland. SUPSI is home to roughly 4,000 students and over 6,500 continuing education students (SUPSI 2013). Funding from SUPSI is different from the other universities explored in this research paper; monies for research, building, and the like comes from both the Canton and the Federal Government. Strategic direction and control are the responsibility of the SUPSI Council, composed of people not working at SUPSI, but rather are individuals appointed by the State Council (Government) of Canton Ticino. Currently, SUPSI is in the process of building a new campus that is estimated to begin in the next 2-3 years. The program will cost roughly 100 million CHF. SUPSI is largely autonomous in campus development, however are still required to show a need in order to obtain funding. Because of the use of both federal and state money, the government is heavily involved with development at SUPSI.

SUPSI, like Virginia Tech, has a master plan that is revisited by the SUPSI Council every 4 years. The plan is revised based on school and Canton needs. Once the plan is agreed upon, the Council submits budgetary information to the Confederation (Federal) and Canton (State) government. At this point, a democratic vote takes place with the people of Ticino deciding whether or not to approve the budget set forth by the SUPSI Council in order to expand the campus. If the people of Ticino approve the budget, the school can assign a project manager and begin construction. When approved, the Canton provides roughly 2/3 of the required funds, while the Confederation covers the remaining 1/3.



If the people deny the budget, the Council will need to revise the master plan in order to resubmit for another vote.

## Conclusion

With the growing needs of universities around the globe, campus development will continue to be a large portion of university budgets. As this research paper has shown, how these projects are executed can vary greatly among, Countries, States, and individual universities. In comparing similarities between US and Swiss universities, ETH Zurich and SUPSI have processes that are closely related to the US system, minus the substantial government subsidy. However, as government funding continues to decline in both the United States and Europe, privatization of campus development will become more frequent and the process of campus expansion at Swiss universities will likely begin to look more like the US system.

## References

- Building and Grounds Committee (2014). "Capital Projects Status Report." Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 1-3.
- ETH Zurich (2014). "Facts and Figures." <<https://www.ethz.ch/en/the-eth-zurich.html>>. (August 7, 2014).
- National Center for Education Statistics (2012). "Number of educational institutions, by level and control of institutions, 1980-81 through 2010-11." <<http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=84>>. (August 7, 2014).
- Stockley, D. (2011). "Global Trends in Higher Education." Cooperation Between European and Chinese Higher Education Institutions, Peking University, Beijing, China.
- SUPSI (2013). "SUPSI in cifre." Scuola universitaria professionale della svizzera italiana, 77-94.
- University of Zurich (2014). "UZH in Numbers." <[http://www.uzh.ch/about/portrait/figures\\_en.html](http://www.uzh.ch/about/portrait/figures_en.html)>. (August 7, 2014).
- Virginia Tech (2014). "Factbook: Student Overview." <<http://www.vt.edu/about/factbook/student-overview.html>>. (July 31, 2014).

JOHANNES WILBERTZ

# STUDYING LIKE JOE DOES: A PEEK INTO THE NEAR FUTURE

AN IDEALISTIC APPROACH TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE, FREEDOM AND DIVERSIFICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSPIRED BY THE TRAVELS AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS DURING THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PROGRAM 2014

It's 8.00 o'clock. It's Monday. The alarm of his mobile phone forces Joe out of bed. Another day begins on his journey toward a Bachelor degree in "Natural Sciences" at the University of Basel. After breakfast and a short commute by bike he arrives at his department's building. A building that actually does not deserve this name anymore since his university underwent a radical reform a few years ago. Chemistry, pedagogy, history, and other traditional departments no longer exist. Instead the university transitioned toward research clusters in which different subject areas are combined with the intention of creating synergistic effects between the different disciplines.

In the meantime, Joe has locked his bike and hurries into the building in order to be on time for his 9.00 o'clock "Science news briefing." During this part of his daily schedule a fellow student studying "Natural Sciences" like Joe, introduces the others to a current scientific finding he or she was intrigued by. Group meetings are supervised by one or two PhD students or postdocs who give guidance and can offer help. Only four rules for each meeting exist: (1) presentations must be science related, (2) presentation must be non-electronic, (3) a clear and detailed take-home message needs to be presented, and (4) presenting student needs to stimulate a discussion about the topic. Although these rules seem very simple, Joe finds this part of his daily schedule very challenging and it forces him to focus and be awake in the morning. On the other hand, Joe feels that his presentation skills have improved dramatically. In addition he interacts with students from other disciplines and learns what interests them.

After a short coffee break, from 10.30 to 12.30 Joe attends two biochemistry lectures that deal with the current focus area of his main study program. These lectures are comparable to traditional university lectures with lots of details which are given at universities all over the world. For example, today Joe learns how genetic information in human cells is translated into proteins. Interrupted by his lunch break (which he enjoys outside in the sun) Joe continues from 13.30 to 15.00 with his daily "Methods course." During this part of Joe's education the theoretical knowledge he and his fellow students have obtained during the lectures is now put into practice. Joe performs and learns about experiments that are often performed in his field of study. Although this part of his colloquium can be complex and/or quite theoretical, Joe likes the modular structure. Each day all over the University of Basel this combination of lectures and practical courses is given from 10.30 to 15.00. This allows students to

select and assemble their own personalized study plans and encourages them to see the breadth of disciplines within UniBasel. Occasionally, Joe likes to swap a few weeks of chemistry with an introductory lecture series in history or business administration.

Slightly overwhelmed by some complex biological mechanisms he just encountered, Joe takes a break and chats with his friends for a bit. Many of them will join him in a few minutes for a recently introduced part of his education with the catchy title “Stop & Notice Course” (15.30 to 17.00). During this course, or “brainstorming meeting” as Joe prefers to call it, he and students from *all* backgrounds meet. Together they explore their questions, doubts, or excitements pertaining to their own or completely unrelated academic fields. In the past Joe has pondered ethical problems about how biological research can be communicated to the public. Currently, he is working together with a law student to explore how new laws could be designed to reduce the risk of new biology-related technologies. In the future he would like to collaborate with a business student to learn more about how it works to setup his own small company. The “Stop & Notice Course” is actually one of Joe’s favorite parts of his daily schedule. The course allows him to find out what he can do with his knowledge beyond pure academic science. In addition Joe meets a lot of interesting students from other fields and they work together on small and big questions. Even during academically challenging times, this course reminds Joe why he chose to become a natural scientist.

Although he is quite tired by now, every day from 17.00 to 17.30 before going home, Joe has to write a short paragraph into his online “Daily Achievements Notebook.” This last part of his daily schedule helps Joe to reflect on what he did the previous 8 hours. He often writes down what he liked about the day, some details about what he learned, a new experience he made, or a plan that he would like to pursue in the near future. Sometimes, however, he also writes down criticism about the way a course was given or a particular topic he did not understand. Every few weeks he sits down with his personal study advisor, who is a late stage PhD student, to address these matters. Together they then plan his next few weeks’ schedule with the goal of becoming a real scientist.

## **A New Colloquium to Promote Knowledge, Interdisciplinarity, and Communication**

Of course the random day out of Joe’s life described above is a complete fiction. Despite the fictitious nature of this example, Joe’s day does contain a number of “idealistic visions” that I have developed during the last few weeks, months, and years while I was myself a student and a participant of the 2014 Global Perspectives Program (GPP). There exist numerous approaches to teaching and education. Most of them have been designed based on ideas of pedagogical experts who know far more about the involved theory than I will ever know. Nevertheless, I would like to highlight three basic and very simple elements of learning in a research-based university setting that I enjoyed or partially missed during my studies.

First, studying should be target-oriented. There needs to be a clear aim. In the end, the benefits of all the hours at desk should be clear. What more do I now know that I did not know before? Second, students should learn and be stimulated to think in ways that allow them to identify problems and questions – within and beyond their primary discipline. Last but not least, students need to learn how to communicate, share ideas and opinions, be convincing, and receive criticism.

How could these three elements be converted into a useful and practical university framework? By sketching a random, hypothetical day in Joe's life I tried to illustrate how such an educational framework is possible. But how realistic is such a model in the real world? Let's focus on a few examples. At the University of California, Santa Cruz innovative teaching methods have become reality at the Science & Justice Research Center where it is part of the scientific responsibility to promote exchange between the social sciences and engineering.<sup>1</sup> Another example is the "BrainLab" within the School of Life Sciences at the University of Nottingham. This program is offered to final year neuroscience students to foster communication and teaching skills in co-existence with the aim of developing the student's ability to design scientific studies in order to answer their own unresolved questions.<sup>2</sup> A third example I experienced personally. At Virginia Tech's Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT) artists, musicians, architects, and natural scientists work together on projects related to societal challenges, but also generate ideas and work which is purely based on the pleasure of thinking and designing.<sup>3</sup> Of course these three cases only represent the tip of the iceberg. Still thought, they are impressive examples of how interdisciplinary teaching methods could help to improve the way universities work.

What do these programs have in common? What can we learn from such examples? And how could these elements be incorporated in more general terms to enhance the learning, teaching and quality of future universities?<sup>1</sup>

1. *Fostering collaborations*: The aim of future universities should not be to create unnecessary hybrids between different and completely unrelated disciplines. Instead, they should focus on answering relevant questions that traditional academic structures were not able to solve. These questions can be society-related, technology-based, or purely interest-driven. However, it is a common feature that a single scientific discipline does not have the expertise necessary to adequately address the question in the required detail. Therefore, a culture needs to be created in which common concerns lead to collaborations between disciplines. Common concerns need to be identified and space and time needs to be provided to address them.
2. *Distinct spaces for interdisciplinary work*: Working across disciplines requires collaboration with others. In order for this to work, distinct physical locations are necessary. For example, a university can offer a few rooms that can be shared by researchers with different backgrounds. In the long run it would, however, be attractive to organize interdisciplinary collaborations on a larger scale and bringing entire departments into close proximity of each other. On the other hand, the idea of distinct spaces for interdisciplinary work also incorporates the dimension of time. Without



freeing up time for collaborations and changing priorities the nicest building devoted to interdisciplinary work will remain unused. A regular event during which some food and drinks are served might serve as a simple, but excellent starter to physically join researchers.

3. Encouraging “slow down”: The “publish-or-perish” culture, fast-track PhD programs, and the current tenure system have led to a tremendous generation of specific knowledge and data, but have also dramatically increased the speed of everyday scientific work. This development has resulted in an atmosphere where processes such as trying out, failing, and venturing into the unknown are often perceived as a “waste of time.” Structuring degree programs is not the main problem. It might even be a solution, if time slots are generated when students and junior researchers are encouraged to investigate questions that might seem ridiculous at first. For example, one of their “Friday evening experiments” eventually resulted in a Nobel Prize for the two physicists Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov.<sup>4</sup>

If you closely followed Joe’s day in the previous section, you probably noticed that many of the elements of his schedule are actually overlapping with one or more elements of this short list. How realistic is it to transform current universities into places where these concepts of learning and discovery are valued?

## **How Realistic is the University of the Future?**

On first sight the investments that are necessary for the interdisciplinary university of the future seem enormous. An impressive building like the described ICAT at Virginia Tech that I was able to visit offers great infrastructure and space to prepare students for the future. Of course novel structures like these come at a price. Many other changes that university could implement come at a fraction of these costs or no costs at all. The first step could be to introduce small locations in which students and scholars from different disciplines can meet. This might be a coffee place on campus or a different common area. Secondly, fixed times for exchanging thoughts and developing “novel” ideas can be promoted at the inter-departmental level. For example, a weekly or bi-monthly informal meeting during which snacks are served, short talks are given and discussion are promoted is relatively easy to establish. Last, but not least change can be “institutionalized” by offering interdisciplinary lecture series or making little adjustments to already existing degree programs which shift the focus on awareness for the little, but interesting questions.

Some elements of Joe’s daily schedule are not costly at all and are easy to implement. The Global Perspectives Program has taught me that the future of higher education is not far away. The future is happening right now and small changes that go beyond online lectures and social media may make it a success.

## References

1. Science & Justice Research Center (Collaborations Group). Experiments in Collaboration: Interdisciplinary Graduate Education in Science and Justice. PLoS Biol. 2013 Jul 30;11(7):e1001619.
2. Devonshire IM, Hathway GJ. Overcoming the Barriers to Greater Public Engagement. PLoS Biol. 2014 Jan 14;12(1):e1001761.
3. Virginia Tech, Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology [Internet]. [cited 2014 Sep 13]. Available from: <http://www.icat.vt.edu/>
4. Smith A. The Nobel Prize in Physics 2010 - A Chip Off the Old Block [Internet]. [cited 2014 Sep 23]. Available from: [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/physics/laureates/2010/speedread.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/2010/speedread.html)



## AFTERWORD

The Global Perspectives Program 2014 has offered another round of valuable exchange and insights into Global Higher Education issues. When reflecting about the Future of Higher Education GPP participating doctoral students and postdocs researchers focused on themes like leadership, transformation of society, social responsibility, the transformative experience of the program itself, student linked participatory models of university governing boards, the role of technology (MOOCs) in opening access to higher learning, campus development in the US and Europe, diversity aspects, black studies, academia to fight poverty and expanding waistlines, they looked into career development as future faculty member and questions of quality assurance within the US and EU Bologna system.

Taking up the translational aspect of science as one topic discussed in the GPP 2014 group that on the one side is supposed to feed practitioners with insights and new questions from laboratories and on the other side has its role to play when it comes to social responsibility at regional, national and global level I want to add from my side the engagement of Switzerland at global level by launching and furthering research partnerships with countries outside the European Union, namely the BRICS – countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) at the beginning of 2000 and by enlarging its engagement after 2010 to world regions as a whole when putting Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin-America on the map of preferred research partners.<sup>1</sup> The University of Basel has been mandated by



the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (i.e. the Ministry in Switzerland) to build up research contacts and partnerships with Africa. Basing this mandate on the long common history of Basel with Africa that dates back to the 19th Century and on its competencies in African research and studies today the University of Basel together with the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute has been active with partners in and outside of Basel to implement a multi-year programme with the aim of bringing researchers at Swiss and African Universities together.<sup>2</sup> With the focus on mutual learning for change the focus was set on equal conditions to participate in this programme – following the recommendations of the so-called 11 Principles of KFPE, the Commission for Research Partnership with the South<sup>3</sup> - but also on equal provision of funding. Taking research cooperation into its focus the program is not competing with Development Aid Actions but building up solid research partnerships across North – South boundaries and basing the selection of projects upon academic merit.

Globally oriented Higher Education and Research has certainly the power to transform our thinking and societal behavior towards an inclusive approach worldwide. The Global Perspectives Program is a tool that very much serves this direction and by thanking all of our participants and the Virginia Tech leadership for enabling this program and contributing to it the door of a diversifying view has still to be flung wide open when considering participation of future GPP groups located at African, Asian or Latin American Universities. The power to do so lies with the future professoriate that we were happy to get to know and to accompany during the first five years of bilateral GPP engagement. We look forward to further enticing the spirit of worldwide cooperation and to strengthening global frameworks of mutual learning for change.

Erich Thaler

Senior Manager, Networks and Global Partnerships, University of Basel

1. State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) @ [goo.gl/BXAR2k](https://goo.gl/BXAR2k)
2. Swiss - African Research Cooperation (SARECO) @ [www.unibas.ch/africa](http://www.unibas.ch/africa)
3. KFPE 11 Principles @ [goo.gl/eXY7ul](https://goo.gl/eXY7ul)



# COPYRIGHT

© 2016

Jointly published by Universität Basel & Virginia Polytechnic  
Institute and State University

Concept and layout by Justin D. Shanks  
email: [jshanks@vt.edu](mailto:jshanks@vt.edu).

This publication follows:

[GPP Manual 2010](#)  
[GPP Manual 2011](#)  
[GPP Manual 2012](#)  
[GPP Manual 2013](#)