Global Connections – Local Impacts
Opportunities and Challenges
for Cross-Border Open and Distance Learning

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Liang Qichao (1919)

*Impressions from my European Journey*

‘Our nation has a great responsibility . . . to enrich our culture with Western culture and to enrich Western culture with our culture, so that they may fuse into a new culture.’
A sizeable new university would now be needed every week merely to sustain current participation rates in higher education. 

... A crisis of access lies ahead. Sir John Daniel, 1996

By 2010, there will be 100 million people in the world fully qualified to proceed from secondary education to tertiary education for which there will simply be no room on any campus anywhere. Henry Rosovsky, Harvard University

International growth in demand for higher education will be the principal driver in changes in the nature of universities in the new millennium. Blight, et. al, 2000, p. 95
Going Global: The Driving Factors for Universities

- Alternative funding sources
- Adoption of ‘English’ as the global language
- Diversification and increase in international student mobility for higher education and employment
- Workforce needs – skills migration
- Demand by developed and developing countries for technology transfer and research collaboration
Trends in Global Cross-Border Higher Education

- Host nations are becoming more selective in approving and selecting foreign providers
- Cross-border research exchange is a rapidly growing priority among nations
- Quality assurance oversight agencies, internal and external, are monitoring universities operating in other countries more closely
- Competition for internationally mobile students is growing more intense each year
Emerging Hosts & Sources

- **UK**: major source; emerging host
- **USA**: major source; emerging host
- **C. America**: hosts and sources
- **Caribbean**: emerging host
- **S. America**: varying levels of hosts and sources
- **Canada**: emerging host and source
- **France, Spain, Germany**: hosts and sources
- **UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman**: major hosts
- **Russia**: declining source; emerging host
- **E. Europe**: emerging hosts
- **Central Asia**: emerging host
- **China & India**: major hosts, emerging sources
- **Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore**: major hosts, emerging sources
- **Kenya & Mauritius**: emerging hosts
- **South Africa**: declining host; emerging source
- **Australia (NZ)**: major source; emerging host

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Defining the Global University
(Thomas, 2007)

- Global brand penetration
- Comprehensive excellence in research, teaching, academic staff, facilities, leadership and governance
- Innovative global research
- Global distribution of teaching and learning
- Diverse student and staff demand – many international visitors
- Impacts on global issues and policy formation
- Close interactions with global business
If you don’t know where you’re going . . .

it won’t matter which path you take
Global Distance Learning

75% of global cross-border higher education is delivered in face-to-face formats

WHY?
Barriers to Global Distance Learning

- Academic programs, research, and tech transfer carry ‘real people’ credibility in host nations

- The research and best practices base for the interconnected impacts of online learning, language and culture is in its infancy

- Technology is not culturally neutral

- Digital divide is not an illusion . . . it is real and a major access barrier for global distance learning
The Cultural Imperatives

- Research the core cultural, language, social norms and traditions of the host nation – show respect

- Expand trans-cultural research towards creating teaching models that address technology, language, culture and social norms

- Build regional partnerships

- Student-centered learning - How can our global students make us better teachers?
Strategic Considerations for University Leaders

- Articulate how global distance education initiatives align with institutional mission and strategic goals

- Align distance teaching with instructional design formats that compensate and respect language, culture and social norms of foreign students

- Develop a risk management strategy for major international distance learning initiatives

- Why can you do it better than your competitors?
The Global Future for Distance Learning

- The global distance learning market will grow significantly in the next ten years
- Maintaining the focus on effective teaching and learning rather than the technologies
- Building partnerships with the right partners
- Creating and dissemination knowledge rather than just information
Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.
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THANK YOU

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