

Departments

The Cultures of Education: The European Association for International Education

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The creation in 1989 of the European Association for International Education (EAIE), was a reflection of the growing importance of the internationalization of higher education in the late 1980s to the European Union, national governments, and institutions of higher education. In the United States, the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), has a long tradition and large membership, including many members from Europe. But in Europe, even at the national level, international education associations have been lacking. The newly created ERASMUS program and funding from the European Union have promoted international cooperation and exchange in higher education between the member states of the union, and institutions of higher education have been stimulated to develop strategies and infrastructures for internationalization. The creation of the EAIE in 1989 at a founding conference in Amsterdam was the result of a broadly felt need to exchange ideas and promote professional development in international education. In its short period of existence, the EAIE—with 1,500 members, including several non-Europeans—has become a major player in Europe in the field of international cooperation and exchange, sponsoring training programs, publications, and an annual conference attracting more than 1,250 participants.

The most recent conference of the EAIE was held in October 1995 in Milan, Italy, with around 1,400 participants from more than 50 countries. A great number of sessions and workshops were held, on topics such as credit transfer, credential evaluation, study abroad, foreign student advising, European research programs, North-South cooperation in higher education, East-West cooperation, language and education, and international business studies. The central theme of the conference was "The Cultures of Education," and several sessions dealt with this topic. The notion of culture and cultural diversity is important in the practice of international education. The present situation in Europe, with tendencies toward union-

ization and countertendencies toward nationalism and ethnicity, impacts programs for international cooperation and exchange. For instance, where in the past the European Union was striving to overcome diversity and to stimulate unification in the rich diversity of educational systems, structures, and cultures in the union, there is now a recognition of educational diversity as the starting point for cooperation and exchange and as an important aspect of the European dimension. Some have expressed the feeling that Europe lacks the research experience of the United States on cross-cultural aspects of education, and several conference participants expressed the need for placing this higher on the agenda in international education in Europe.

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The next conference of the EAIE will be held in Budapest, Hungary, December 4–6, 1996. The theme of that conference will be "On Equal Terms: New Partners in International Education." Among many other issues, it will deal with the way universities in Central and Eastern Europe, but also in the developing countries, can transform their one-way dependency relationship with higher education in the industrialized world into a more equal exchange relationship.

News of the Center and the Higher Education Program at Boston College

The Higher Education Program's successful Administrative Fellows Program enters its second year in September. A dozen new graduate students will participate in the program along with seven continuing students. The Administrative Fellows Program provides financial assistance to students who are placed in administrative and other offices at Boston College. Fellows work in such settings as the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the International Programs Office, athletic administration, residence halls, the Center for International Higher Education, the Office of the Executive Vice President, and others. In addition, students participate in an ongoing seminar that provides an opportunity to link work experience with coursework. Further information can be obtained from Professor Karen Arnold, Coordinator of the Higher Education Program, Campion Hall.