better coordination of the country's higher education system. The government would like the private sector to complement and supplement the efforts of the public sector and has sought to steer the private sector toward providing more vocational and technical education.

Thus, there has been a gradual shift from state control toward state supervision in the relationship between the Malaysian government and higher education. In the state control model, the Ministry of Education regulates access conditions, the curriculum, degree requirements, examination systems, the appointment and remuneration of staff, the selection and admissions of students, and other administrative matters. Conversely, in the state supervisory model universities are responsible for their own management and generation of their own revenues. In this model, the state oversees the higher education system in terms of assuring quality and maintaining a certain level of accountability. With the corporatization and privatization of higher education in Malaysia, the shift is from central state control to market-based policies, which will increase the range of choices for students and address the needs of an increasingly complex social order. However, the Malaysian state will still maintain a central steering role to ensure equity of access, consumer advocacy, and national identity, which are broader social and cultural goals that transcend the market. ■

Recent Developments in French Universities

Christine Musselin and Stéphanie Mignot-Gérard

Christine Musselin and Stéphanie Mignot-Gérard are on the staff of the Centre de sociologie des organisations. Address: CNRS, 19 rue Amélie, 75007 Paris, France. Fax : 33 47 05 35 55; e-mail: <s.mignot-gerard@cso.cnrs.fr> or <c.musselin@cso.cnrs.fr>.

French universities have long been known for their weak governance capacity. Research by Erhard Friedberg and Christine Musselin on this topic (*Enquête d'universités*, 1989) and their comparative work on French and German universities clearly confirmed this characteristic. They show that French university administrators tend to behave as *primus inter pares* rather than as active promotors of collective projects. In most cases, university bodies came to " nondecisions," not making any decisions at all, rubber-stamping choices made by individual faculty members, leaving the final decision to the ministry, or simply implementing the criteria set by the Parisian central administration. Thus, individual autonomy was considerable while institutional autonomy was limited ; moreover the latter was considered somewhat illegitimate. In the view of these two authors, the weak governance of French universities allowed the Ministry of Education to play an interventionist role that also maintained the weakness at the institutional level.

Fifteen years later, the authors of this article have done a new study on French university governance, funded by the Agency for the Modernization of the Universities—created in 1997 as part of the French Association of University Presidents. Based on 250 in-depth interviews at four universities, the study shows that French universities experienced a number of important changes within the last decade and have strengthened their governance.

Institutional Policy and Planning

The current study found a rise in the development and the implementation of institutional policies at the university level. While the changes are not large in scale, more and more universities are reexamining the curriculum in order to develop courses in specific areas or to give priorities to certain job-oriented programs. Institutional policies are also focusing on research—to better coordinate research activities, promote interdisciplinary projects, and to search for nongovernment funding. But the more surprising finding of our study concerned management issues. Attempts were made to develop institutionwide reporting and monitoring procedures. The goal was the harmonization and normalization of previously diverse practices to create institutional shared norms and ways of acting. This change in mangement allowed the production of data at the university level. These data are more readily accepted and recognized than data produced by the ministry and are useful as a basis for deciding such things as the redistribution of nonacademic staff positions or new budget allocation procedures.

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University Bodies

A striking development has occurred in the effectiveness of university bodies. The 1984 law on higher education provided French universities with three elected bodies: one for pedagogical issues, one for scientific issues, and above these two the university council, which dealt with all other issues and especially the budget. The council has the power to limit the actions of the university president. As stated earlier, university bodies were previously known for their preference for "nondecisions" and were decribed as places for debates and confrontations. This is no longer true. Decisions are now

made that can affect the university's future (for instance, the creation of new academic positions and the priorities attached to them). The size of these bodies (between 30 and 60 members in the universities we studied) does not allow decisions to be reached during the plenary meetings: decisions are prepared beforehand by specialist groups. This may lead some elected members to feel "dispossessed" and constrained to vote for propositions elaborated without their input. Nevertheless, decisions are now actually made, and university bodies have a much greater expertise than before.

Office of the President

The third important transformation that has occurred in French universities is the strengthened position of the Office of President. While their statutory powers remain about the the same as before, their conception of their role changed: presidents no longer see themselves as passive representatives of the faculty members' interest but much more as managers responsible for initiating projects within the university and promoting the development of relationships with the outside world. They are also recognized as the main spokespersons for the university by the ministry (where as previously they had to compete with deans for this position). Nevertheless, such involvement in the definition and implementation of institutional policies and strategic planning at the university level does not extend throughout the university. The activist, and even quite interventionist approach that is emerging at the presidential level are still very rare at the level of the deans. The latter remain rather passive and are not (and do not wish to be) closely associated with the university administration. Indeed, their position is quite an uncomfortable one: the president's staff expects the deans to convey university orientation and policy, while the individual faculty members still expect the deans to protect them against the presidential will. This imbalance within the university leadership will probably be one of the big challenges faced by French universities in the coming years.

The changes affect not only the universities but the French system as a whole, which for years has consisted of strong *facultés* (colleges) that the weaker universities were unable to consolidate into a whole. The recent evolution fostered the emergence of stronger universities, better able than before to promote collective actions, practices, and orientations. In addition to changes at the institutional level described earlier, there have also been broader transformations with important consequences. The ministry (which initiated this change: but this is another story) needs to learn how to negotiate with university representatives rather than with those representing the disciplines. The developments have had an effect on the French university landscape: stronger university governance promotes the evolving of institutional identities, which increases the institutional diversification in a country known for its standardized and national programs. Strengthened university governance could thus be the visible part of a larger overall change in the French higher education system. ■

The International University Bremen: Private Higher Education Returns to Germany

Hans C. Giesecke

Hans C. Giesecke is NAICU International Fellow and Consultant for Student Affairs, International University Bremen. Address: International University Bremen, Bürgermeister-Smidt-Strasse 78, 28195 Bremen, Germany. Fax: 49 421 3611 1818.

In the latter part of the 19th century, there was a stream of immigration between the ports of Bremerhaven, Germany and Galveston, Texas. The influx of German immigrants into Texas during those years led to the founding of a number of German-American communities in the region between Houston and Austin. This human flow has been augmented over the last quarter century by a scientific exchange between Rice University, Texas and the public University of Bremen. This exchange reached a peak in the 1990s, particularly in the field of mathematics.

The founding of the new International University Bremen (IUB) in the last year of the 20th century by the city-state of Bremen, Rice University, and the University of Bremen is an outgrowth of the links between Bremen and Rice University. IUB, which plans to enroll its first students in fall 2001, will be the first comprehensive, private, English-language institution on the European continent offering B.A.s, M.A.s, and Ph.D.s to an international student body. The campus will feature an international digital library, extensive student and faculty exchange programs, and a variety of joint educational and research ventures between institutions in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

IUB's Development

IUB made the transition from an idea on paper to an institution-in-the-making in a very short time frame. The idea was germinated when a former officers´ logistics academy of the German Army became available in a residential setting just 15km to the north of Bremen´s city center. Bremen´s progressive city-state government agreed to the idea of creating the first true private university in Germany on the site of the former military academy. This,