

in turn, led to a number of contacts with leading academic institutions in North America to determine if a strong partner could be found to assist in institutional development efforts.

Due to the history of collaboration between Rice University and Bremen, the call to Rice University in fall 1997 was received with considerable interest. A delegation of Rice University officials was dispatched almost immediately to begin discussions with Bremen civic leaders. The original notion was to create a branch campus of Rice University in Germany, but after preliminary discussion it became clear that the more compelling approach would be to create a new independent international university in Bremen with its own board of directors and mission.

This concept was detailed in a white paper drafted by David Auston, then provost of Rice and now president of Case Western Reserve University in Ohio. The white paper was followed shortly by a memorandum of understanding between Rice and the city-state of Bremen, which in turn called for the creation of a planning committee to begin conceptualizing the new university's structure. The planning committee was assisted in its efforts by the rector of the public University of Bremen, Jürgen Timm.

Once the initial planning documents were prepared and approved, the next key step was to establish a Board of Governors to guide the institution through its birth. Reimar Lüst, president of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and former director general of the European Space Agency, agreed to take on the role of chair of the Board of Governors. In addition, a planning corporation was founded.

On February 11, 1999, the International University Bremen was officially founded at ceremonies in the historic Bremen townhall. The university's founding was widely noted in the media as an initiative that would help reform German higher education by providing a private alternative to the state-run universities.

In a significant follow-up step, a contract was concluded between IUB and the city-state of Bremen whereby the city-state placed DM 230 million (U.S.\$115 million) at the disposal of the university for start-up funding. These funds were to be used to pay for the purchase of the military academy by the university, the remodelling and reconstruction of several

key buildings, and the completion of the planning effort.

In addition, Rice University assigned two academic administrators to work for two years on the development of IUB. Their key task has been to take the planning documents and turn the Board of Governor's vision into reality. An international search for academic deans has been undertaken to fill the next two key leadership posts: dean of science and engineering and dean of humanities and social science.

IUB's Mission and Profile

The institution's mission statement proclaims the thrust of the academic program. It reads: An independent institution for the advancement of education, research, international leadership, and global citizenship. Legally, the university's structure has been stipulated as a not-for-profit corporation with limited liability (GmbH) operating for the public good. Along with the president and academic deans, other key functions now in development include articulation of the research agenda, planning for an information resource center, creation of a student affairs division, establishment of a technology-transfer arm focusing on the creation of an adjacent science park, and the formation of a fund raising and public relations apparatus.

IUB will differ from other established German universities in a variety of important ways: tuition will be charged; faculty will not be tenured—the 100 plus member faculty will be hired with limited-term, renewable contracts; enrollment will be modest (1,200 students by 2005); admissions will be highly selective; instruction will be offered in English rather than in German; and the university will have the look and feel of an American college campus, with the goal of creating an environment in which students and faculty are part of an academic community.

One key feature of the plan for student life at IUB is implementation of a residential college system to which all students and faculty will be assigned. The goal is to create an academic community where all members become involved and share ideas with one other. In addition, international internship programs will be offered to all students so that they can blend theory together with practical solutions to problems. ■

Pressures in Saudi Arabia

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There are various kinds of institutions of higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Some of them are under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education (mainly, the eight universities), while the rest are

run by other government agencies or ministries. The General Presidency of Female Education manages and finances 50 women's colleges of education; the Ministry of Education supervises 18 teachers colleges. These institutions have a total of 307,351 students (131,659 male and 169,692 female) and 15,167 teaching staff (9,857 male and 5,310 female).

Institutions of higher education below the level of the bachelor's degree include 34 colleges for the health-related professions, 20 women's junior colleges, 3 community colleges, 12 technical colleges, and 2 industrial arts colleges. There are also a number of military and security

colleges that are beyond the scope of this article.

The Saudi system of higher education has had to face several challenges in the past few decades. The first challenge has come from the rapid pace of progress in Saudi society: dramatic changes in literacy, family income, modernization, and social mobility—in the transition from a mainly tribal and nomadic society to an urban one. These internal changes could not have happened without external forces such as the emergence of a more open economy, exposure to foreigners from almost every country of the world, industrialization, and, lately, war. Although these developments have influenced the development of Saudi higher education, the real pressures on the institutions of higher education have come from the beneficiaries (the labor market and students alike), whose impact is beginning to be felt by colleges and universities all over the country.

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Rising Demand

Saudi higher education is under mounting pressure to admit more students than it is really capable of handling—to accommodate the ever-increasing number of high school graduates. The rising demand is due in part to individuals and families looking for ways to supplement their income (university students in Saudi Arabia receive a monthly stipend of \$300). Higher education is also viewed as a way to avoid the dangers of having large numbers of unemployed young people.

To address this issue, Saudi higher education is studying the possibilities of a national entrance examination for high school graduates. Those who do not qualify for admission would have to enter a one-year program of general courses. Students who successfully completed these courses could then proceed to the university. Those who did not pass would be asked to take other courses to complete the requirements for a junior diploma, which should prepare them for the labor market. The main difficulty with such programs, however, is the possibility that their diplomas may not be recognized by the public and private sectors.

This situation reflects the lack of coordination between higher education institutions (which enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in terms of planning, organization, and policies) and the public and private sectors. This disconnect has led in the past to the doubling of programs that are not necessarily relevant for national development plans or the

labor market. To address this problem, a group made up of representatives of government, business, and the universities in the Arab Gulf States have recently held their fourth meeting in Kuwait. They have started to work out new proposals to guide universities and colleges in setting up their programs to meet the needs of the market and to maintain high academic standards.

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The Need to Nationalize the Work Force

This cooperation between the private and public sector and the universities came about as a result of the policy of nationalizing the work force in the Arab Gulf States. Saudi Arabia, for example, has 7 million foreign workers in a population of 16 million. Higher education, therefore, is assigned the responsibility of replacing these foreign workers with qualified and competitive Saudis. The massive expansion of higher education would not have been possible without a reliance on faculty members from other countries. Saudi higher education now needs to create a balance between the expansion in programs, students, and institutions and the preparation of Saudi nationals. While recruiting well-qualified scholars from other countries has had a positive impact on the Saudi higher education in the short run, foreign faculty members are not the right solution in the long term. This issue will be an ongoing concern for Saudi higher education in the future, given the rapid growth in higher education.

Competition is an area of great concern now.

Student Allowance Policy

The continuing support for students in the form of monthly allowances in the absence of tuition and fees creates a heavy burden on the budgets of higher education institutions and limits the expansion and improvement of academic programs and university services. The irony, however, is that such financial support was introduced as an incentive to increase higher education enrollments. While it is a sensitive issue, the student allowance program is increasingly

coming under fire. Higher education institutions are considering many proposals that are aimed at revising this generous program. One proposal would link this financial support with student achievement. Such a policy would reduce the financial drain on institutions and the rate of student dropouts from colleges and universities.

Competition now is an area of great concern. The purpose of these discussions is to encourage competition between the different institutions of higher education, and to attract the best students from all over the country. Some universities and colleges have started self-evaluation in order to secure a place for their graduates in the job market and to win the recognition and trust of the private- and public-sector employers. This is in addition to the commitments of academic institutions to improve and update their programs according to the national and international standards.

In summary, the Saudi higher education is going through many changes—imposed on it by international economic developments and by national economic and social needs. ■

The Global Growth of Private Higher Education: A SUNY–Albany Initiative

This three-year project financed by the Ford Foundation—with collaboration from the University at Albany, SUNY—has two major components. One is research on the global growth of private higher education. This research will be headed by Daniel C. Levy, Distinguished Professor, SUNY at Albany. The other component is support for the university's graduate work and other activities related to comparative higher education. The specific research project concerns the global growth of private higher education—its causes, dynamics, patterns, consequences, and attendant public policy issues.

The study will gather and analyze wide-ranging data. It will provide comparative and conceptual guidance for understanding proliferating private higher education in individual countries. This proliferation will be related to general higher education issues of growth, governance, finance, and missions. Additionally, social science theory on private-public interfaces will help relate private growth to wider matters of political sociology and political economy.

At least four national cases will be explored in greatest depth. Likely cases include China, South Africa, Russia,

and Mexico. A set of additional cases will be explored in somewhat less depth, and quantitative data and other information will be collected on all countries possible. Appropriate contrasts will be thematically drawn with the U.S. case. All cases will consider the extraordinary diversity within the private sector, including nonconventional and for-profit activity. An international network of scholars, policymakers, and centers will be formed; inquiries—and information—are welcome.

The private higher education research project will involve doctoral students and lead to dissertations on the topic. However, the overall Ford project will also support graduate work for students not tied to this research. This support will include special assistantships and some funding for summers, travel, and research. Details of a competition for two Ford-sponsored assistantships will be given in the next issue of the *IHE*. Tentatively, the application deadline might be the end of November 2000, with winners announced around February 2001 for study beginning in fall 2001.

Faculty whose major interest lies in comparative education include Gilbert Valverde, Heinz-Dieter Meyer, Ralph Harbison, and emeritus Philip Foster, in addition to Daniel Levy. For both specific research projects and more general graduate opportunities, the Ford project at Albany will have linkages with the Ford project at its SUNY counterpart in Buffalo.

Inquiries may be directed to Daniel Levy (dlevy@wizvax.net) concerning either the specific research project or pertinent graduate study opportunities. For basic and general information on doctoral study, and for applications, please contact Carm Colfer: <ccolfer@csc.albany.edu>.

Conference Announcement

The 12th Biennial Conference of the South African Association for Research and Development in Higher Education (SAARDHE) will be held 21–23 March 2001 on the theme: The Impact of Globalization and Internationalization on Higher and Further Education in Southern Africa. The international keynote speakers will be Michael Gibbons, secretary-general of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and Jan Currie, School of Education, Murdoch University, Australia.

For inquiries concerning the conference program, contact: Prof. M. Fourie (Tel: +27 51 401 2441, Fax +27 51 430 6714, e-mail <fouriem@rs.uovs.ac.za>). For inquiries concerning conference organization, contact A. Church (Tel : +27 51 401 2425, Fax +27 51 430 6714, e-mail <churcha@rs.uovs.ac.za>). Full registration particulars and a call for papers will be distributed during September 2000. Please contact either of the above persons to include your name on the mailing list. ■