

University in Greece provides a fine example of why oversight at a distance does not work.

Accreditation is a minimalist exercise, conducted for the purpose of limited quality control—although it is better suited for financial oversight than for academic quality assurance. Even on the financial side, I am aware of a case in another state in which an accredited institution moved millions of dollars into its accounts before a reapproval and afterward moved the money right back out again. That review was one of the regular evaluations conducted by a state government; states, not accreditors, have the power to decide whether institutions can operate within their borders and what degrees they can offer.

#### MEANINGFUL EVALUATION IS NEITHER EASY NOR CHEAP

Genuine, meaningful oversight is expensive. The natural inclination of governments and organizations is to want to do it quickly, cheaply, and infrequently. This is a recipe for poor enforcement, lack of awareness, and substandard educational outcomes. Within the United States, accreditors have only limited knowledge of changes in faculty composition, financial policies, and the award of credits during the typical 10 years between accreditations. That is one reason why states generally use a much shorter review cycle: Oregon, for instance, reviews every program under our jurisdiction every three years and after two years for a new program.

All an American accreditor can really do for foreign colleges and universities is to rent them its reputation. The institutions get to mention the accreditor's name, though the standards that the accreditor chooses to apply overseas may be extremely low. Who will know?

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The Tbilisi case shows how complex international evaluation can be. The government agency that screens foreign degrees in the Netherlands and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, which does the same for many American universities, consider degrees from the American University for Humanities to be invalid or substandard. The American Academy for Liberal Education considers the program to be acceptable. National education officials in Sweden treat the degrees as legally issued but are not yet convinced they are equivalent to Swedish degrees.

The bottom line is that American accreditors should not evaluate foreign colleges and universities. Other nations have the right to set their own standards, whether high or low. American colleges should be free to use customary academic norms and their own standards to decide whether a foreign degree is suitable for purposes of admission or employment. Do not rely on unsupervised accreditors that freelance in foreign lands.

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## Internationalizing Canada's Universities

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In Canada education is the responsibility of the provinces, and unlike many other federal systems, no national ministry or legislation exists that establishes a national framework for higher education. Several federal departments invest in specific international education program initiatives within their overall policy framework. For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, as part of its public diplomacy portfolio, supports bilateral educational exchange agreements, international scholarship programs, the Canadian studies initiatives abroad, international youth programs, and international marketing initiatives. The Department of Human Resources and Social Development Canada invests in international academic mobility programs within North America and Europe. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) contributes to university international initiatives by funding development projects—for example, through the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development program. More recently, through its new Canada Corps initiative, CIDA supports international internships for students and joint projects delivering governance programming in developing countries engaging both faculty and students in Canada and partner countries. Several other federal departments such as Industry Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada also contribute to the overall international education and research portfolio.

While a range of federal departments support initiatives in this area, the overall level of federal government support is extremely modest. In a 1994 report the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade estimated that Canada's per

capita investment in international cultural relations and education was CDN\$3.08, while France spent CDN\$26.58, Germany CDN\$18.49, United Kingdom CDN\$13.37, and Japan CDN\$12.60. International student recruitment receives almost no support and the budgets for international scholarship programs are frequently threatened.

The Canadian system needs to provide policy coordination and communication across federal departments and agencies. The absence of a federal ministry with responsibility for higher education means that leadership in this policy area becomes an enormous challenge.

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

While education is the responsibility of the provinces under the Canadian Constitution, the federal government plays a major role in a variety of policy areas that intersect with the internationalization agenda—including research and development—and has explicit responsibility for Canada’s international relations. Federal and provincial governments find themselves, almost constantly, in conflict over issues of territory and responsibility for international education.

While most provinces have developed some form of international education policy or invested in specific initiatives, these initiatives have emerged independently of one another without an overall national framework or policy context or a “Canadian” brand. The initiatives are regional in their objectives and approaches. A classic example is the provincial government of

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Quebec, which is one of the larger investors given its unique rationale and approach to international education and cultural programs. Without a formal “Canadian” policy approach to internationalization, what is defined as a Canadian approach is in fact a piecemeal combination of various federal and provincial departmental initiatives. Further, given the Canadian federal context, governments are cautious in considering any national policy that would facilitate pan-Canada funding and program initiatives.

#### CANADIAN UNIVERSITY APPROACHES

Since Canadian universities operate within a highly decentralized policy environment, each institution constructs its own institutional policy framework. Institutions vary in terms of the role of internationalization in strategic plans and priorities, the level of institutional investment, and the overall approach. At some institutions internationalization approaches are being critically examined within the context of broader pedagogical

principles, in particular their relation to aboriginal, diasporic, and postcolonial education. Both curriculum and teaching practices are challenged, and strengthened, to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse domestic student body, while also attempting to internationalize higher education. The ethics of “internationalization” is a core debate at several Canadian campuses as the agenda for internationalization expands to include newer stakeholder groups from government and the public sector with a more neoliberal agenda.

Contested in part by the task of defining and articulating

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this complex phenomenon, internationalization also relates to the Canadian challenge of addressing the needs of an increasingly diverse, multicultural, and multiracial domestic student population. The boundaries between international/global and local objectives begin to blur.

#### LACK OF A NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Most universities would concur that the absence of national funding and policy initiatives weakens their ability to accomplish objectives. For example, with international marketing efforts, universities operate with little if any organizational and structural support at the provincial or national level. The Canadian Educational Centers established by the Canadian federal government, based on Australia’s educational centers model, have now become private nonprofit enterprises. Unlike most developed countries, Canada lacks official educational and cultural centers, other than the ad hoc activities sponsored by individual Canadian missions abroad. Canadian universities depend on their own resources to establish credibility and market educational resources, even though the Canadian government at both the federal and provincial levels has determined international educational marketing as a key strategic priority. Canadian institutions receive limited national funding to promote international scholarship and research, international study programs, or international student mobility.

A diverse range of institutional practices and initiatives have emerged in a way that a focused, directive national policy framework might have prevented from occurring. In some respects Canada’s federal structure may act as a buffer and essentially prevent governments from directly steering international educational policy objectives and outcomes.

#### INTERNATIONALIZATION AS A POLICY AGENDA

Internationalization seldom represents an issue of higher education policy. In fact, the international education and higher education policy communities in Canada remain relatively dis-

tinct. Discussion of internationalization and higher educational policy occurs in separate silos. As in the European Union and several other jurisdictions, internationalization of higher education has to be addressed within the overall framework of Canadian higher educational policy. Canada needs to engage higher educational policymakers and researchers in the debate and discussion on internationalization and to integrate internationalization into higher education policy. ■

## The International Branch Campus: Models and Trends

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The number of international branch campuses has increased significantly over the past decade. Since undertaking its first study of offshore campuses in 2002, the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education has followed developments in this area and recently published a major report, identifying over 80 offshore campuses. The definition of a branch campus is still less than straightforward and lacks global consensus. The term is used in this article to designate an offshore operation of a higher education institution run by the institution or as a joint venture in which the institution is a partner and uses the name of the foreign institution. Upon successful completion of the study program, students are awarded a degree from the foreign institution.

The study shows that the majority of branch campus provision is from North to South. While American institutions continue to dominate this type of overseas delivery, institutions from more countries are engaging in branch campus development. Driving rationales for sending institutions include full control over delivery, prominence in an increasingly competitive transnational education market, greater opportunities for external funding, and changing regulations in some host countries. The sites for branch campus operations are becoming equally diverse, although findings point to a higher level of activity in countries where financial incentives are provided.

### MODEL A: FULLY FUNDED BY THE INSTITUTION

Of the 68 branch campuses for which a funding model has been identified, 37 percent have been established solely through funding from the home institution. However, this approach to offshore operations might become less common as institutions seek more collaborative approaches. The size of

the investment required to establish a fully fledged branch campus and the institution's accountability for any losses discourage many institutions from operating on this model. Advantages connected to this approach include the lack of requirements from partners regarding expected investment returns, repayment, and a time frame for the operation to break even.

Of the 16 branch campuses in Model A where a date of opening could be ascertained, 6 were opened after 2000. However, many of the projects are among the first branch campuses established (e.g., operations in Austria and the Netherlands of the US Webster University in 1981 and 1983, respectively, and the campus in Mexico of the US Alliant International University in 1970) or were established by a for-profit institution (e.g., the operations in Canada and the Netherlands of the University of Phoenix and DeVry University). Both of the latter institutions operate from multiple campuses in their home countries and have raised capital for their continued expansion through stock offerings.

A number of other projects might be best characterized as smaller-scale operations (with limited program offerings and facilities). These include the campuses in London and Singapore of the University of Chicago School of Business, which offer Executive MBA programs, and the facilities in Belgium of Boston University, which focus on business-related diploma and degree programs. The concentration on potentially profitable fields such as business and the limited expenditure of capital on campus facilities may represent attempts to accelerate returns on the institution's investment.

### MODEL B: EXTERNAL FUNDING

Thirty-five percent of the branch campuses in the study fall under this model, which can be divided into two main subcategories: (1) recipients of host (central or regional) government funds/support and (2) recipients of external support from private companies or other organizations in the host or home country. In some cases funding comes from more than one external source; for example, a financial contribution from the host government and support from the home government through state-approved loans. Institutions wishing to establish a presence abroad seem to be increasingly opting for funding through Model B. With the exception of three operations, all branch campuses included in this category have been established in the last decade and 70 percent in 2000 or later.

Most branch campuses in receipt of financial or other assistance from the host government have established a presence following an invitation from central or regional authorities. While there are advantages in gaining host government support and funding, an institution needs to evaluate whether the project is in line with its overall mission and institutional goals. In addition, the institution must consider whether it is willing to cover the costs beyond the host country's contribution. Examples of projects in this category include some of the operations established under Singapore's "World Class