demic ranks in their early career years—similar to the "hemorrhaging" attrition among new public school teachers and nurses.

Perhaps the greatest crisis is a sea change in the nature of academic employment contracts. Traditionally, most academics were full-time on the "tenure track." They were hired fresh out of graduate school with a PhD as an assistant professor, and if they demonstrated adequate, and usually exemplary, performance they would be promoted to a tenured position with the expectation, with ongoing good performance, of a lifetime job. Academics earned somewhat lower salaries in order to have the security of tenure, which protects academic freedom. A reasonably robust job market assured most young scholars and scientists of a full-time tenure track appointment after completing the long grind of doctoral study. The profession attracted young people interested in "the life of the mind" to teaching and in many cases to research as well.

The Deterioration of the Career

Since 1990, *less than half* of the full-time faculty appointed by American colleges and universities are in probationary positions that may lead to tenure and a stable career. The *majority* of full-time faculty hired in the past 15 years are on annual or short-term contracts and ineligible for permanent appointments (57% in 2005, according to the National Center for Education Statistics). Indeed, an even greater number of the new generation of college faculty are hired on a part-time basis to teach a course or two with absolutely no job security or benefits. While some types of institutions and academic fields are more "at risk" than others, this phenomenon is occurring across the board.

This change is having a profound, and largely unscrutinized, impact on American higher education. It means that a large number of professors lack a real connection or commitment to their institutions. They do not participate in the collegial governance that has characterized American higher education for more than a century. Academic freedom is absent. The marginalized academic force does no research and has little direct contact with or responsibility for the students they teach. They are, in many ways, like the "taxicab" professors of Latin America who come to campus to teach a course or two and then leave. This situation also means that the full-time faculty, especially those who are tenured, have increased responsibility for advising students, participating in institutions' decision making, and conducting research. Professional careers are diminished by the new arrangements. America is constructing—largely below the radar screen of public officials—a two-tiered university with a small elite cadre of full-time faculty increasingly overstressed by responsibilities and a large mass of part-time and temporary workers with few benefits and tenuous connections to their jobs or institutions. Preliminary research suggests that this new edifice may be compromising the student learning experience, the functioning of academic units, and the long-term health of the national R&D enterprise.

> *The American academic profession is, however, widely acknowledged to be in "critical"—and deteriorating—condition.*

The Future

If New York State is to succeed in its goal of strengthening public higher education, it must start with a recognition of the deterioration in the working conditions of the professoriate and the relevance of hiring full-time tenure-track faculty. If current downward trends continue, improvement will be impossible regardless of additional funding or the creation of endowments. America's professors are the crown jewels, currently tarnished, of our colleges and universities

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Is There a Latin American University Model?

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Postindependence Latin American universities developed during the 19th and most of the 20th century largely under the normative influence of a Latin American idea of the university institution. In the last few decades, factors both related to the development of higher education and external to it have combined to challenge the clout of that model. As a result, notwithstanding the persistence of elements of the old paradigm, the model of the Latin American university is now related chiefly to US research universities.

The Shaping of the Latin American Model

Throughout the 20th century universities were created from scratch or revamped from colonial predecessors to lead the postindependence endeavor to create a modern nation-state. The new universities were to train the professional, secular elites, especially civil servants. These universities were called upon to serve as the state's educational arm, for the promotion of national unity and an enlightened citizenry. Professorial chairs were largely served part-time by noted members of the liberal professions, grouped in loosely formed faculties, which in turn corresponded to professional fields—typically, law,

medicine, and engineering.

The reform movement set off in 1918 by students at the University of Córdoba, Argentina, was a turning point for the predominant university model in Latin America. The tenets of the reform movement evolved over time and spread across Latin America. The stylized doctrine included democratic governance, or "cogovernance," by students, professors, and alumni who elected deans and rectors and shared in decision making through collective bodies; democratization of access through tuition-free education and expansion of enrollments; the orientation of the university's mission toward the solution of social, economic, and political problems, autonomy from state intervention, and academic freedom.

By the late 1960s and the 1970s the Latin American model had reached the peak of its influence over the region's universities. However, at the same time higher education was undergoing transformation through the sheer pressure of social change, demographics, and increased secondary education in most of the countries.

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Erosion of the Model

Expansion was funneled through the swelling of the numbers of public universities or the multiplication of their enrollments (e.g., in Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, and Honduras), the development of a large private sector (e.g., in Chile, Brazil, and Colombia), or a combination of both strategies (e.g., in El Salvador and the Dominican Republic). This growth, together with the emergence of a non-university-sector of higher education, increased the ideological, functional, and organizational diversity of the tertiary level of education.

The impact upon public universities of massification, unruly growth, deterioration of quality, politicization, and decreased influence over the elites—together with the external shocks caused by the military dictatorships of the 1970s, the economic crisis of the 1980s, and the neoliberal turn of the political economy in the 1990s—provoked a crisis of identity and legitimacy in the public sector from which it has yet to recover.

Latin America has experienced the advent of research activities to meet the longtime research rhetoric and of full-time research faculty who carry them out. The region has been partaking in worldwide trends facing universities: the rising economic value of knowledge, the pressures for self-funding via tuition charges and sale of services, privatization, the demand upon researchers and teachers to work more closely with firms, the creation of schemes to provide more accountability, and the new system that critics call "academic capitalism" and advocates refer to as "capitalization of knowledge." To survive the current fiscal constraints and in keeping with generally neoliberal policies supported by the multilateral lending agencies, universities are forced to seek a closer commitment to the issues of economic growth and competitiveness and to do away with the dominant discourse of social transformation characteristic of the Latin American model.

Rise of the Research University

The ascendancy of the US concept of research university has risen worldwide as the top echelon of North American universities continue to increase their lead in scientific productivity and in harnessing the opportunities and challenges of the new economy. The US research university is known for its focus on knowledge creation and application, departmental organization, professional faculty and administrators, academic governance by faculty, organization and rewards for research and publication, and an elastic balance between autonomy and accountability. This successful model has become an inspiration for university leaders worldwide and a gold standard for universities throughout the world.

New generations of academics, with graduate degrees obtained abroad, who know research universities from the inside, press for a departmental organization, research labs, equipment, funds, and full-time contracts. Where these scholars have come to control their academic units, displacing the part-time practitioners or the full-time professors who only teach, they have brought their units (or their entire universities, when such scholars exist in critical mass across the faculties) closer to the culture of the research university.

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In fact, only a tiny fraction of universities in Latin America can be characterized as research-oriented universities (based on their output instead of their rhetoric), and graduate education, especially at the doctoral level is at an early stage everywhere except Brazil. But even if research-oriented universities are not numerous in Latin America, they provide the other institutions with relevant models already adapted to the local culture.

Remnants of the Latin American Model

Professional education at the undergraduate level is still what universities do as their main function, but curriculum reforms stressing general education and examples of "deprofessionalization" of undergraduate programs are ubiquitous.

Part-time teachers still constitute the majority of the faculty overall, but academics with doctorates and with full dedication to the university are gaining ground. With their governance prerogatives, the new generation of academics control their universities, while cogovernance by students and administrative staff is in retreat.

Signs of the model's decline are numerous but not of the same nature across countries or across universities in a given nation. Brazil and Chile, for example, have moved on considerably; but the large national universities in Central America or Bolivia maintain their loyalty to the model, while Colombia, like Brazil, never did absorb much of its influence. And in Argentina and Mexico, for political and cultural reasons, it has been much easier for the newer or smaller universities to relinquish the model than has been the case for the highly visible Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México or the University of Buenos Aires.

The mores of the Latin American university are unlikely to vanish without a trace, given the persistent connection of the largest public universities in the region to some elements of the Latin American model—such as participatory governance, free tuition, and institutionalized political engagement. Further, the traditions of political awareness, social critique, and outreach to the underprivileged seem especially relevant today, both in Latin America and globally. As with other phenomena of cultural diffusion, the concept of the research university is likely to evolve in Latin America into a form that recognizes and integrates in some manner the tradition of the Latin American university

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Measuring Institutional Quality in Argentina: The Devil Is in the Details

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More than a decade after launching a national quality assurance program, Argentina may be pursuing a worthy cause on the wrong path. The country has adopted schemes in use elsewhere without accommodating conditions that make higher education in Argentina very different. Measuring itself by the evaluation criteria applied elsewhere, Argentine universities are diverting attention and resources from improving their primary activity—teaching.

Context and Challenges

Higher education in Argentina has undergone many of the rapid changes experienced in other developing countries. Demand for access to university education has grown precipitously during recent decades, and the government has allowed a private sector to expand while also creating new public universities. There are currently 81 (43 private, 38 public) universities serving an enrollment in 2007 of slightly more than 1.5 million. Twenty-five years earlier enrollment was under 400,000.

In Argentina this expansion took place under very precarious economic conditions. The 1980s ended with staggering hyperinflation that did not abate until 1991. The economy prospered briefly, then suffered several setbacks during the 1990s, culminating in a 75 percent devaluation of the peso in 2001.

At precisely the time when enrollment was exploding, public universities were struggling with shrinking or devalued budgets, and a nascent tuition-dependent private sector was forced to operate within severe limitations. Consequently, universities in both the public and private sector have tended to be seriously underfinanced. In the midst of these significant economic challenges and constraints, higher education suddenly confronted new demands for accountability and quality assurance.

Mimicking Others

During the early 1990s, fueled by assessments and funding from the World Bank, the Ministry of Education initiated a national dialogue about quality in higher education. International experts were invited to present schemes in use elsewhere in the world. Argentine educators attended conferences abroad to learn more about international trends and programs. A new law of higher education, passed in 1995, presented universities with the obligation of participating in an array of evaluations.

In practice, the new program resembled quality assurance schemes employed elsewhere—self study followed by external evaluation, all reviewed by the CONEAU (Consejo Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria), the new parastatal coordinating commission. So far, so good. The problem was (and is) what to measure. In other words, by which criteria are Argentine universities to be evaluated?

Quality is a concept not unlike "success"—although everyone wants it, few can define it in a way that will suit diverse audiences. Not defining quality based on the unique characteristics of Argentine higher education may be a serious flaw. Lacking experience and a process for creating indigenous criteria, Argentina adopted measures, as well as methods, used by other cultures and societies. Thus, universities are measuring institutional characteristics such as the number of profes-