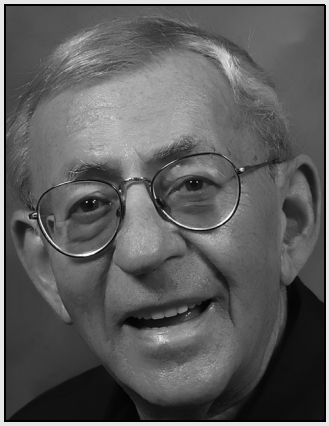
The Next Generation of Planetary Universities

A Two Part Bird's Eye Review

Irving H. Buchen

Part One: Future Global Curriculum Models

Often in the last century the final stage of academic preparation occurred after graduation. Many graduates of Oxford and Cambridge embarked on the European grand tour as the finishing academic experience. To be sure, its roots are much older. Its earliest version appropriately took place at the Academy, where young philosophers in ancient Greece sat at the feet of Socrates and engaged and developed the learning exchange of Platonic dialogue. Rome often favored more distant travel to such hallowed and exotic cities of learning in its empire as Alexandria. Holy pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Mecca, and Constantinople (later Rome) were the appropriate rites of passage for clerics, even to this day. After World II, the middle class entered the scene with study abroad and/or government sponsored programs of international service such as the Peace Corps. Part of the progressive difference of modern college graduates from their parents was the latter granting them the means to enjoy what formerly was restricted to the upper classes or the titled.



Irving H. Buchen, St. Clements University,
8650 Kilkenny Court, Fort Myers FL 33912.
Telephone: (239)561-3750.
E-mail: ibuchen@msn.com

There are a number of distinguishing characteristics about the above pattern. First, travel was broadening. One had to leave one's native shores to directly experience difference. In today's parlance, it involved leaving face two face (f2f) for distance education. Second, learning was regarded as incomplete and unfinished without acquiring an international perspective unavailable at home or on campus. Third, although it was a particularly valuable experience for future heirs and lords, especially if they were involved in empire building and maintenance, now it prepares future managers and leader for managing and leading global businesses. Finally, although historically the geographical preference initially was for European settings, this began to change after WWII.

A postwar educational immigration emerged. Initially hundreds and ultimately thousands, especially from current or former empire countries, came to European, English, and American universities to study. Foreign students became a familiar sight on campuses and because they generally were from exotic lands, administrative arrangements often featured evenings of native dress, art, and food as gestures of recognition. Indeed, for many Americans planning to study abroad, these foreign students introduced new destinations, especially in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The coexistence of the two directions of study abroad—going there and coming here—had a number of immediate and long-term effects on curricula. Perhaps the most important was the emergence of area studies and area experts. Whether it was Middle Africa or the Middle East, specialists also had to be generalists as well. And whether or not separate departments of areas studies were created, a new or at least unfamiliar curricula standard of holistics began to appear.

The need to be aware of and communicate the complex and interactive components of a particular region resulted in a greater emphasis on multidisciplinarity and team teaching. Many departments of areas studies indeed were cobbled together by borrowing the needed expertise from traditional disciplines and departments. In some instances, it was a professor's independent choice of an extended interest; in other cases it involved the persuasion or the attraction of an administrative, financial, or research carrot. But whatever the means, it created for the first time a standard for teaching, inquiry, and research that significantly pushed the academic range beyond departmental borders. Although such multidisciplinarity often failed to achieve wider or mainstream recognition and adoption, it introduced an interactive model of internationalism that has remained a selective rather than a broad-based model generally unfulfilled until recently.

The next stage of the evolution of international education cannot be understood without the introduction of two major formative institutions: one group of academic newcomers and another from outside the academy. The former is represented by emergence of online for-profits, the latter by the corporate universities of multinational companies.

Almost all the new universities created after WWII were for-profit and online—a new correlation and benchmark. They offer degrees ranging from associate to bachelor's to master's to doctoral, enroll students from all over the world, and almost all do so by distance education. The largest university in the United States—the University of Phoenix—enrolls over 350,000 students, hires 500 faculty each month, is regionally accredited, and regularly makes money for its owners and shareholders. The distinctive focus of for-profits big and small is threefold: developing quality courseware for self-directed adult learners; providing strong student customer support services including student recruitment marketing; and identification of and designing programs for emerging career areas. In many ways these successful institutions share much of the entrepreneurial vision and mission of corporate universities which are also for-profit and, of late, online.

Operative during the same post-WWII period and paralleling educational developments, multinational companies created their own corporate universities. Now numbering over 100 and ranging from McDonalds to Toyota, these for-profit extensions had less difficulty developing cross-disciplinary competencies, especially for cross-training, than their academic counterparts. They already were multinational. Besides, they also were tasked to create an international teamwork culture and ethic to serving the common bottom

line. In addition, they were quick to implement e-learning and employ courseware because of the relative ease and lower costs of enriching the mix with overseas employees in different time zones. Moreover, what gradually began to emerge but what generally eluded academic institutions was a shift in student perspectives. The different expertise and expectations of such employees when they became students enrolled in traditional graduate degree programs generated a change-force from within.

Generally, when employees from multinational companies trained by their own corporate universities became university enrollees, they impacted the status quo in many ways. First, such students placed a higher value on the interoperability of disciplines than their professors or courses did. Happily, that sin of omission often was redeemed in large part by more student-generated than instructor-designed exchanges in chat rooms. Then, too, typically their research assignments or capstone projects took the form of case studies which replicated in miniature the more holistic range of their employment and previous training. Second, diversity of race, ethnicity, and gender became too visible and important to be ignored. Although often initially only token, adjustments began to appear. The most serious efforts to extend the traditional range and definition of diversity involved the adaptive areas of learning diversity and implementation variety. Such culturally driven forces required instructional design to engage the issue of cultural determiners of both learning and country adaptation. How a culture learns and thinks became as critical to recognize and value as how one adjusts the delivery of MBA solutions and systems overseas to another culture.

Finally, and most important, was the gradual recognition that these students were embryonically new kinds of leaders and managers. Their range, the focus, the reach was global. Even team-based training had to factor in cross-cultural communication and negotiation. Reinforcement of the trend surfaced in other ways. For the first time, non-Americans were chief executive officers (CEOs) of American companies. Reports of earnings routinely were broken down into domestic and overseas sources. Investment brokers increasingly offered the greater returns and risks of global securities. Many American companies were stampeded into going global, only to have to tap their domestic earnings to make up for their international losses. Indeed, sophisticated executive headhunters and recruiters quickly entered the international scene and began to secure a new niche by seeking CEOs who were really GEOs—global executive officers.

Although academic institutions often operate glacially and are not known to be entrepreneurial, that is no longer the norm. A number of significant signs of catch-up and even transformation have been taking place. The example of corporate universities; the identification of new careers and career areas by online for-profits; the needs of students from multinational companies; and the international reach and universal access of the Internet have all converged to signal a major transformation of a number of twenty-first century universities into new models of global vision, curricula, and delivery systems. That requires separate examination, but the emphasis will be on the operational version of such institutions aspiring to become planetary universities.

Part Two: Future Operational and Structural Models

The attempt here is not to definitively survey or examine all that is going on. Rather, the focus is to identify and examine a representative sample of those emerging future institutions and practices which display sufficient and significant typicality, durability, and variety to document the

future structural transformation of academics as global enterprises.

At least three different institutional prototypes and strategies have appeared and can be profiled. One type seeks explicitly and often exclusively to address globality in terms of workforce needs. Another ambitiously changes its mission and redefines and restructures the entire enterprise as a global university. The most extensive and varied versions achieve global range through structural alliances, extensions, and even outsourcing.

The Fuqua School of Business of Duke University provides an excellent example of the transformation of the traditional MBA executive program. The target audience is now future global executives. Typically, an average of 20 countries is represented in each class. Residencies are rotated on four continents. Often held at corporate sites, global business leaders and experts are invited to supplement the perspectives of professors. Blending f2f with e-learning, the global MBA also structures collaborative team building across many different cultures. In the process, student networking supports later alumni connections after degree completion and becomes a critical referral system of innovative developments and personnel.

Highly ranked by *Business Week*, *US News and World Report*, and the *Financial Times*, the Duke program like many others is an excellent example of accomplishing its shift to globality by focusing on developing global leaders. Everything then follows in the wake of this singled-minded focus: curriculum, business participation, international residencies, electronic teambuilding, student and alumni networking, and so forth. There is no indication that Duke's emphasis on global leadership has been orchestrated as part of a campuswide revision of mission. Indeed, that approach, which has been elected by a number of institutions, provides a separate illustration of going global.

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey officially revised its mission to reflect its future role as a global educational institution. To accomplish this universitywide change, three approaches were identified and implemented. First, five divisions of area studies covering all countries were identified. Second, recurrent international themes were defined, monitored, and often supplemented by a standing committee of faculty. Third, the global program was to embrace and include all disciplines (including the creative arts) and all campus institutes and centers.

Unlike the limited focus of Duke, Rutgers like a number of other like-minded institutions opted for total change via diffusion. But lest such comprehensive inclusiveness be lost or fall between the cracks, the president and his senior staff were built directly into the hierarchical chain of command. In addition, the development of the university's strategic plan was mandated to reflect and incorporate the new global mission. Understandably, as a state university, Rutgers also has to factor in encouraging foreign investment in New Jersey as well as serving and supporting the international operations of New Jersey corporations.

The Rutgers example, like many other universitywide policy changes, represents not just a shift in mission but in vision. The president and his or her governing board acknowledge the emergence of a different world in the twenty-first century and a major shift in the future employment of its graduates. Assessing the degree to which the university is moving toward globality, the Rutgers leadership calls for a fundamental change in direction and commitment, but they recognize that it is a formidable task. Universities, like sovereign countries, operate internally with territorial borders of their own. The change strategy has to be appropriately indirect and even peripheral. Like a series of concentric circles which move from the

outside hopefully to the inside, basic structural fiefdoms are not directly addressed. Rather, a series of overlays are developed and promulgated, sometimes enriched with various attractive incentives, and allowed to work their trickle-down magic. Has or will it work? It has to because it is both future- and student-driven and because universities are playing catch up to functioning like world-class multinational institutions.

An interesting confirmation and variation of the Rutgers example, but with an important difference, is provided by New York University. Like Rutgers, NYU promulgated a new initiative that "required the positioning of global operations within that vision." Toward that end, a new and distinct Web site has appeared which bears in large letters "Global University," with NYU appearing below it in smaller font, and which responds to search engines as a global entity in its own right. But unlike Rutgers and many other universities that essentially just added globality to the job description and portfolio of existing directors of international programs, NYU has created a new and separate Office of Global and Multicultural Affairs, appointed a vice provost to head that office and has just advertised for an executive director of global operations.

Lest one conclude that this new title is cosmetic, add-on, or token, the job description could be that of a GEO running an international business. The executive director will supervise NYU's six global academic and business operations including its six international centers and future satellites; mange all logistics of f2f as well as virtual delivery and all capital investments and expenditures; and provide policy development for input into overall strategic planning and development. Here perhaps is a clear instance of how the development of a new direction carries within it the creation of new executive and management careers.

The third type of global academics is totally different from the direct approach of Duke or that of the diffused mission-vision of Rutgers and NYU. Because it involves the greatest number and widest variety of institutions and programs, it has about it both the substance of a separate pattern as well as the transitional prospect that it may serve as the optimum solution to facilitate and bridge gradual crossover by many into global fields. If so, then to the notion of multiculturalism has to be added that of multiple institutional alliances.

Not unlike the internal academic process of linking different departments and disciplines to create multidisciplinary area studies, various institutions have negotiated partnerships to accomplish their global educational ends. But in all cases cited below, the more familiar business version of mergers or acquisitions is not involved or pursued. Rather, the participating partners remain distinct and separate; the preferred configuration is decentralized rather than centralized. What thus is often structured is a series of satellites linked to the supplemental strengths of each other but orbiting around a common global educational goal. Separate identity and control are maintained through retention of expertise. Even the descriptive language selected to describe the negotiated relationships preserves the relative autonomy of interdependent entities.

Here, then, is a brief capsule version of a number of such global alliances:

- The Global University Alliance (GUA) is composed at this point of six partner universities; three from England, two from Australia, and one from the United States (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee). Undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered at GUA Centers exclusively in Asia. The favored study areas are information technology and business administration. The degree programs seek to fuse both global range and application through its partnership

with developing Asian information and business companies. All programs are in English and use a blended delivery system of f2f and virtual courses taught tutorial through Platonic dialogue.

- George Mason University through its Center for Global Education has committed itself to an expansion of its student international programs. Bearing the significant title of "Global Connections," the university has established or enlarged special undergraduate and graduate degree programs in global affairs and systems, world religions, peace studies, and international commerce and policy. Equally as important the university has structured through memos of understanding with universities all over the world the acceptance of their courses toward GMU international degrees. The result is now a two-way, study-abroad program which justifies its being offered under the umbrella of Global Connections.
- The Intercultural Management Institute of American University offers a totally different approach. It is an institute and thus does not offer academic degree programs. Rather it is an entrepreneurial global business consulting and research services. Specifically, it specializes in two areas: assisting the adjustment of employees and their families with overseas assignments as well as their return; and preparing and training individuals and teams working in multicultural settings to excel in international environments. Its university justification is maintained by publishing a research journal, the *Intercultural Management Quarterly,* and hosting annual conferences of intercultural experts. Its inclusion here is justified in part by demonstrating the research and employment possibilities of global degrees.
- Probably one of the most ambitious examples of global inclusiveness appears in the Global Derivatives Doctoral Degree Program (GDDDP). The focus is the highly specialized area of global quantitative finance. The range is totally international and includes nearly 50 PhD programs from the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australasia, and Europe. It lists and facilitates different concentrations of the field. Thus, Stanford's PhD in finance offers dynamic asset management; Vanderbilt, differential mathematics; Hong Kong University, risk management; University of Valancia, econometrics. Then, too, the standard designation of finance now reflects global variety. PhDs are offered in Management science, mathematics, business administration, and so forth. In short, what emerges is a global consortium approach to a particular field which in fact has been dramatically impacted and even created by increasing international interoperability. A world community of specialists, in this case of quantitative finance, now binds academic institutions together.
- The University of Texas has created the Global Business Accelerator (GBA). Its mission is stimulating wealth creation and economic growth through technology-based ventures. Unlike other academic arrangements which exclusively and only linked universities together, GBA has created a coalition of partners that include government agencies, regional development centers, international technology incubators, universities, and sponsoring corporate partners. The mission is to assist technology startups with consulting and mentoring support services and to inculcate a global vision. One of the GBA programs is Project Caribbean.
- Michigan State University has concentrated its efforts in assembling a Global Access Data Base. Compiled by MSU international experts, this portal is unique because it is searchable not just by one but a combination of categories. It also can accommodate special inter-

ests by identifying Web sites that deal, for example, with the environment in Latin America or labor in Mexico. Universities like MSU thus are supplementing domestic now with global informational links and sources. Indeed, if one were to search for international engineering programs, one would find over 50 programs all over the world that are part of an international consortium of Global Engineering Education Exchange Program.

One could multiply the examples, but they would only confirm the extent, creativity, and variety by which academic institutions have reinvented and reconfigured themselves, their mission, and delivery systems to become global institutions and partners. One of the most immediate yields is the creation of new executive- and professional-level titles and job descriptions or a significant expansion of that range and systemic complexity. Thus, the traditional CEO is now increasingly a GEO—global executive officer. The familiar chief information officer (CIO) is now a GIO; the standard chief finance officer is now a GFO, often with a PhD in derivatives; and even basic engineers are now listed as global engineers (GEs).

On a broader policy level one even can claim that the diversity and substance of these various new academic forms not only generally exceed the mission and vision of current corporations and their training units, but also that the academic world globally is becoming a major force for planetary consciousness and cooperation. As such, it may be our new best hope of championing the notion of one world and serve as an academic version and clearinghouse for the United Nations.

A more ordinary claim but ultimately perhaps maybe finally more transforming, rests on what may gradually occur in curricula. Currently, many academic courses are given a prefix to symbolize the extension and enhancement of e-learning. Thus, catalogs list e-economics, e-finance, and even e-composition The next step may be to add the addition of a new prefix: g-economics, g-finance, g-engineering of the double hybrid: eg or ge. Such signaling of change in context may provide current and future students with a new lens with which to view, study, and engage the world as whole.

Finally, the value of the above examples may provide guidelines and models to academic institutions contemplating going global. How would they benefit from the knowledge of the prototypes? What directions, models, structures are available for the institution to follow? Clearly, one of the first choices is whether the university should be broad-based or selective, mission/vision-centered, or workforce-focused. Another key consideration is whether it should be based locally or abroad or both? How to manage their limited expertise and resources would be another concern. Should they be restricted by their own extent or can consortium partners and alliances be used to overcome such limitations? Above all, what has the creative forging of new global structures, curricula, and relationships done for the participating university? Has it enervated or recharged students, faculty, and administrators to a new sense of mission or even vision? Will the amplified programs produce the next generation of global engineers, finance experts, and executives? Even at this early stage of what is shaping up as a major twenty-first century trend, the answer is already clear: global universities provide the distinction of offering not only competitive edge, but also moral advantage. And that doubling, like sustainable ecology, may become the world standard.