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Emerging trends in globalization and knowledge-based economy are redefining the nature and conduct of business world-wide. Are business schools in the U.S. adapting to these trends in an appropriate manner? Dean George Stevens of Kent State University is concerned that U.S. business schools might be losing ground to their counterparts outside the U.S., where productivity and academic value are measured through metrics that are quite different. Dean Stevens calls for business schools in the U.S. to take stock of themselves, their curriculum, intellectual contributions, and other activities and adapt to the changing times. [Krishna Dhir, Feature Editor]

Isn't it Time to Stop Making Clones of Ourselves?

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Deans, especially those who are leaders of professional schools, face a myriad of challenges. Leadership requires the acts of encouraging, leading, supporting, and implementing change within their own business schools.

Business school deans, among professional school deans, have witnessed major upheavals in the faculty marketplace with sharply escalating salaries and now "packages" being presented by mint-new faculty members who have never proved themselves. They must gear up their business schools to face challenges presented to them by AACSB—no, not the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). That's the *old* one! The new one is a different organization, an overdue rebirth of an important institution that was focused predominantly on one continent—North America. Fortunately, AACSB International (AACSB stands for Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) is an organization that serves business units on a global basis. It has worked really hard, since before the approval of its latest standards in 2003 to address the needs of management education on a worldwide basis, provide value to its members, and devote itself to understand not only management education on a worldwide

basis but the higher education context within which that management education exists. For deans who love a long-term comfort level of 10 years between accreditation visits, there is no such luxury under the five-year visit and ongoing continuous quality improvement approach of the new standards or the accountability challenges of the Assurance of Learning section of the current standards.

The backdrop above is necessary to understand why I am very concerned that many business schools in the U.S. are rapidly losing ground. As an "old hand" with AACSB International in the role of peer-review team chair, mentor, and consultant, I travel around the world (e.g., Abu Dhabi, Bangkok, Belo Horizonte, Quebec City, Montreal, Dubai, London, Normandy, France, Clermont-Ferrand, France, Hong Kong, Mexico, Saó Paulo, Saudi Arabia, Shanghai, Singapore, Tainan (Taiwan), Tokyo, and Venezuela, among other places). I will generalize: I am seeing faculty who appear to work longer hours, serve more students, more fully integrate theory and practice, and who are paid less than professors in the U.S. The faculty are research productive and hang their collective hats on intellectual contributions but are not married to



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using Cabell's and counting of citations for their academic peer-reviewed journals in determining their own academic worth and self esteem. Many of the faculty equally value discipline-based work and contributions to practice research. In fact, France's Grand Ecoles work with regional chambers of commerce and businesses to match the needs of the region to the academic and professional programs they develop. The students put in longer hours in the academic setting, are more respectful of the faculty, are focused less on working countless hours in fields totally unrelated to their perspective fields and more on learning and studying, are better educated, and have a global perspective. In addition, students are multilingual or at least bilingual. Often they learn how to do business in other countries. Books such as *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands* are great resources to help business students and business people learn about traveling and doing business abroad. Many programs outside the U.S. (OUS) include management curriculums that require multiple international experiences, application of the theoretical knowledge they have gained through professional apprenticeships, junior consultancies, internships, and projects. Some of the business schools outside of the U.S. require that their graduate students create viable companies that sell a product or service. I am pleased to note that many U.S. business schools are moving beyond typical study abroad programs in locations of interest to various faculty members.¹ As Karin Fischer notes in a recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Traditionally, American higher education has relied on study-abroad programs to supply students with many of the international perspectives they need: An understanding of other cultures, economies, and political systems . . ." However, U.S. employers note that recent graduates lacked the skills to succeed in a global economy.²

Change will be important for AACSB and for our business schools in that the ability to change the future in academe hinges upon our ability to turn

out a new breed of professor who approaches today's world differently. They must not be clones of current faculty who are typically, if engaged in doctoral programs, rooted chronologically in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Most of these individuals are teaching the way they were taught, espousing values that they have embraced for decades (e.g., "if the doctoral student is mostly interested in students and teaching, he or she does not belong in our doctoral program"). Doctoral learning can only occur at the altar of abject poverty and supplication because all students must be willing to give up their life of comfort and earnings to be mentored at our feet. (Translation: Only full-time programs count.) At the top of the heap are the elite schools that want to shape young minds. Older, experienced students need not apply. Students who cannot help us lift our GMAT scores to the stratosphere need not apply. Research and ratings are king. When (or if) we allow you to pass through our hallowed portals, we offer you a Ph.D., the "true" research degree, and a belief that you obtained a G.O.D. in the process. In my mind, only medicine's output, the M.D., is worst in the latter regard of garnering greatness for mining to the greatest depth an important but narrow slice of knowledge. If we are honest with ourselves, that *is* what dissertations represent; mining subject matter to the greatest depth possible, although the breadth of the knowledge is *not* very broad.

Business schools embrace the value that teaching, research, and service represent critical activities that we do in our profession. However, it is my sense through it all, that many, many business school faculty members fail to practice what they preach. They fail to teach the soon-to-be faculty members how to value teaching or the rudiments of doing it. Many students are not prepared for the diverse student environment of this decade or century, nor are they prepared to facilitate learning for working adult learners (especially those who work as managers and executives, who are willing to challenge, think they have

something to say, and absolutely believe if they pay the tuition, you owe them your (undivided?) attention. It is an interesting time where continuing studies/education units are begging for the faculty members who *can* engage in active learning processes. Private, for-profit schools and business schools that are entrepreneurial seek out faculty members who have high-level work experience of significant duration to participate in management development and executive education programs. Rollins College takes care of business—executive education. The College hires professors who have lots of corporate experience, corporate training, and savvy so that the professors facing the students in their MBA, management development and executive education programs can facilitate learning and learn from their students. Some of the business schools are actually taking a closer look within their classrooms only to discover that the traditional students as we used to know them are harder to identify or find. An even closer look reveals another trend that apparently the Homeland Security Department and Immigration and Naturalization Service have not quite figured out: Higher percentages of our graduate and doctoral programs are peopled by students (if they can get into the country) from places such as Thailand, China, and India. Business school leaders abroad are thanking us in the U.S. for making it harder for these students to be admitted here.

On the one hand, there are faculty members who act like independent contractors, pretending to need no one, to report to no one, and to answer to no one. For example, sections of a course are taught by four faculty members teaching from three or four different books, taught from different academic perspectives, without consultation with each other as to learning goals, objectives, and outcomes. Just give us the budget we want. Just pay us the salaries we want. Just give us the reduced loads we want. Regional accreditation bodies and AACSB are demanding that our academic enterprise practice as-

assessment or assurance of learning. These agencies are requiring accountability. Why in heck would we *want to be accountable* for what we say?³

Sadly, the verbal message is that research is really important. If you fail to do good research, you will likely remain unemployed, underemployed, or turned out by the academy. Is there any accountability here? No, doctoral students are assigned to someone for the purpose of doing a dissertation (if they reach that stage), but beyond taking research methodology classes, writing papers, being a “go-fer” (a research assistant who runs data analyses as instructed or does other ‘grunt work’), it is not clear that Ph.D. programs really work with the students to help them understand what this “research” thing is, how it works, how to do it, who to work with, how to interpret reviewer comments, how to address those comments, and the importance of timely turnaround or, more critically, how they can be successful when they are assistant professors pursuing tenure and promotion.

What I hope folks within the academy can do is debate these points, suggest a reality that people can perceive and embrace, and recognize the challenges we face, but also understand what the implications are if we do not change.

Clearly, as an example, internationalizing the college experience is a huge challenge for all institutions. Can we afford *not* to internationalize? My response would be an emphatic “No!” My own campus is a blended mix of several thousand students in residence on our largest campus and twice as many who commute to campus. Many of these students are less interested in tours at our Geneva or Florence campuses or places where we have partners (e.g., Laval University in Quebec City, Canada or the University of the Americas in Puebla, Mexico among other locations). Therefore, we work to change general education offerings, look closer to home at businesses that are tied to global services and trade, and discuss job opportunities that have an interna-

tional focus. Every academic discipline and every department or other academic unit must accept responsibility for providing an internationalization of the curriculum. Students and faculty members need to understand how globalization affects their disciplines, majors, or other fields of study. Although globalization should not be left to international studies or foreign languages departments, such units have an opportunity to adjust their thinking and their curriculums to entice more students to engage in global or international activities. For example, most foreign language departments focus on language, enunciation, and grammar in their teaching. I am convinced that students, especially business students, will be “hooked” if they readily see that there is relevant information that helps them. Students who learn how language, enunciation, grammar, time orientation, goal orientation, culture play a role in success or failure in conducting business in a country or part of the world of interest to them are more likely to see the value of learning Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, French, or other more popular languages. A collaborative effort by faculty, students, staff, and administrators can make this globalization a reality for all, but it requires change in both our language departments and our business schools.

Noting in particular, that as Homeland Security and the Immigration & Naturalization Service intervene in our efforts to look abroad for bright talent in places such as Japan, China, and India among other places, we have become less attractive to the raw material we need for our graduate and doctoral program. My point: Before thinking about all that went before, we face a serious “pipeline problem” that has begun to encourage the outstanding international students to look in directions such as Europe and Australia. We have the internal challenge for our graduate and doctoral students that our stipends are too low. We hold rigidly to the idea that Ph.D. programs are for those willing to sacrifice to do them on a full-time basis despite the evidence

that Capellas University, Walden University, The University of Phoenix, and so many other private, for-profit universities present us. In fact, we have created this whole, not-so-new industry. I remember when Arizona State University colleagues learned of the University of Phoenix back in the early 1980s. The faculty members at ASU said what many people at mature industries say, “There is plenty of room for everyone. We are certainly not afraid of the University of Phoenix!” In writing this article, I realize that for our industry that old saying is true, “We have met the enemy and it is us.” We are a very mature industry in a most dynamic, global environment. We must change to recognize and adapt to that fact and the double whammy of respected schools abroad (many earning “our” accreditation), and bright students who are determined to come to the U.S.⁴ As with textiles, rubber, steel, chemicals and other (now rust belt) industries, we must change. Are we, like those industries just named, going to be the last to recognize the need to do so?

Endnotes

1. Faculty members familiar with a particular country have long driven where business schools establish global partnerships for international exchange programs. Today, some business schools are thinking more strategically in terms of study abroad programs, research partnerships, and entrepreneurial academic programs.
2. Source: Association of American Colleges and Universities employers’ survey.
3. Note AACSB’s 2003 standards and the several standards built around accountability and assessment captured as “Assurance of Learning”
4. If people doubt the maturity of the U.S. business school industry note that many of the elite schools are now located across the country from their original city of residence and in countries with plenty of students, a willingness to pay, and a desire for the prestige an elite American brand name brings them. AACSB is very busy with accreditation but note that the major activity is coming *outside* of the United States. ■