

# I. THE STRATEGIC LEADERS GLOBAL SUMMIT ON GRADUATE EDUCATION: PURPOSES AND PRODUCTS

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**G**raduate education is widely seen as the cornerstone of a country's educational infrastructure, determining its degree of participation in the knowledge economy of the future. This perception is almost universally shared, despite the fact that graduate education means different things in different countries and regions, and despite the widely varying capacities of countries to deliver high-quality graduate education within their borders. While higher education, generally, is essential for a nation to *participate* in the global knowledge economy, graduate education and advanced research training are key to establishing a *leadership* position in that economy.

Graduate education is a key driver in generating new knowledge and new ideas, cultivating new intersections between traditional disciplinary fields, producing and inspiring future generations of scholars and researchers, and translating the knowledge generated into human betterment. Clearly, the spectrum of graduate education includes countries that are just beginning to build systems of graduate education as well as nations and regions in the process of enhancing or reforming well-established graduate education systems. In the fall of 2006, the boards of the Council of Graduate Schools and the European University Association met in Salzburg, Austria, to begin a discussion about reforms in doctoral education that were unfolding in both the U.S. and Europe. Among the goals of this transatlantic dialogue were to promote better mutual understanding of the transformations taking place in doctoral education in each geographic context and to ascertain their national, regional, and global implications. This extraordinarily productive dialogue motivated the next steps to broaden the scope of the discussion in two ways: first, to expand the discussion to include master's as well as doctoral education, and second, to expand the participants to include a set of geographically

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dispersed countries with mature systems of graduate education at both the master's and doctoral levels.

The Strategic Leaders Global Summit on Graduate Education, convened in Banff, Alberta, Canada, in September 2007 by the Council of Graduate Schools in partnership with the Province of Alberta, was designed to launch this global conversation about best practices in graduate education and, to the extent possible, map concrete directions for future collaborations. We invited leaders of graduate education from countries and regions with which CGS had been in active bilateral dialogue: Canada, Australia, China, Europe, and the United States.

We wanted to explore both the opportunities and the challenges confronting advanced systems of graduate education. With respect to the doctoral degree, we were particularly interested in developments in improving completion rates, facilitating interdisciplinary programs, and launching professional development programs for doctoral students. On master's education, we wondered about the evolution of the professional master's degree in traditional arts and science fields as well as the role of the master's degree generally as preparation for the workforce. We also wanted to explore the way the master's degree in each country serves as a transitional degree to the doctorate.

But beyond the best practices underway on individual campuses within each country, we hoped to share more about partnering with universities outside of one's own country, at both the master's and the doctoral level. We knew that joint and dual degrees were on the rise, but we did not have any insight into how different countries view the many agreements being struck. We invited participants to share stories about "what worked" in the crafting of such international cross-institutional arrangements. We asked specifically for principles that might underlie effective inter-institutional arrangements.

Moving from the opportunities to challenges, we invited participants to share perspectives on issues that call for global dialogue and to describe models or frameworks for making that dialogue meaningful and effective for all parties. Specifically, we invited good examples of models for transnational or trans-regional conversations that might be adopted to further the goals of sharing best practices in graduate education globally. And again we wanted to encourage discussion on the principles that undergird models that "work." We knew that at the end of the day it would be important to begin discussion about a "platform" on which a truly global dialogue could take place. The platform can be virtual or face-to-face. Its rule of inclusion can be expansive or restrictive. But since no such platform currently exists, we thought that this Global Leaders summit might be seen as a very faint "first

step” toward the creation of such a platform. Key questions here were: What kind of platform would be most useful? What principles must be honored in building such a platform?

Pursuant to this discussion of a possible global platform for dialogue, we knew that for international dialogue to be ultimately effective, it was essential that the participants who drive decision making and change from each represented country or region be identified. So we invited participants to discuss the national structures that are in place that allow the graduate education community to have a voice. We entered the discussion knowing that in five of the countries participating there were associations of graduate schools or graduate deans in place, but we also knew that their scope of membership, organization, missions, financing, and relationship to their governments differed. In countries where comprehensive associations of graduate schools existed, we wanted to know the kind of sharing deans have found most useful and what elements of these structures were scalable globally. On the assumption that some kind of global sharing of best practices is valuable to all participants, we wanted to explore the kinds of settings, fora, and structures that would be most helpful toward advancing that goal.

Next, we wanted to explore practices and perspectives on graduate education’s relationships to the employers who hire the graduates of our programs. While we ultimately need to ask employers how they would like to be included in the kind of discussion begun in Banff, we thought it would be useful first to invite this discussion among national graduate studies leaders from the academy. We wanted to discuss differences in how employers are typically consulted on issues in graduate education in each country and to think about which of those practices might be scalable to a global dialogue on graduate education.

A final issue that resides just below the surface of any discussion about sharing best practices globally is the matter of global talent flow. On the one hand, our countries’ universities compete to attract the best and brightest students into our graduate programs, and our academic and non-academic employers compete to retain this highly trained talent. On the other hand, both graduate admissions and workforce recruitment of international talent take place within a broader policy environment, and these often involve the policies of two countries. There are also ethical implications to the import of international talent that must be considered, particularly when that talent comes to developed countries from developing countries. While the overarching purpose of this conference was to focus global discussion on international collaboration, we felt that ignoring the realities of this competitive dimension

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might diminish our collective capacity to share best practices effectively. So we solicited the leaders' perspective on what is currently known regarding global talent flow with respect to graduate education. Recognizing that there are currently gaps in our knowledge of talent mobility, we wondered about whether we might reach agreement on principles that need acknowledgment in discussions of global talent flow. Recognizing that current trends in student flows hold implications for future cross-border partnerships, we invited discussion of how these trends might impact the sharing of best practices across institutions or graduate programs. This led to a discussion of both talent flow and barriers to talent flow.

This long list of topics and interests represented a very ambitious agenda. In order to successfully negotiate this agenda, and to accelerate the process of establishing a common vocabulary that can comprise such a large portion of any international meeting, we invited each participant to contribute a two-page paper addressing some aspect of the set of issues set forth above. Those papers provided the background text upon which the discussion proceeded. Each respondent was asked to address the assigned topic from his or her country's point of view, since we recognized at the start that "where you stand depends on where you sit" geographically and nationally. Both the context and the content do matter in discussions about the structure and the implementation of best practices in graduate education. But we proceeded from the viewpoint that difference must not deter sharing, learning, and building in ways that will strengthen the entire enterprise globally.

This report is organized to represent the spirit and structure of the conference. We include all of the short papers, as well as summaries of both speakers' oral comments and the free-ranging discussion among panelists and attendees that ensued. In any conference where multiple participants actively contribute to the discussion, topics will surface and resurface in a cyclical manner that does not always correspond to the more linear agenda that structures the overall meeting. In some instances, where the comments of individual participants addressed themes and issues that were more explicitly addressed elsewhere on the conference agenda, we have moved those comments to the appropriate section to better convey in print the coherence that participants experienced in the discussion.

At the end of the day, we hoped to achieve four core outcomes from the summit. We believed that we could target "best practice" topics most amenable to global sharing and dialogue. We wanted to understand the limits and scope of productive sharing, including articulation of conditions that work for all parties. We hoped to be able to describe a series of next steps that

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address appropriate platforms for continuing the conversation begun in Banff. Finally, and perhaps most ambitiously, we aspired to come to a consensus on a statement of principles emerging from the summit that could guide future discussion and assist local efforts to improve the practice of graduate education globally. The nine Banff Principles that resulted from the consensus are included at the conclusion of these proceedings.

The following chapters are a testimonial to the effort of all participants, in their papers and their words to achieve these objectives.

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