

P R E F A C E

Universities share a growing concern that they will be at risk if they do not adapt more rapidly to their changing environment and to new challenges. If this concern is valid—and the participants of the Glion Colloquium in their May 1998 meeting in Glion, Switzerland, concluded that it is—the governance of universities is becoming increasingly crucial, particularly for research universities (The Glion Declaration, 1998). Therefore, the Glion Colloquium decided to devote its January 2000 meeting in Del Mar, California, to the question of governance.

The Glion Colloquium is a private initiative. The group includes a number of higher education leaders from leading research universities from Western Europe and the United States—well-known scholars in higher education (some active, some recently retired), as well as industrialists and journalists. They share the view that the big changes characterizing our period represent serious challenges for universities. They plan to meet periodically to analyze these developments and to make concrete proposals for action.

The structures, missions, and challenges of Western European and American universities have much in common. But there are also significant differences—one relating to governing boards. In the United States, these boards fulfill important functions. But, in Western Europe, they do not exist at all, or only in a weaker form. There, mechanisms applied to advise and/or control rectors, vice chancellors, or presidents vary greatly from one university to the next. Some European countries have boards similar to American boards but with less or little decision-making power. Others have no board or a board

without authority; they have instead “participation councils” in which the different internal stakeholders are represented (faculty, researchers, students, administrators). Moreover, some of the roles exercised by American boards are in Europe played by the state or other groups that monitor or make some formal decisions, such as nominating the rector or professor proposed by the university. There are great differences from one country to another, even from one university to the next.

The editors of this volume are quite aware that it concentrates somewhat on the American environment characterized by powerful boards. However, they are convinced that the thoughts expressed about the role of boards are of great interest on both continents. This is obvious for readers in the United States, where the role of boards has come under significant scrutiny and, at times, criticism. This is true for the European readers because the solution of having boards assuming some of the powers that the state used to have and supporting and/or monitoring the action of the rector, vice chancellor, or president is gaining support.

The January 2000 Glion Colloquium addressed the defining issues of *governance in research universities*. Participants agreed to look upon *governance* in a university as the formal and informal exercise of authority under laws, policies and rules that articulate the rights and responsibilities of various actors, including rules by which they interact, so as to help achieve the institution’s academic objectives. To be effective, a powerful governance process must be embedded in an appropriate governance structure suited to the institution’s purposes and consonant with its culture. Management, in contrast, involves the responsibility for effectively operating the institution and achieving its goals. Managerial responsibilities are in the hands of the administration; it is responsible for the effective use of resources, support and performance of teaching and research, meeting the highest standards of scholarly integrity and professionalism, and assuring its accountability for the conduct and performance of the managerial tasks. In most Western European and American universities, governance is a cooperative effort, where a governing board or government department, president (or rector/vice-chancellor) and faculty (often organized into an academic senate) are the major stakeholders. They share specific rights and responsibilities in the governance of the university.

Participants also agreed on the contours of the major characteristics of the *environment* universities are likely to face in the near future. These future circumstances will have a defining bearing on the specific structure and process of governance that will enable universities to effectively carry out their mission. Thus, the papers are forward looking and factor in to their analysis future education scenarios.

The changes in the environment are manifestations of ever greater demand for education, which however is not matched by resources to meet this

demand. No less important is the rapid creation of new knowledge. One implication is an increasing demand for lifelong learning opportunities. Another relates to tenure extending over a longer time. Moreover, much new knowledge will be created increasingly at the boundaries of conventional disciplines and much of it can have great value for high-tech firms. As a consequence, faculty in science departments and many professional schools will tend to spend more time outside the university and work on research outsourced to it by high-tech firms. These developments will ever more seriously challenge faculty's commitment to the university and its ability to provide a balanced academic program. A further development that is likely to have a revolutionary effect on university governance is the cyberspace revolution. Its impact on information and communication is likely to be profound, because of the speed, reach and universality with which new networks will emerge. As a consequence, information will become universally available, almost instantaneously. One result will be a flattening of the hierarchical structure of such organizations as universities. Another will be further globalization of knowledge creation and dissemination.

This volume is the result of a rigorous selection from the papers prepared for the Del Mar meeting and the fruit of the intensive discussion provoked by those papers. It tries to provide a representative survey of the views held on the complex question of university governance and of the diversity of approaches taken to this problem. We, however, realize that much more research and debate are required to provide the universities with a governance system able to allow them to adapt to their changing environment, while ensuring that universities still serve the entire society by upholding their centenary values.

The papers in this volume are organized into four parts and followed by the presentation in an appendix of the Glion Declaration II. In the first part, the missions and responsibilities of research universities in a changing world are reexamined. The second part comprises papers that review the status and recent trends in the governance of universities in both Western Europe and the United States. The focus is on the strengths and weaknesses of today's governance systems. The third part explores governance principles in an attempt to introduce some theoretical thinking into the deliberations. These papers lead in the fourth part to proposals for improving and streamlining governance structures and processes in research universities. Some of the proposed initiatives relate to a single stakeholder, while others encompass the interaction between two or even three of them.

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