

# P R E F A C E

**T**he fourth Glion Colloquium was held in Glion, near Montreux, in Switzerland, from June 22 to 24, 2003. The Glion Colloquia were launched in May 1998 by Werner Z. Hirsch, of UCLA, and Luc E. Weber, of the University of Geneva, to bring together university leaders from America and Europe to share their perspectives of the issues facing higher education. The first three colloquia concerned topics such as the global forces driving change in higher education, the governance of the contemporary university and the increasingly permeable boundaries between the university and broader society. Papers presented at each of these colloquia, along with key elements of the ensuing discussion, were then published as books.

The Glion IV Colloquium drew together active university leaders (presidents, rectors, vice-chancellors) along with guests from industry with close ties to academe, to compare perspectives of the future of the research university in America and Europe, as reflected in its title, *Reinventing the Research University*. Although there was considerable discussion about whether it would be more accurate to use other verbs—such as “reforming”, “renewing” or “refocusing”—there was general agreement that change would characterize the future of the research university, driven both by powerful social, economic, and technological forces external to academe, as well as by important internal forces such as the changing nature of scholarship and learning.

There was a general recognition that universities have always evolved as integral parts of their societies to meet the challenges of their environments. Indeed, this disposition to change is a basic characteristic and strength of

university life, the result of the constant generation of new knowledge through scholarship on campuses that, in turn, changes the education they provide and influences the societies that surround them. In this sense, the research university both drives and is driven by social change. Yet, despite this long tradition of evolution, the forces driving change in higher education are particularly powerful today: the changing needs in education driven by a global, knowledge-dependent economy; demographic change driven by the mobility of populations and the needs of under-served communities; the rapid evolution of information and communications technologies which, in turn, drive the accelerating pace of intellectual change in scholarship and learning; the powerful forces of the marketplace threatening to overwhelm public policy and drive a fundamental restructuring of the higher education enterprise on a global scale; the rising costs of excellence in the face of increasingly limited sources of public funding; and the increasing demands for public accountability driven by an erosion in public trust that constrains both governance and management of our institutions.

These factors raise many complex issues that require serious consideration by the academic community. For example, while the university's traditional mission of creating, maintaining, and diffusing knowledge requires some degree of institutional autonomy and freedom, the increasing dependence of our world on the advancement of scientific and technological knowledge not only expands the mission and roles of the university in addressing social priorities, but it furthermore links the university more tightly to the society it serves. In a similar sense, the increasing complexity and interdisciplinary nature of the problems faced by society will require not only a restructuring of the scientific disciplines, but their further integration with academic disciplines from the humanities, the arts, the social sciences and the professions.

Yet, even as research universities play an ever more central role in identifying and addressing the important problems facing humanity, the erosion of public support suggests that society fails to appreciate the value of these institutions. Here university leaders face the challenge of better explaining to the public the return on investment in research and higher education.

A third challenge involves the nature of the interaction between the university and the wider community (e.g., governments, industry, society at large) as well as within the university itself (e.g., faculty, students, staff, governing bodies). Here again, the forces of change both upon and within our institutions will almost certainly demand a major rethinking, if not a significant restructuring of these linkages.

Yet, despite these challenges, the research university today is more central to contemporary society than ever before. It educates the graduates who sustain commerce, government and professional practice; it performs the research and scholarship so essential to a knowledge-driven global economy;

and it applies this knowledge to meet a diverse array of social needs, including health care, economic development, cultural life, and national security. Hence, while it is clear that universities need to reconsider their future role and mission and seek the resources, autonomy, and freedom that allow them to adapt to a time of change, they must do so in a way that recognizes their public purpose, their responsibility to serve the societies that created, depend upon and sustain them.

While the general nature of these challenges, opportunities and obligations were recognized and shared by all of the participants in the Glion IV Colloquium, it was also clear that they acquired a somewhat different character and required considerably different strategies that were heavily dependent upon particular geopolitical situations. For example, the response to the eroding public support of American universities has stimulated a dramatic increase in student fees (tuition) and private philanthropy, options made difficult in Europe by existing public perceptions and tax policies. The great mobility of students and faculty in America has created a highly competitive university marketplace, a feature only now beginning to appear in the European Union with major policies such as those contained in the 1999 Bologna agreement and the European Research Council proposals.

The papers contained in this book reflect both the consensus and differences in the perspectives of the participants on these issues. In Part I, the papers by Frank Rhodes, Robert Zemsky and James Duderstadt, and Luc Weber and Pavel Zgaga, as well as Sir Howard Newby, set the stage by considering the forces that are likely to change the nature of the research university. In Part II, Roger Downer, James Duderstadt, and Frans van Vught discuss the changing nature of education and scholarship. Part III then continues with papers by Robert Zemsky, Andre Oosterlinck, Nils Hasselmo, Marcel Crochet and Wayne Johnson on the changing nature of the interaction between the research university and broader society. In Part IV, Luc Weber, Marye Anne Fox, Frank Rhodes and Marcel Crochet explore the challenges of financing and governing the contemporary research university. In the concluding chapter an effort is made to pull together these discussions to develop more specific suggestions concerning those issues and strategies that universities should consider as they approach a period of rapid change.

Yet, as Frank Rhodes reminds us in the first paper, despite the powerful forces confronting the contemporary university, we must also bear in mind that this remarkable institution has been one of the most enduring in our society in large part because of its capacity to adapt and evolve to serve a modernizing world while holding fast to its fundamental values and character. Perhaps the real focus of the Glion IV Colloquium and the primary challenge to the research university are a reformation of those fundamental processes that allow and shape institutional adaptation and evolution, while

refocusing universities on their most fundamental missions of remaining places of learning where human potential is transformed and shaped, the wisdom of cultures is passed from one generation to the next, and the new knowledge that creates the future is produced.

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*James J. Duderstadt*  
*University of Michigan*

*Luc E. Weber*  
*University of Geneva*