World Open University Presidents Summit 2008

Facing New Global Challenges with Open and Distance Learning

8-10 September 2008

The Dusit Thani
BANGKOK, THAILAND

Hosted by
Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University
Open Universities: Past, Present and Future
higher education in two medieval universities...
...a life-changing experience...

-Scale
  - Idealism
    - Intellectual energy
    - Media
  - Eager students
Télé-université
Athabasca University
Alberta
Laurentian University
- Open as to PEOPLE,
- Open as to PLACES
- Open as to METHODS
- Open as to IDEAS
Professor Arnold Kettle

Professor Asha Kanwar
Professor
Asha Kanwar

Indira Gandhi
National Open University
Arnold Kettle
Arnold Kettle

Walter Perry
Origins of Open Universities

Back to the 19th century
New COL Fellows
“the radical innovation of delinking access to its examinations from study in any institution”
the shoemaker in his garret
A debate on the nature of universities

RESIDENCE

“a university which did nothing but merely brought a number of young men together for three or four years”.

John Henry (Cardinal) Newman
A debate on the nature of universities

LECTURES

“lecture bazaars under the absurd name of universities”.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge
A debate on the nature of universities

EXAMINATIONS

“what I mean by a university is an examining board”.

Robert Lowe
“the young man who presents himself for examination in the confidence of knowledge acquired by dint of self-denial and self-reliance, brings the strongest presumptive evidence of intellectual and moral culture…

Dr Robert Barnes
Knowledge alone must be tested. There is no substitute for it. The University and the public are not concerned to inquire ‘when or where’ it was obtained.
“…Unlike more worldly stores, knowledge can hardly be acquired dishonestly, or without elevating the character of him who has achieved it”
Louise Creightton

“One of the first women to enter the University of London’s Special Examination for Women, which she passed with honours”
The University of London
Rail and postal systems
UNISA

1946
Two trends:
- Expansion of education
- Media developments
The Iron Triangle

- Access
- Quality
- Cost
Mega-Universities & Knowledge Media

Technology Strategies for Higher Education

John S Daniel
1996 MEGA OPEN UNIVERSITIES OF THE WORLD (SELECTED)

- Anadolu University, Turkey
- Centre National d'Enseignement à distance, France
- China Central Radio and TV University
- Indira Gandhi National Open University, India
- Korea National Open University
- Open University, UK
- Payame Noor University, Iran
- Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand
- Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain
- Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia
- University of South Africa
India’s State Open Universities

Report by Mr. T. Rajagopalan

(former Education Correspondent: The Hindu)
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

“Although the Indian State OUs have managed to register huge enrolment figures over the last two decades, a close look at the scene makes one feel that a lot more is to be done to improve the quality and tone up student services...
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

“A few of the state OUs, however, have done well in respect of both courses and social reach by way of equity and access. This has much to do with political and institutional leadership…”
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

"Almost all state OUs in India claim that they provide a better quality alternative to the programmes and courses offered by the correspondence course institutes run by conventional universities. “
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

“...academic leaders are expected to give a thrust to development of the learning system and make it vibrant and exciting.”
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

“The V.C. as a leader must be a person of impeccable integrity and imbued with a spirit of total dedication to the cause of open and distance learning. Only then can reasonable progress in the path of development of ODL be made...
India’s State Open Universities

Rajagopalan Report

“Much depends on the leadership from above and the Vice Chancellor must be a person owing allegiance to the cause of scholarship and learning, not to any political power. Otherwise, how can one expect the Open University to become “a learning community based on reflective practice”?”
Dual-mode
Dual-mode

“open universities should be able to offer distance learning of higher quality than conventional universities for which it is a sideline”
Dual-mode

Mergers with campus operations e.g.:

- Télé-université with Université du Québec à Montréal

- Open University of British Columbia Thompson Rivers University
Dual-mode

Two tracks:
- Distance
- Classroom

One track:
- Flexible learning
Open Universities: The Future
Open Universities: The Future

1. Diversity of Learners
   - Large young population but... many older tertiary learners
Open Universities: The Future

1. Diversity of Learners
   - Large young population but...
   - Many older tertiary learners
   - More women
Open Universities: The Future

1. Diversity of Learners
   - Large young population but... many older tertiary learners
   - More women
   - Digital natives
Open Universities: The Future

2. Integrating eLearning

“Elearning is permeating the educational world as fast as expanding connectivity allows”
Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES
Open Universities: The Future

2. Integrating eLearning

“Open universities are much better placed than conventional institutions to do eLearning well”
Open Universities: The Future

2. Integrating eLearning

“A GUIDED DIDACTIC CONVERSATION”

Borje Holmberg (1977)
Open Universities: The Future

2. Integrating eLearning

REMEMBER:
The Internet will never be a mass medium…
Open Universities: The Future

2. Integrating eLearning

REMEMBER:
Not to be fixated on laptops…
Open Universities: The Future

3. Open Educational Resources
“academic putty”
Open Universities: The Future

3. Open Educational Resources

DANGERS

and

OPPORTUNITIES
Open Universities: The Future

3. Open Educational Resources

Interactions in learning

Student <> Content

Student <> Student

Student <> Teacher
Open Universities: The Future

3. Open Educational Resources

Interactions in learning

Student <> Content #1

Student <> Student #2

Student <> Teacher #3
Open Universities: The Future

4. Cross-Border Education

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP!
Open Universities: The Future

5. Advice from a practitioner

Dr Dominique Abrioux
President
Athabasca University
1995-2005
1. The primordial importance of relationships with governments
2. The importance of relationship building with other institutions
3. The double-edged-sword nature of inter-institutional collaboration
4. The importance of cultivating communities of students and alumni
5. The need to ensure that governance structures maximize institutional autonomy, credibility, and flexibility
Professor Dominique ABRIOUX

6. The importance of the academic staff for the university’s reputation
7. The importance of increasing market share through product differentiation
8. The need to develop and entrench scalable models of programme development and delivery

9. The importance of leadership.
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