

# 9<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

10-12 October 2012 • University of Pittsburgh



INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

## ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

(as of 12 March 2012)

### REFORMING THE POLICY AND PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

#### WORKSHOP THEME AND ITS CONTEXT

There seems to be a renewed interest in having universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) engage with their communities. Seemingly paradoxical in times of globalization and global higher education, the focus on the local is a consequence of demands for more relevance and accountability. This trend can be seen in increasing numbers of government documents, university mission statements, strategic planning initiatives, and literature on this subject.

But what is community engagement? Even if this interest is genuine and widespread, there are many different concepts of community service and engagement. Especially universities are criticized for doing too little (or nothing) as many of them engage in a plethora of very well meaning, sometimes innovative, but mostly small and localized initiatives. Even if there are many worthwhile local initiatives, few are concerned with global problems (such as climate change or the need for human security). During the 2011 “Occupy” movement in the United States, very few universities engaged with protestors or orchestrated discussions around these events.

There are different terms for “engagement” activities, for example “third mission,” “social service,” “university-community partnerships.” They include various types of activities ranging from technology or knowledge transfer to university continuing education, urban regeneration, community-based research, and service learning initiatives. Universities provide health care through teaching hospitals and community clinics, contribute to the cultural and intellectual life of “the community,” and institutes or departments and individual faculty members engage in various other aspects of “the community” and its development. The wide range of activity encompassed by community engagement suggests that a precise definition of the “community mission” is difficult and organizing and coordinating such activities is a complex task.

Because governments and funding agencies in several countries are increasingly focusing on university community engagement, there is a need to assess and measure engagement activities. For some of these activities this is relatively easy, for example, technology transfer can be measured by patents accorded, licenses sold, and spin-off organizations established; and continuing education can be measured by the number of courses, students enrolled, and revenue generated. However, long-term outcomes are difficult to assess because of time taken to develop relationships or partnerships. Other outcomes are difficult to quantify, since their impact is perceptibly intangible. Other forms of assessment, such as identifying “good practices,” are problematic since these practices are dependent on their particular context making generalization difficult. To capture activities as well as results, different methods, instruments and approaches are used such as audits, evaluations, and benchmarking and institutional reviews.

This Workshop will explore conceptual understandings of community engagement and university reforms intended to foster it. There will be a particular focus on the following issues:

- What is “the community” and what does it need and expect from HEIs, particular the universities?
- Is community engagement a mission of all types of universities and HEIs or should it be the mission of specific institutions such as regional or metropolitan universities, technical universities, community colleges, or indigenous institutions while other institutions such as major research universities should concentrate on national and global research agendas and on educating internationally-competent researchers and professionals?
- The emergence of a global knowledge economy and its impact on universities and its geographical groundedness and focus: How can a university be global and at the same time locally relevant?
- Is it, or should it be, left to the institutions to determine the scope and mode of their community engagement, or is a state mandate preferable and feasible?
- If community engagement or “community service” are mandatory, what are the consequences of not complying with the mandate?
- If not mandatory, are there any particular incentives or rewards for institutions and faculty actively engaged in community-related activities? Should there be such incentives?
- How effective are policy mandates and university engagement for regional and local economic development?
- What are the principal features and relationships of regionally-engaged universities?

- Is community engagement to be left to faculty members and students who are particularly socially engaged and locally embedded or is it, or should it be, made mandatory for both faculty and students?
- How can community engagement be (better) integrated with the (other) two traditional missions of the university—research and learning?

Besides papers on one of the above issues, examples of reform initiatives in various countries are also of particular interest as are case studies of institutions or academic-community partnerships.

## WORKSHOP ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

The Workshop will take place at the University Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA). It will be organized by staff and students of the Institute for International Studies in Education ([www.iise.pitt.edu](http://www.iise.pitt.edu)).

This is the ninth International Workshop on University Reform bringing together researchers and policy analysts and makers. Previous workshops have taken place in Vancouver (University of British Columbia), Vienna (University of Klagenfurt), Tokyo (University of Tsukuba), Dublin (Dublin City University), Shanghai (East China Normal University), Mexico City (Center for Research and Advanced Studies – Department of Educational Research), and Berlin (Humboldt University).

The Workshop is co-sponsored by the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Higher Education Special Interest Group; Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education (CSSHE); Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training, University of British Columbia at Vancouver, Canada; Asian Education and Development Studies Research Consortium, Hong Kong Institute of Education, China; and PASCAL International Observatory.

## CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANELS

Papers and panels are invited to address these or related themes. Proposals of up to 400 words (for papers) and 800 words (for panels) should be received per electronic mail (file transfer) **by or before June 1, 2012** to the Workshop Chair. Presenters will be notified by June 10<sup>th</sup> at the latest.

Details concerning communication, registration, accommodation, and the program can be found at the workshop website: [www.iise.pitt.edu/her9](http://www.iise.pitt.edu/her9).

## LOCAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

*W. James Jacob*, Director, Institute for International Studies in Education (IISE), University of Pittsburgh, USA  
(Workshop Chair), Email: [wjacob@pitt.edu](mailto:wjacob@pitt.edu)

*Huiyuan YE*, Program Coordinator, IISE, University of Pittsburgh, USA  
(Workshop Coordinator), Email: [huy10@pitt.edu](mailto:huy10@pitt.edu)

*Stewart E. Sutin*, Clinical Professor of Higher Education and Coordinator, Higher Education Management Program, University of Pittsburgh, USA

*John C. Weidman*, Professor of Higher Education, Administrative and Policy Studies Department, University of Pittsburgh, USA

*John L. Yeager*, Associate Professor of Higher Education and Director, Institute for Higher Education Management, University of Pittsburgh, USA

*Jennifer R. Crandall*, Program Coordinator, IISE, University of Pittsburgh, USA

*Enes Gok*, Program Coordinator, IISE, University of Pittsburgh, USA

*Otgo Okhidoi*, Program Coordinator, IISE, University of Pittsburgh, USA

## INT'L WORKSHOP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*Germán Alvarez Mendiola*, Centre of Educational Research and Studies, Mexico City, Mexico

*Mei LI*, East China Normal University, Shanghai, PR China

*Hans G. Schuetze*, Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education and Training, University of British Columbia at Vancouver, Canada

*Maria Slowey*, Centre for Higher Education Research and Development Dublin City University, Ireland

*Andrä Wolter*, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

*Shinichi Yamamoto*, Research Institute for Higher Education, University of Hiroshima, Japan