

PREFACE

The fourth Glion Colloquium was held in Glion above Montreux, Switzerland from June 22 to 24, 2003. The Glion Colloquia were first launched in May 1998 by Werner Z. Hirsch of UCLA and Luc E. Weber of the University of Geneva to draw 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) 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 by powerful social, economic, and technological forces driving change in our world.

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 their 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 underserved 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 an 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.

Yet, despite these challenges, today the research university is more central to contemporary society than ever before. It educates the graduates that 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, 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 allows 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, depends upon, and sustains 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 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 have 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, James Duderstadt, Luc Weber, and 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, Adre Oosterlink, Nils Hasselmo, 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 discuss the challenges of financing and governing the contemporary research university. In the final 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 also must bear in mind that this remarkable institution has been one of the most enduring in our society in large part

because of their capacity to adapt and evolve to serve a modernizing world while holding fast to their fundamental values and character. Perhaps the real focus of the Glion IV Colloquium and the primary challenge to the research university is 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.