



Poised for the Future

AACSB is perfectly positioned to cope with some of the most pressing issues in management education today, from globalization to the doctoral shortage to the implementation of international accounting standards.

It has been 42 years since I taught my first university class and 31 years since I was named to my first university administrative post. It should be no surprise if I note that much has changed in management education during that span of time.

Over the last four decades, our evolution has been steady—with dramatic spikes at some points. As a result of the rise in the global economy, emphasis on international business education has skyrocketed, along with the number of business schools around the globe. International partnerships, study abroad programs, and exchange programs have become commonplace. More and more college graduates are pursuing graduate degrees, especially MBAs.

Change has been rampant in other areas, as well. The production of Ph.D.s has risen, then fallen. More schools have raised the bar on research expectations. Accounting accreditation has become a reality. Rankings have emerged as a dominant focus for many schools. Classroom emphasis has shifted from teaching to learning and assessment. Technology has replaced blackboards and chalk as a key component in the delivery of management education. New dynamics in the economics of management education have caused more emphasis to be placed on fund raising and revenue generation for noncredit programs.

The changing environment of management education has

heightened the importance of our professional organization, AACSB International. In recent years, AACSB leadership has expanded its efforts to become a positive force in helping members to articulate, understand, and manage significant changes within the industry. An effective and committed network of members has been instrumental in leading initiatives that are advancing management education around the globe.

International Expansion

During the past five years, AACSB has firmly secured its position as a leader in management education beyond North America as it makes a significant impact in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Australia. Through accreditation, educational programs, communications, and knowledge-based services, AACSB is providing high-level services to the global community. These initiatives benefit all members by enabling them to identify programs of quality outside their own boundaries. As a result, there have been enhanced opportunities for study abroad programs for students, as well as exchange programs for students and faculty.

Another significant step in worldwide advancement has been the establishment of the Global Foundation for Management Education, whose mission is to address global

by Doyle Z. Williams

challenges and opportunities within management education and practice. GFME was recently formed as a partnership between AACSB and the European Foundation for Management Education (efmd). I believe this partnership sends a powerful message that international cooperation is not just important; it has become an essential reality. Through the GFME partnership, management educators will be able to draw on resources that will help them address issues in cross-border management education.

Doctoral Faculty

One issue the new GFME partnership might address is the growing global shortage of doctorally qualified faculty. AACSB has taken a leadership role by forming a task force to seek solutions to this problem. The Doctoral Faculty Commission observed that a continued decline in the production of business Ph.D.s threatens the future of scholarship and research at a time when they are more important than ever.

Regardless of our diverse missions and programs, we are all affected by the doctoral shortage—and other professional groups have recognized that. AACSB's efforts have sparked interest among education and faculty leaders domestically and abroad. I urge AACSB members who have affiliations with other organizations to encourage these groups to take up the issue as well, as we seek long-term resolution of this problem.

One organization that is working to alleviate the doctoral shortage is the PhD Project. Founded nine years ago by Bernie Milano and the KPMG Foundation, it addresses the acute lack of minority Ph.D.s in business. The PhD Project has assisted hundreds of African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans to earn their Ph.D. degrees. The PhD Project now enjoys the support of 18 foundations, corporations, and other organizations, including AACSB.

Accent on Accounting

Another key area where AACSB can have an immense impact is in accrediting accounting programs. At AACSB's International Conference and Annual Meeting in April, the membership adopted revised accounting accreditation standards. Nonetheless, questions occasionally still arise about whether AACSB should accredit accounting programs. For me, the answer is a resounding "yes." I believe that accounting accreditation is inevitable and that if AACSB doesn't set the standards, someone else will. I also believe the accounting profession is best served if accounting education is offered in



Doyle Williams

concert with a quality business program. For those programs to be consistent and effective, accreditation standards for accounting and business should be coordinated and synchronized. AACSB is in the best position to achieve this outcome.

The public has a strong interest in the practice of public accounting. In the U.S., every state has a State Board of Public Accountancy that sets educational standards for aspiring CPAs. These boards work together through the National State Boards of Accountancy, which in turn worked with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants to produce the Uniform Accountancy Act in 1997. While state statutes are not always in harmony with the Uniform Accountancy Act, these cooperative efforts have led to a great deal of consistency. AACSB accreditation is acknowledged in the UAA.

Given recent accounting scandals in the U.S., it is more important than ever for business schools to take a stance for strong accounting programs, including five-year programs. Acting under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, Congress has created the Public Companies Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB), which will undoubtedly address the credentialing of CPAs who practice before it. The PCAOB will be studying educational standards as well.

I predict that within the next ten years there will be the equivalent of a national CPA certificate for those auditing publicly held companies. Not only will strong, accredited accounting programs help create consistent national standards that will contribute to the CPA certificate, such programs also will aid in the ongoing effort to create international accounting standards. I believe that, within 20 years, an international certification program will be in place. Business schools need to be at the table when international standards are drafted.

An accreditation program of information systems is also under way, led by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). A few IS programs in business schools have already achieved such accreditation. The inevitable question is whether or not AACSB will seek to accredit IS programs in business or leave that task to ABET. AACSB's board of directors welcomes comments on this issue.

Rankings—and the Alternative

Another issue that many business schools wrestle with regularly is annual rankings of business schools produced by commercial publications. While these rankings have been beneficial in some respects, many well-documented ill effects also have

Meet the Board Chair

It's no surprise that Doyle Z. Williams ardently supports the idea of accounting accreditation. Williams has always had a passion for accounting. He served as founding dean of the School of Accounting at the University of Southern California and led that school to be among the top five in the nation. In other critical roles, he was coordinator for the Area of Accounting at Texas Tech University and chairman for the Accounting Education Change Commission from its inception in 1989 until 1993.



Doyle Williams receives the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Most of his many honors revolve around accounting excellence, the most recent one being the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Gold Medal, its highest honor. He has also held key offices with accounting organizations, including president of the American Accounting Association, vice president and member of the board of directors of the American Institute of Certified Public

Accountants, and many other positions.

Now in his eleventh year as dean of the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Williams has presided over the school's rise in eminence. Since he has been dean, the school has recruited 63 percent new faculty, secured private funding for a new building, established the Graduate School of Business, and achieved ranking among the top 30 public undergraduate business schools in the United States.

Williams also is active within AACSB, serving as vice chair-chair elect from 2003 to 2004. His term as chair began in July 2004. He has been a member of the board of directors since 1999 and chairman of the Accounting Accreditation Committee twice. In addition, he has served on numerous accreditation visiting teams and as chairman and member of various committees.

Williams holds a B.S. degree in accounting from Northwestern State University of Louisiana and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Louisiana State University. He has authored more than 45 articles and several monographs and has contributed to more than ten books. He holds the Sam M. Walton Leadership Chair at the University of Arkansas.

resulted. AACSB's New Issues Committee is currently finalizing a paper addressing some of these points, and the report will be disseminated to all members.

In the meantime, I publicly call for the publishers of these rankings to cease the apparently intentional mislabeling of their products. For instance, magazine covers and book titles claim they include rankings of the best business schools. But a thorough read of the publication often reveals that it has ranked only MBA programs, or only full-time MBA programs. It is as if the magazine has touted itself as publishing rankings of the best countries in the world, when in fact it offers only a ranking of one city from each country.

B-schools annually produce more than a million graduates from baccalaureate and part-time MBA programs. The number of MBAs produced from full-time programs is one-fifth that number! When this misrepresentation is pointed out to the publishers, they shrug it off. They prefer to keep to their original claims in the interests of selling books and magazines.

These commercial rankings occasionally are valuable to business schools looking to benchmark themselves against peer institutions. However, business schools have another resource: the management education database developed by AACSB's Knowledge Services department. The database provides a wealth of data about business schools, their prospective students, and their prospective employers. Some of these data have now become an integral part of the accreditation process. Although the effort will be challenging, AACSB has committed itself to helping more non-U.S. schools participate in and use this database program. I'm truly excited about the important contribution this initiative is making and its potential for the future.

AACSB Member Services

The Knowledge Services database is not the only valuable service offered to AACSB members. Other useful services, which will continue to be priorities in the coming year, are Web-based resource centers, the community of affinity groups, and a variety of publications.

Resource Centers: Two existing resource centers and one in the construction stage provide members with forums for learning about and discussing critical issues in management education. The Ethics Education Resource Center, created by the Ethics Education Task Force and AACSB staff, helps members address ethical issues in the curriculum. The Assessment Resource Center helps educators as they seek to change their emphasis from teaching to learning. This second Web site is especially sensitive to regional institutional accreditation standards as well as AACSB's new accreditation standards.

A Walk About Walton

The University of Arkansas in Fayetteville first opened its doors to students on January 22, 1872. Fifty-four years later, the business school was founded, initially consisting of four professors teaching 36 courses in business administration, economics, and sociology. Today the faculty consists of 75 permanent full-time members teaching approximately 2,800 undergraduate and graduate students.

In 1998, the school received a \$50 million cash donation from the Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation, believed to be the largest donation to an American business school at that time. The school was subsequently renamed the Sam M. Walton College of Business.

The Walton College offers two Ph.D. programs—in economics and business administration—with concentrations in accounting, economics, finance, information systems, marketing, management, and transportation and logistics. Master's degrees are offered in accountancy, information systems, economics, and transportation and logistics management. Undergraduate fields of specialization include accounting, economics, information systems, finance, marketing, transportation and logistics, general business, and management. A separate bachelor's degree is offered in international business. The Walton College also boasts an advanced computing instruc-

AACSB is in the process of designing the Doctoral Education Resource Center, a joint project with DocNet, an organization of doctoral program administrators. The center will be directed at management educators and will focus on improving programs and developing innovative practices. Another site, which will be directed at prospective doctoral students, will contain information about doctoral education and accredited doctoral programs. These two sites, as well as the ethics and assessment Resource Centers, will be accessible through www.aacsb.edu.

Affinity Groups: AACSB's Affinity Groups offer members a chance to meet with like-minded professionals to discuss problems, solutions, issues, and concerns. The 12 existing Affinity Groups are organized around missions, scope of programs, size of institutions, geographical location, and other commonalities. Interest in the groups is growing, and three new groups were recently added—Development Professionals, Entrepreneurship Programs, and Technology Leaders. Currently representatives from more than half the member institutions, about 475 schools, participate in Affinity Groups.

Communications: Another key member benefit is the range of communications products that keep members connected and informed. The Web site, www.aacsb.edu, contains comprehensive information on accreditation, member benefits, affiliated organizations, conferences and seminars, and job openings.

eNEWSLINE, a monthly electronic publication, provides members with information on the association and its events,

tional and research center, with a state-of-the-art multimedia lab, four computer labs for undergraduate students, and a separate computer lab for graduate students.

The Walton College has implemented an integrated undergraduate core curriculum, developed an advanced enterprise resource program curriculum in information systems, and established three investment funds—a stock fund, a fixed-income fund, and an asset allocation fund—with real money managed by students.

Seven specialized centers have allowed the Walton College to strengthen its public service and research: the Center for Business and Economic Research; the Bessie Moore Center for Economic Education; the Small Business Development Center; the Center for Management and Executive Development; the Supply Chain Management Research Center; the Information Technology Research Center; and the Center for Retailing Excellence.

Throughout its long history, the Walton College has not lost sight of its threefold mission of teaching, research, and service. "Learning is a lifelong adventure that begins with discovery," according to the school's credo. "Our passion for learning must be sustained by intellectual curiosity and scholarship, and we must endeavor to instill this same passion in our students."

news from members, and thought-provoking columns such as "Dean's Corner."

Finally, *BizEd* celebrates its third full year of publication with this issue. Its mix of staff-written articles and contributions from outside experts brings readers up-to-date on relevant topics that range from globalization to corporate governance.

Planning for Progress

AACSB has made enormous progress in fulfilling its international leadership role in management education—and I expect that progress to be ongoing. AACSB accreditation will continue to expand around the globe. Knowledge services will become more valuable to educational institutions, prospective students, and employers. AACSB member services and affinity groups will continue to help members exchange best practices and keep abreast of changes in management education.

In the coming months, AACSB's role as a thought leader will become more critical. I believe AACSB is well positioned to serve its members and management education worldwide. I suspect those who founded AACSB in 1916 did not envision the global breadth of the organization today or expect it to attain a membership approaching 1,000. Similarly, we can only imagine the impact AACSB will have in the coming century.

The key to AACSB's future will be, as it was in the past, a committed and informed voluntary leadership drawn from institutions around the world. I urge all members to become involved in building an even stronger foundation for management education through leadership in regional, national, and international organizations. 