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Metropolitan universities have constituencies to serve at home and abroad. U.S. urban areas must be players in a new international "game," if they are to prosper as centers of civility and commerce. To obtain this prosperity requires the whole-hearted collaboration of universities their urban communities. The roles of metropolitan universities are many: interpreter, incubator, change engine, mediator. In every instance, the "international reciprocal" applies— an "investment" begets a valuable "dividend" for the urban community and the university. The world will find the experience and models it seeks in urban America, and metropolitan universities can be the decisive players in bringing the other players together.

The International Role of Metropolitan Universities

The Mission of Metropolitan Universities

Metropolitan universities have constituencies to serve at home and abroad. The impact of the new economic and political international environment on the university's regional community creates and energizes local partnerships with international dimensions. Further, only the universities can make special, internationally oriented resources available to important economic and cultural entities in the community.

The Declaration of Metropolitan Universities formulated by several university presidents and printed in each issue of this journal states that, among other things, the institutions must: 1) "...[develop] creative partnerships with public and private enterprises that ensure that the intellectual resources of our institutions are fully engaged with such enterprises in mutually beneficial ways," and 2) "...[make] the fullest possible contributions to the cultural life and general quality of life of our metropolitan regions."

Such commitment is enlightened self-interest as well as commendable educational policy. In the first issue of volume two of this journal, Roger Soder cited two important benefits to the university that derive from this "intra-linkage" perception of modern metropolitan universities: a) "...greater congruence

between institutional goals and priorities, on the one hand, and faculty values, commitments, and rewards on the other," and b) a revitalized interaction with external constituencies—real partnership, true dialogue—mingling experiences, knowledge, and perspectives. "Tomorrow's universities," said Soder, "ignore the health of the surrounding community at their peril."

The commitment expressed in the declaration must include the newly emphasized imperatives of international participation by the metropolitan concentrations of the United States and their universities. Of course, the breadth of interest encompassed by the declaration and

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intended by Soder is vast, reaching well beyond the particular focus of this paper. Yet there is an international facet to many aspects of metropolitan universities—their faculty, their students, the welfare, health, and civility of their communities, and their capacity to contribute to the

leadership of the nation. As metropolitan universities organize and activate themselves, they will find an "international reciprocal": each investment of knowledge, effort, or other good by the institution to enhance international comity, commerce, and communication will benefit themselves and their various local partners. U.S. urban areas must be players in a new international "game," and they need the whole-hearted collaboration of their university to do so effectively and quickly.

Not long ago, and perhaps too often today, the common view equated urban with local—urban with parochial interest and perspective. It is now clear to the thoughtful urbanite—educator, business executive, professional, public official—that urban is universal and international. Promulgation of such a perspective by the metropolitan universities brings them closer to the traditions and character of the academy than was generally true of even the nonurban university of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America. Today, the metropolis must succeed both in the challenges deriving from internal, domestic elements of metropolitan life, as well as in challenges arising from the call to compete in the world scene. In both cases the challenges are economic, educational, social, and political. Metropolitan universities must attempt to be an effective partner with the other natural parties that have a vital stake in the competition.

The role of metropolitan universities is central to the strategy of urban America in all of its dimensions, and none more so than the whole range of current international opportunities and challenges. The whole idea of metropolitan universities, as a distinct form of an academic entity, is formative; it is still maturing. It certainly embraces the general purposes of a university, which are teaching, research, and service. But, to a more direct extent than most other forms of postsecondary institutions, metropolitan universities now are also charged with the continuing development of the great American experiment—the undergirding of political democracy through the preparation of effective self-governing citizens. That is why it is so necessary to draw the metropolitan universities into the crash effort to transform the former Communist-run socialist states into polities featuring democratic processes and markets responding with products according to consumer demand.

These countries are not the only ones with which metropolitan universities can become involved for mutual benefit. There is also critical potential for U.S. metropolitan institutions to contribute to the technical and intellectual needs of developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere. The contour of the partnership for the United States and foreign metropolitan institutions likely will be different in these latter cases than in the transforming countries. The resulting benefits to the U.S. metropolitan region may also be different in kind and importance. These will not be described at this time. Suffice it to say that there are fundamental differences between developing and transforming nations and regions of the world; thus there are different responses to be expected from metropolitan universities.

This essay emphasizes the tumultuous "transformation" of the Eurasian expanse from Western Europe to Siberia as a particularly appropriate sphere of international challenge for the concepts outlined in the Declaration of Metropolitan Universities. Reconstruction of a market, regeneration of an industry, retraining of managers, and re-education of citizens in economics and democratic forms of public action are pressing needs in Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States, the new independent republics, and Russia. In most instances, what is required is reformation based on new fundamental principles. Metropolitan universities, because of their diversity of population, industry, language, and religious-cultural factors, can make unique contributions. In turn, their "investment" abroad can beget a valuable "dividend" at home.

The democratic processes nascent in the transforming countries require very practical information about election arrangements, research support for legislative and executive authorities, independent media, and so on. The U.S. metropolis is the natural source of such information and the natural work and learning place for those people who need the information to come and study, observe, and engage in a "hands-on" internship. Metropolitan universities are the key partner in the metropolis to be the broker of such arrangement through all of the governments and institutions involved.

Similarly, the creation of a new economic environment—of prosperity, responsive to consumer demand and competitive in global markets—requires strong and stable institutions. One finds them in the metropolitan centers of the United States. Thus, there is an immediate role for the metropolitan universities network in the transformation of these economies: the creation of partnerships of European institutions and U.S. metropolitan entities—governmental units, business associations, volunteer social agencies, and educational institutions. In fact, it has begun. Institutions and individuals have forged program relationships linking seven Central/Eastern European nations with a broad array of U.S. metropolitan universities and their communities. The Poland (Wroclaw)–Central Connecticut State Program described elsewhere in this collection of essays is a splendid example. Similar initiatives can be expected for the Baltics, Russia, Ukraine, and the other new independent states.

Metropolitan universities have a pivotal role in the contemporary international scene. Their mission and urban or regional focus are

particularly relevant to the rejuvenation and reform of the economies of Central and Eastern Europe and Baltic States, and to the development of democratic processes of government and social action there.

The declared mission of metropolitan universities (which recognizes the necessity to embrace the enriching diversity of the metropolis) provides a prospect for an equally inclusive setting and attitude for the diverse traditions, religions, and levels of development of the new polities of Eurasia. Within these nations now in transition from failed economic and political policies is to be found the nuclei of the very commercial, social, cultural, and civic clusters metropolitan universities know as their community collaborators and clients. But metropolitan universities are not likely to find analogous academic institutions in the counterpart European urban community that see a role for themselves as partner in human development. Here certainly is a major challenge: to propound the concept of community/academy "inter-linkage" as expressed in the Declaration of Metropolitan Universities, and then to follow up with assistance to academic institutions in Eurasia so they can adapt themselves as metropolitan partners and, like American metropolitan universities, pursue:

- a. reaffirming that the creation, interpretation, dissemination, and application of knowledge are the fundamental functions;
- b. asserting and accepting a broadened responsibility to bring to bear this knowledge on the needs of metropolitan regions;
- c. responding to the needs of metropolitan areas by seeking new ways of using human and physical resources to provide leadership in addressing metropolitan problems, through teaching and professional service.

It can be seen that this mission points in two directions, not only to the integrative role of metropolitan universities for the areas within which they exist, but also to the larger international aggregation of metropolitan areas and institutions that need the concept and focus offered by the American model of metropolitan universities. In this latter sense, American metropolitan universities need to be partners, examples, and guides.

This combination of the contemporary demands of nations in economic and political transition with the concepts of mission and focus of metropolitan universities creates the special opportunity for international leadership and partnership in teaching, research, and service. Their relevance to the current urgent demands of the reforming, reorganizing world gives rise to a special strength in American metropolitan universities that enable them to be valuable partners with the business and other communities of their region.

Mutually Beneficial Partnerships

Metropolitan universities focus on citizenship education, that is, preparing capable persons for occupations and professions, and providing educational opportunity for underserved groups. They seek to link basic investigation with practical application and to create multidisciplinary,

scholarly partnerships with other public and private entities in order to address complex metropolitan problems. There is an immediate and direct utility of each of these undertakings in the present international situation. International partnerships enhance the capacity of American metropolitan universities to share their intellectual resources with regional partners in mutually beneficial ways.

The likeliest manifestations of such beneficial collaboration range from the sublimely intellectual to the very practical and commercial. They encompass roles such as interpreter, incubator, engine-for-change, mediator. None is a radical new role for a university, especially one with a long association with the developing urban centers of the nation. The context makes the difference.

Interpreter. Metropolitan universities are in a unique position to interpret for their regional clienteles the meaning of the twin economic challenges of the time: the integration of Western Europe and the transformation of Central, Eastern, and Baltic Europe; Russia; and the new independent states. Evaluation of the political and economic consequences for the average citizen, the average business, and the typical community group is the responsibility of metropolitan universities.

In a broader, long-term sense, metropolitan universities serve as *entrepôt* for the economic and political ideas from other urban polities, for it is in metropolitan settings that such ideas arise and are tested, proven, and exported. This role as *entrepôt* reflects our understanding from human history that both cities and universities have been the welcoming environments for intellectual commerce in ideas as well as goods, more so than any other institutions of society. Further, history suggests that metropolitan universities connote a capacity for acculturation. It is the role of facilitator, by which ideas old to others but new to us are learned and accommodated, to which metropolitan universities are summoned.

One could expect such a responsibility to sit lightly on the shoulders of professors accustomed to probing and teaching. But it is a role, also, for the nonacademic clienteles of metropolitan universities and one with which they will need help in accepting and doing. The "pay-off," of course, is a more rapid assimilation within the metropolis of that which is discovered and proved abroad.

Incubator. Metropolitan universities focus on recognizing the social strains in current life, both in the individual metropolitan region and in the broader world. Naturally, this leads to their function as practical laboratories for testing the efficacy and acceptability of solutions, and to at least a coleadership role in weaving consensus where controversy arises. Metropolitan universities, through their "bridge" role between the practical problems of urban life and the resources of the mind and the laboratory, are incubators of new ideas about the natural world—thus centers of research about biological, physical, and other scientific phenomena; incubators of new ideas about the political world—thus centers for studying human behavior and interactions and development;

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and incubators of new ideas about truth, reality, and beauty—thus centers for examination of values and creativity.

It must be recognized that there are complementing but different university services in being an incubator of ideas, processes, and products whose adaptation is the objective; and being a “broker” of ideas where fundamental examination is the objective. As broker, the university brings to the attention of special clientele, or a general audience, “state of the art” ideas, processes, and services, which may then be utilized by the recipients for their separate, special needs. As incubator, the university itself employs, evaluates and promulgates to clientele what it considers to be promising.

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The two complementary academic functions receive no further consideration in this paper, but they deserve close examination within the university community. The outcome of such campus consideration could be crucial to the questions of priorities, resource allocation, and reward that hover over all university choices of mission and focus.

Each one of these characteristics of metropolitan universities places them in the vanguard of the international world of scholarship and service. The ideas they incubate are to be found across the entire globe and come into our ken through the intellectual idea exchange that an international participation facilitates.

Engine for Change. Because they are intimately involved with their greater urban community, metropolitan universities provide the engine for economic, political, and social change. Their role springs from the intellectual and service traditions of higher education as shaped in the state university and land-grant college traditions of the nineteenth and twentieth century in the United States. Metropolitan universities assemble persons of expert knowledge and professional credentials to stimulate and inform those who must formulate the policy, the strategy, and the organization options to deal with current urban exigencies. They must be taught what to do and how to do it. They must be stimulated to put into service of humanity what they have learned, and synergize the product of learning by their experience and rational thought. They must respect the ceaseless effort to know more about our natural world, and to think about meanings and values.

All universities do this. But metropolitan universities add to the equation their unique commitment of partnership with the leadership of all segments of their communities. Here, again, their contribution is enhanced by a reinforcing international network of metropolitan centers and the insights and experiences they offer. The mutually beneficial outcomes of partnership and association, at home and internationally, are fundamental to the concept of metropolitan universities. The principal items on the agenda of any metropolitan area, thus of any metropolitan university—environmental protection, personal security, physical growth,

economic development and its limitations, health, justice, social equity, equal opportunity, individual self-improvement—indicate both the commonality of metropolitan concerns across the world and the mutual benefits of international collaboration by metropolitan universities.

Mediator. Much of the world's population will want to come to America; much of it already has. Metropolitan America is the magnet for those coming, just as it is already the home of those who have arrived. These new Americans bring enormous strength along with the inevitable challenges. This immigration alone demands an international initiative from metropolitan universities. First, it might be taken as axiomatic that to be truly credible as a "partner" to a clientele comprising recent immigrants, metropolitan universities must by their actions demonstrate contact with and understanding of the world beyond the immediate metropolitan region, including original homelands of the new citizens. Second, an international network of contacts can facilitate the accommodation of new citizens by the clienteles of the university—civic groups, business, industry, and others. Quite simply, metropolitan universities can and should be vital partners with regional institutions in dealing with the new clientele, including challenges of literacy, quality, and relevance (i.e., the effective use of resources on real problems faced by real people in the real world). To a growing extent, this is a problem of international dimension. It is faced at home, to be sure, but it will be most successfully faced by the community that enjoys substantive partnerships with an internationally involved university. Such a university will mediate and provide for the demands of the rising immigrant population and its social mobility within our American milieu. Such a university will be ready to respond to two-way demands for language study—in school and outside, for comparative religious understanding, for desires for cultural sophistication, for recognizing new ideas of family, education, and work. Such a university will mediate even the alternate, even contentious, ideas of art, music, race, and gender relationships—even cuisine! Such a university will draw on its metropolitan experience to meet these challenges in the workplace, on the campus, in the market place—wherever they are best addressed.

Metropolitan universities, if they are fully involved in several international roles, can help to "internationalize" their regions' thinking and acting in both the commonplace and rare facts of life and work. Such an "international-sensitive" university is the best resource for the development of abilities needed by business and industry executives and other professionals to be successful in their own interests and on the international stage. Of course, we assume that metropolitan universities are uniquely situated to provide direct and substantial assistance to regional businesses. A university is the nearest and best resource for assisting the region's businesses to discover, apply to product, manufacture, and market goods and services in the fiercely competitive global economy. It can do so even more effectively if it has in place a network of international contacts mirroring the ethnic make-up and/or the economic mosaic of the metropolitan region it serves.

Conclusion: The Role Ahead

All of the above suggest the obvious: metropolitan universities by their own internal motivations have an important international role in the transformational change occurring in Eurasia. The world will find the experience and models it seeks in urban America, and metropolitan universities can be the decisive players in bringing the other parties together. International "role-reciprocity" operates to reward the community—not just the university—in compensation for investments of resources.

Of all the contributions metropolitan universities can make to the long-term viability of the democratizing and the privatizing efforts now transforming Eurasia, one is most vital: to be an institutional model for universities abroad. It is a role not yet demanded, as far as I know. Nevertheless, it will be crucial to creating and sustaining a Europe that is whole, stable, prosperous, and free. The higher education systems and institutions of Eurasia need reformation and strengthening. They need partnership with appropriate institutions in America and Western Europe. Programs to make such partnerships possible must be formulated by governments and nongovernmental agencies. Metropolitan universities, for the reasons cited in this paper, should be both primary prototypes as well as resources for this reconstruction in order that the strong, reformed institutions abroad, like metropolitan universities in the United States, accept responsibility for teaching, research, service, community interaction, and integration of all community resources of production, instruction, experimentation, and application.

Thus will there arise global recognition of the spirit and the letter of the Declaration of the Metropolitan Universities. These institutions have the right stuff for what Eurasian communities and their academies need for the immediate future. In accepting an international role, metropolitan universities maximize the opportunities for reciprocal benefits to each metropolis, which, while not quantifiable, promise continuing "transformation" for all of the partners.

Suggested Readings

- "Working Together: A Challenge for Postsecondary Education and the Greater Portland Community." Governor's Commission on Higher Education in the Portland Metropolitan Area, October 11, 1990.
- "The Urban University in the 21st Century." Speech by John W. Ryan on the occasion of IUPUI (Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis) 20th Anniversary Program, November 8, 1989.
- "IU: One University-Indiana at its Best (Indianapolis Plan) IUPUI by the Year 2000." Indianapolis: Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, 1988 (copies available through the Chancellor's Office).