

Preface

Radu Damian

Why a preface? This was the first question that I asked myself when accepting the responsibility of writing a preface to this new book of the Council of Europe, part of the Higher Education Series. Is a preface really necessary when the reader has the table of contents available? Are prefaces always needed?

My own answer to this “existential” question was obviously positive since you are reading the preface – hopefully with interest. The main motive behind the decision is that for universities a subject such as “converging competences for democratic society” is not usually one found near the top of their list of missions, not to mention their day-to-day practice. For obvious reasons, universities, which I see as “small, autonomous societies” with their own priorities and internal rules, are faced with more and more challenges. The economic dimension of their existence, related to study programmes, teaching methods, learning environment, quality assurance, student numbers, research results leading to prestige in the scientific community and other urgent issues facing them, leaves little room for reflection in the academic community and the university leadership about values they take for granted, such as democracy, citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Therefore, I thought that if this book is meant to become known and to appeal to people from universities, my brief preface should contribute to stimulating their curiosity to read it.

The values of the Council of Europe are well known: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The member states share those values and have committed themselves to fully promote them as part of their internal and international policies.

Recent experience and the results of national elections in many countries, as well as for the Parliament of the European Union, have, however, shown not merely a lack of interest among citizens in participation, but also a relative rise of a rather “radical” political message. The relative success of that message, which questions the essence of democratic values and is something we believed belonged to the past, is indeed very worrying for the future of Europe and the world. We should not forget that, by the “direct or representative vote of the people”, Europe or other parts of the world have in the past experienced political “democratic” transitions to extremism and autocracy, with all the consequences that followed. Must we accept this situation and let it happen again in the future?

If the answer is negative, and definitely it should be, our societies must reaffirm their commitment to democracy, must use it, defend it and be aware that democracy is not a gift and is not to be taken for granted. The best way to defend democracy is to understand how it works, to make full use of it to respect human rights and to live by the rule of law. These elements define in fact in simple words what is called a “democratic culture” in society. Defending democracy and making use of

its potential is a task for all citizens, as well as for educators, and an obligation for the political class.

However, in many European countries, statistics have also too often shown an awkward situation: the percentage of those voting in the elections from population groups which did not attend higher education exceeds the percentage of voters from population groups with an academic background. Newspapers and sociologists come up with many different explanations related, for example, to the political situation or the disillusionment of educated voters with politics and politicians. Fundamentally, however, the situation is unacceptable and leads to several questions. Does higher education give its students the essential values of democratic societies? How should universities do that? How can universities educate not only highly skilled specialists for the labour market but also highly motivated citizens for our democratic societies? Are there examples of good practice in Europe and across the world?

If you want to find some answers, I encourage you to read this book which I hope will become a reference point in the process of redefining the role of universities in the modern, global world.

A word from the editors

Sjur Bergan and Radu Damian

The book that you are about to read draws on several sources: contributions to two Council of Europe higher education conferences as well as articles written especially for this publication. In spite of the diversity of sources as well as of the backgrounds and origins of the authors, there is, however, unity in purpose. This book set out to explore the roles and purposes of higher education in modern, complex societies and how these relate to the competences that higher education provides to students.

Public debate, at least in Europe, could easily leave the casual observer with the impression that higher education serves one purpose and one purpose only: preparation for employment. This is of course an important function of higher education and our public debate is not wrong in emphasising this purpose. It is wrong, however, in emphasising only this purpose. As man does not live by bread alone, human existence is about more than work.

In a previous project on the public responsibility for higher education and research (Weber & Bergan 2005; Council of Europe 2007), the Council of Europe identified four major purposes of higher education:

- preparation for sustainable employment;
- preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies;
- personal development;
- the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad and advanced knowledge base.

Some debaters and authors might have preferred to phrase the four purposes somewhat differently, but there is little disagreement that the purposes stated broadly cover the main roles of higher education. This is reflected in the Bologna Process, through the 2007 London Communiqué (Bologna Process 2007: 1.4). Yet, these statements have so far not significantly modified the public debate in Europe, which continues to give the impression that preparation for employment is the only major reason we have higher education. In this, Europe differs from North America, where not least the higher education community itself is very keenly aware of its key role in transmitting the values of democratic citizenship (AAC&U 2007) and where the concept of liberal education emphasises the personal development of students as a major – perhaps even *the* major – goal of higher education. Therefore, the fact that several prominent US authors contribute to this book is significant.

In both the European and North American contexts, it is important to underline that the discussion is not about which of these different purposes is the “real” one. They are all important and they coexist. Many of the characteristics that will make higher education graduates fit for employment will also make them fit for active

citizenship and contribute to their personal development, as well as enable them to contribute to improving our knowledge base. The ambivalence about the different purposes that one can discern in European public debate nevertheless led the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) to refer to "higher education between humanism and the market".

The Council of Europe is dedicated to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is also concerned with developing the ability of European societies to conduct intercultural dialogue. Education, at all levels, plays a crucial role in furthering the overall purposes of the Council of Europe and this book demonstrates why. It is not a coincidence that one of the sections in this book focuses on higher education for democracy and dialogue, and that this is the section that links a consociation of the roles and purposes of higher education in and for modern society to a consideration of competences.

Seeing higher education exclusively as a process leading to a set of competences is overly reductionist, but developing learners' competence is an important part of the mission of higher education. Competences are, however, not a neutral issue. The kind of competences that higher education should develop depends on what we see as the purposes of higher education.

As with the purposes of higher education, it is important to refer to competences in the plural. This is not only because higher education graduates need to acquire a broad set of competences within their chosen field of study, but also because they need to acquire two complementary kinds of competences: subject-specific and generic. A chemistry graduate needs not only to have advanced competences in chemistry (and, most likely, to specialise within a sub-field of chemistry), but also to acquire a set of competences which any higher education graduate should have, such as analytical ability, communication skills and the ability to work alone as well as in a team. The concepts of subject-specific and generic competences were made explicit within the Tuning project (González & Wagenaar 2005) and are essential to understanding the concept of qualifications (Bergan 2007).

An important point made in the present book is that while subject-specific and generic competences are important concepts, they do not live separate lives. They converge, in the sense that an individual learner needs both kinds of competences. Learners need to apply both subject-specific and generic competences in everyday life and, as societies, we need to draw on a very broad range of advanced competences of both kinds in order to solve the most difficult challenges that we are faced with, from the consequences of climate change through intercultural dialogue and democratic culture to unemployment and sustainable technological innovation.

Therefore, the third part of the book refers not only to "competences" but also to "converging competences". This important point links up with one of the starting points for the reflections that led to this volume, namely the need not only to train individuals for specific tasks but to educate the whole person. Education is about acquiring skills but also about acquiring values and attitudes. As education policies

move from an emphasis on process to a stronger emphasis on the results of the educational processes, learning outcomes have come to be seen as an essential feature of higher education policies in Europe as well as in North America.

The current language of higher education reform is very much that of learning outcomes, and rightly so. The classical definition of learning outcomes is that they describe what a learner knows, understands and is able to do. This is an important development from an earlier age that emphasised rote learning of “facts”, and also from what we suspect is still a fairly commonly held view of education that focuses on knowledge alone. Knowledge is crucial but it only works if it is accompanied by understanding and an ability to act. Think of learning a foreign language. Learning the declensions of nouns, adjectives and verbs of a new language is a difficult challenge for most learners, but apart from the intrinsic interest of grammatical systems, this knowledge is of little use unless it is matched by an understanding of how the declension systems work and the ability to put the knowledge and understanding to use by learning to speak and write the new language. As any language learner understands, “knowing the grammar” is only the first part of learning a foreign language.

However, the example of language learning also offers a fourth element of learning: the motivation to learn and the attitudes that are developed as part of the learning process. Learning a new language requires considerable investment of time and energy, which is likely to be made less prohibiting if the learner is curious about foreign languages and cultures and has an open attitude towards them. This may of course focus on a specific language and culture but a frame of mind that is generally receptive towards a variety of cultural impulses will probably help find the motivation required. At the same time, one would hope that the process of learning a new language will open up new horizons and further stimulate the learner’s intellectual curiosity. We would therefore suggest that even though knowledge, understanding and capability are important, the definition of learning outcomes should be completed by the inclusion of a reference to attitudes.

The first part of this book considers the roles of higher education in and for modern society. Derek Bok, former President of Harvard University and one of the foremost writers on higher education in the United States over the past generation, shares his vision of what higher education should be. Bok addresses three important issues: the role of higher education in offering opportunities to all members of society in accordance with their real abilities, most notably by opening up access; the extent to which universities actually fulfil their obligation to provide future leaders of society, in the broad sense of the term, with an adequate education; and the extent to which higher education institutions are equipped to fulfil their responsibilities. Derek Bok strongly underlines that in an ethnically and economically diverse society, it is essential to have a diverse student body, not only for reasons of equal justice but also for reasons of legitimacy. If students are admitted on the basis solely of academic merit, which measures past achievement rather than future potential, talented individuals from underprivileged groups may easily be left out because they have not been given the opportunity to demonstrate their full potential. However,

access is only a beginning. It also matters a great deal what courses students take once they have been admitted. Derek Bok expresses grave concern that as many as one half of all US college students do not take courses that will help prepare them for citizenship, even if he considers that the increase in community service by college students shows some promise. Solving the fundamental issues concerning the role of higher education in preparing for citizenship in diverse societies will require rethinking our approach to education.

Peter Scott explores the challenges European higher education faces in a world of increased global interaction, the proverbial, if oxymoronic, “globalised world”. In this, European universities face the same challenges as universities all over the world, but Peter Scott suggests European higher education also faces some additional challenges because of its reluctance to recognise them. Globalisation is, however, a more complex phenomenon than the most commonly used clichés will allow, and Peter Scott explores what he refers to as two modes of globalisation. “Mode 1 globalisation” emphasises the economy, and higher education institutions rise to these challenges essentially by producing high class research, as well as by developing into entrepreneurial institutions. What Peter Scott refers to as “Mode 2 globalisation” is more preoccupied with culture and cultural differences, concerns that are more closely related to the traditional agenda of classical universities. Universities must play a key role in developing intercultural sensitivity in graduates, as well as in the broader society, but equally in developing an ability to look at one’s own society and culture with some critical distance. This is perhaps a steeper challenge than facing Mode 1 globalisation but, on the other hand, it may well be one for which European higher education is better equipped.

In the third article in this volume, based on her role as Rapporteur General of a Council of Europe conference on “New challenges to higher education – managing the complexities of a globalised society”, Kathia Serrano-Velarde reviews the role of higher education in meeting the challenges of globalised society. Again, the plural is important and we need to take a differentiated approach to the perception of global trends and to include stakeholders and civil society in identifying solutions, which must strike a balance between short-term decisions and necessary long-term reflections. Kathia Serrano-Velarde considers humanist and market interpretations of higher education and provides a brief “history of ideas” concerning its missions. She offers ten conclusions and recommendations, grouped around three main aspects of the debate:

- dealing with complexity: key concepts for the realisation of an inclusive debate;
- dealing with cultural diversity: fostering intercultural dialogue;
- taking action in a complex and globalised world: civic engagement and social responsibility.

In his contribution, Andrei Marga examines multilingualism, multiculturalism and autonomy. Multilingualism is very much a reality in Europe, but it is also a choice, exemplified by the fact that the European Union has included all national languages

of its member states as official languages. Multiculturalism is a somewhat more problematic phenomenon but, whatever the definition, it is a reality that in many European countries, different cultures have a long history of coexistence. Marga sees an important difference between the two in that multilingualism gives rise to educational policies concerning professional training, certification and recognition, whereas multiculturalism may impact on the organisation of the state and has a strong legal impact. The author's own university, Babeş-Bolyai in Cluj, offers an interesting example of how an autonomous university has sought to rise to the challenges of multilingualism and multiculturalism, and Andrei Marga analyses this example in the last part of his article.

Internationalisation of higher education is a highly topical policy area, linked to the trends described in the first part of this book, and in particular those described by Peter Scott. While internationalisation is often justified and strategies developed with a view to economic competitiveness – what Peter Scott refers to as “Mode 1 globalisation” – Sjur Bergan in his article argues that internationalisation must take account of the full range of purposes of higher education (“Mode 2 globalisation”). While internationalisation policies should not neglect the economic aspects of higher education, they should also take account of the need to provide graduates with the ability to conduct intercultural dialogue, to consider an issue from various points of view and to develop a democratic culture. Higher education graduates must be provided with linguistic skills and other competences for dialogue, without which internationalisation policies aimed at improving economic performance in a narrow sense cannot be successful.

The second part of the book addresses higher education for democracy and dialogue. In the first article in this section, Slobodanka Koprivica offers insight into how these issues have been addressed in a country with a small higher education system which recently acceded to independence: Montenegro. Montenegro ties its higher education reforms very firmly to the broader European agenda, both when it comes to overall political objectives and specifically for higher education policies. It is an active participant in European Union programmes as well as in the Bologna Process. While several aspects of this strategy clearly link to overall issues of globalisation and internationalisation, Montenegro's policies also aim to address issues of democratisation and social cohesion. Montenegro has developed an Inclusive Educational Strategy aiming to provide education to young people with special educational requirements according to their interests, abilities and needs, as well as a strategy for civic education. While the latter is aimed primarily at primary and secondary schools, it is also important for teacher training, as higher education plays an important role in democratisation.

In the second article in this section, Caryn McTighe Musil looks at the role of higher education in promoting universal values in the face of societal change, and she does so on the basis of the US concept of liberal education. While to many, liberal education has mainly implied a broad curriculum focused on arts and sciences, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) prefers to think of

liberal education as an approach to learning which applies to all knowledge across all fields. The importance of this approach is shown by a quotation from Terry Tempest Williams: “When minds close, democracy begins to close” (Williams 2004). The shift of emphasis from teaching to learning is also essential in this context, as is the strong increase in student numbers, moving from elite to mass higher education. Caryn McTighe Musil describes US lessons on learning and diversity, drawing in particular on experience from the AAC&U’s own projects.

In the third article in this section, Nancy Cantor explores co-operation between universities and their local communities. She underlines that the model of an engaged university goes against the main tendency of the history of universities, which have tended to see themselves as somewhat distant from the societies that surround them. As Derek Bok also points out in his contribution, universities have not been characterised by their efforts in preparing for democratic citizenship, even if, we might add, US universities seem to play a considerably stronger role in this respect than their European counterparts. Nevertheless, a good number of US universities are now strongly engaged with their local communities, and Nancy Cantor’s own Syracuse University is a good example. Under the label “Scholarship in Action”, Syracuse University plays an important role in revitalising an industrial city focusing on areas such as environmental sustainability and justice; inclusive urban education; art, technology and design; and neighbourhood and cultural entrepreneurship. The university also works with the Haudenosaunee community to draw on its experience as well as to improve higher education opportunities for Native Americans. Nancy Cantor is careful to underline that the university seeks to work *with* rather than just *for* the community.

Gabriele Mazza and Sjur Bergan draw on the experience of the Council of Europe in discussing the role of higher education in promoting dialogue. The Council of Europe adopted its White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, and the authors see education as an essential component of this dialogue, which should address the substance of higher education and not be limited to a “dialogue about dialogue”. Education at all levels must play a key role in developing the competences that are essential for dialogue, competences that will allow us to transcend the categories of “us” and “them”. Dialogue requires openness of mind but it also requires reflection on one’s own values. Understanding the views of others does not mean one has to accept them as valid regardless of the values they espouse, and there are views that are unacceptable in modern democratic societies, notably those that deny the human dignity of others. To be consistent with its own values and heritage, higher education must commit to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The third section of the book, on converging competences, is introduced by Stephen Adam’s article on competences, learning outcomes and convergence. These are fundamental ingredients of ongoing higher education reforms, notably in the Bologna Process. This is, however, not just a technical discussion, even if it has its share of technical issues. The discussion should link to a consideration of what we view as the purposes of higher education. Competences must be defined in relation to the

labour market, but equally in relation to the other purposes of higher education, not least those required to develop active citizenship. Stephen Adam explores the concepts of learning outcomes and competences and puts them into the context of the Bologna Process in Europe, as well as relating them to the broader issue of the roles of higher education. He warns that learning outcomes are means towards an end rather than ends in themselves. The potential for misuse is real but so are the promise and potential opportunities. He offers a typology of learning outcomes and raises questions about the relationship between education, civic virtues and democracy.

Áine Hyland explores competences, learning outcomes and convergence on the basis of a case study of her own University College Cork, one of seven universities in the Republic of Ireland. These are placed within the context of European higher education reforms, to which Ireland is an active contributor, not least in the area of qualifications. The University College Cork identified teaching and learning development as an important area in its strategic plan adopted in 2000. Rather than seeing teaching and research as two clearly distinct sets of activities, Áine Hyland argues, using the words of Ernest Boyer, that education should be seen as a “seamless web”. This also means that teaching must be rewarded and recognised, and Hyland outlines a number of initiatives taken to this effect. The University College Cork is now broadly recognised as a university that values and recognises research-led teaching, a position that could not have been achieved without the work of those Áine Hyland refers to as “change agents”.

From her perspective as a student leader, Ligia Deca explores the impact of “converging competences” on the reality of teaching, learning, research and institutional life. She points to the positive role higher education and, in particular, students have played in “new democracies” in central and eastern Europe as an example of responsible higher education communities. Equally important, however, are political debates in higher education institutions and lecturers who are active in public debates and democratic participation within the governance of higher education institutions themselves. Ligia Deca underscores the importance of education preparing for life and not only for work – in her words “higher education institutions as both melting pots and shaping vessels of individual characteristics and personalities” – as well as a means of furthering opportunities for socially disadvantaged groups. Student participation in higher education governance as well as, more broadly, in the life of higher education institutions, serves a double purpose: it improves higher education and helps prepare students for life as active citizens. “Converging competences” are essential in this respect.

In the final article of the book, Manja Klemenčič considers converging competences from the point of view of diversity, higher education and sustainable democracy. Like several other authors in this volume, she underlines the importance of considering the full range of purposes of higher education, but her article in particular focuses on the role of higher education institutions in developing student competences for democracy and diversity. She suggests that these competences must relate knowledge and understanding of the social and political concepts and structures (knowing

what); skills to effectively participate in the social and political systems (knowing how to act); and the values associated with and commitment to active citizenship in diverse, democratic societies (knowing how to be). She discusses competences for active and responsible citizenship and relates these to the concepts of subject-specific and generic competences as developed in the Tuning project (González & Wagenaar 2005). Manja Klemenčič also discusses the non-cognitive development of students, referring to development of (or changes to) beliefs, attitudes and values, and identity in general, and she seeks to discern some common principle for the teaching and learning of competences for democratic citizenship and diversity. From the perspective of someone who is professionally active in Europe as well as in the United States, she explores differences between Europe and the US in conceptions of and practices towards student development of competences for democracy and diversity. Parts of this relate to the fact that US higher education leaders are more conscious of their role in promoting citizenship, whereas European higher education leaders seem entirely focused on promoting the employability of their graduates. In her article, Manja Klemenčič recognises that the demands on higher education may seem to be higher than institutions, teachers and students can reasonably meet, but she also argues that *expanding* the goals of higher education should really mean *integrating* goals. The higher education leadership needs to find ways to employ and reemploy existing resources to meet these multiple goals.

As editors, we are convinced that this book raises issues that are essential to the future of higher education. We do not pretend that the answers to the questions raised can all be found within the confines of a single volume, and it is very likely that they are not even to be found by sifting through all the arguments made in today's higher education debate on either side of the Atlantic or, for that matter, elsewhere in the world. We do, however, hope that this book will help raise consciousness of the need to address education as a holistic phenomenon that aims to educate the whole person and that it will provide inspiration for a broader public debate on higher education policies than we tend to see in Europe. In broadening the policy debate, we will also have a better chance to find at least some of the essential answers. We are writing these words as the world celebrates the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It would be a cruel irony if, two decades after this monumental event that symbolises profound changes in half of Europe's countries, higher education were to focus all its attention on the labour market without looking towards the broader issues of how education can help make our societies the kind of societies in which we would like to be not only employees but also fully fledged citizens.

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I. Higher education in and for modern society

Converging for diversity and democracy: a higher education

Derek Bok

It is a great pleasure to join in a discussion of the role of higher education in providing competences for diversity and democracy. I would like to begin my remarks by calling attention to what I consider an unprecedented position our universities occupy within today's society.

We often do not stop to think what an exceptional position universities have come to occupy. Our institutions are now the leading sources of all three of the most important ingredients for progress and prosperity in modern societies: new discoveries, expert knowledge and highly trained people.

The discoveries that universities make not only account for most of the basic advances in knowledge but lead to new products and new processes as well as to progress in health care, in government and much else. In addition, universities not only produce most of the technical knowledge that society needs, they are also the principal agency for independent analysis and critique of government, social institutions and the professions.

Finally of course, universities are the essential institutions for preparing leaders throughout society. Every politician, every civil servant, every judge, doctor, priest and virtually every top business executive will attend our universities. Although this often goes unnoticed, more and more of these leaders are also returning to universities in mid-career for further education. In my own institution we talk about having 18 000 students and indeed we do have 18 000 traditional students who spend several years with us and eventually graduate. But we also have between 60 000 and 70 000 other people, most of them professionals in mid-career, who are coming for a few days, a few weeks, a semester or a year for additional education they need because they have reached some critical stage in their career that requires knowledge they do not have.

These are enviable responsibilities, but they bring new obligations which I want to discuss in the remainder of my article. Specifically, I would like to take up three of these new responsibilities and phrase them as questions.

First of all, if we are the essential gateway to virtually all important careers and leadership positions in society, whom should we admit and recruit to be our students? Second, if we are the training ground for tomorrow's leaders, what more should we be doing to prepare students for their important tasks? And finally, if we are to discharge the educational responsibilities that our current position requires, how well prepared are we to carry out those responsibilities?

I am going to address each of these questions and, obviously, I will refer mostly to the universities that I understand best – the American universities. I will speak very candidly about them. Now that I do not have to raise large amounts of money every year, I can afford to be frank about the institutions that I love and in which I have spent my entire professional life.

First of all, whom should we be admitting? In Europe as in the United States, I think that higher education has now completed a transition from elite to mass higher education. In my own country the big challenge in recent decades has been to respond to the increasing racial diversity in our population. Now, a further challenge is emerging that has been there all along but is becoming more important and more widely discussed, and that is how to offer greater opportunities for children of poor and working class families. I suspect that these same issues exist in Europe and I would make two categorical statements about them.

First of all, in an ethnically and economically diverse society, it is essential to have a diverse student body. It is not simply a matter of justice, nor is it simply a matter of equality; the reasons are very practical. No society and its government can solve their problems effectively if one race or one economic class controls the lion's share of leadership positions. If they do, the authorities and institutions will not command the respect and legitimacy they require. Leaders will not attach sufficient importance to the problems of those outside the ruling group, nor will they even understand them fully.

The second categorical statement is that universities that have more applicants than they can admit – universities like Oxford or Cambridge or the *Grandes Ecoles* in France – are unlikely to have a sufficiently diverse student body if their admissions are strictly on academic merit. Even non-selective institutions may have to actively recruit students from minority groups and working class communities if they wish to acquire the necessary diversity, because students from under-represented groups may not come forward and apply without active encouragement by the universities. Many immigrants and many members of working class families are going to suffer from inferior schools, from low expectations, from far less access to tutors, advisers and other enriching opportunities that children in well-to-do families enjoy as a matter of course. If they are immigrants' children, they will also suffer from language handicaps and all too often from actual or subtle forms of discrimination. Therefore, to expect these students to compete for admission on an equal basis is probably unrealistic. At least it is in my country. They have to be given some form of preferential treatment in order to be admitted.

Once they are admitted, however, their grades and their academic standards must be based strictly on merit. You cannot provide preferential grades or apply special standards to special groups without destroying the integrity of your system of evaluation. Preferential grades will not succeed because employers will simply stop paying attention to them, and even the most academically gifted minorities and children from poor families will not get jobs because no one will believe that

the qualifications they have achieved were honestly earned. Rather, they will think these students received some special dispensation because of their ethnic or economic group and will give their grades little weight.

These realities present a daunting educational challenge. We have to take students who are less prepared initially but help them to compete effectively in the very few years that they are with us. It requires a very careful admissions policy and an active process of recruitment so that we can admit students who may lack all of the qualifications to begin with, but whom we believe have the special qualities required to persevere and to master what they need to master in order to graduate in a meritocratic environment. It may also require some special help along the way to keep these students from failing courses or having to leave the university before they graduate, thus destroying the whole value of the enterprise.

To show you how complicated this can be, in the United States we have encountered the problem of what we call underperformance. Minority students in the United States, and by that I mean students who are Hispanic Americans or students who are African Americans, do not simply enter with lower grades and lower test scores. Most of them perform below what those grades and test scores would predict. We do not really understand why, and we are only now recognising the problem and trying to find ways to understand it and eventually to deal with it. Unless we solve it we will not fully achieve the goals we set out to achieve by creating a diverse student body.

The further challenge, of course, is to help all students learn to live in a diverse student body and to benefit from it. Diversity can certainly enrich education. It can teach students to be more tolerant, it can teach them to appreciate differences in culture and customs and outlook on life and it can teach them ultimately to adapt more easily to a globalised, cosmopolitan world. All this does not come automatically, however. There is nothing that will prevent students, once admitted, from following a natural human tendency to congregate with students like themselves and to live rather separate lives in which they do not learn to appreciate the value of the rich diversity around them.

At my own university, we try to solve this problem by insisting that diversity permeate the entire undergraduate experience. The students live together in our residence halls, they participate in all extracurricular activities on a diverse basis and their social life is organised in diverse ways. Of course, that is easy to do in the residential universities like mine because such universities do not merely organise the academic life but the social life and the extracurricular life as well. In that environment, one can make sure that diversity is part of the everyday life of every student. It is much more difficult where students do not live on campus but come to take classes and then depart. Under these conditions, you may have to rely more on courses that try to take the values of diversity and teach them in some way that will register with students. Some colleges are now requiring courses on diversity and there are evaluations that suggest they are effective if they are properly done

and do not degenerate into some kind of ideological rant but really try to explore diversity along with its problems in a thoughtful way. That is not easy to do but, if done well, it does have a real effect in building tolerance and understanding. Even so, I suspect that you cannot teach students to appreciate other races and classes by books alone. Somehow, you have to find ways to complement whatever you do in class by having students work and study together as well.

The task of building diversity and making the most of it through the entire experience at the university is a very difficult problem. You have to model diversity for your students by building it into your staff and into your faculty. If you do not do that, it will not be credible; if institutions do not even bother to have a diverse staff they cannot expect their students to really believe in diversity. You need to be sensitive to the special needs of different groups but not compromise proper standards out of some misguided desire to be nice or to be understanding; otherwise you lose the respect of all students.

There are many obstacles along the way to greater tolerance and understanding. In my case, I started on this enterprise over 40 years ago as a very young law professor. We recognised then, at a time when law had become a vital part of the struggle by African Americans to overcome a legacy of slavery, that although law was essential to that struggle, there were practically no African-American students in the leading law schools of the country. We started to do something about it. Since that time, I have been picketed, I have been burned in effigy, I have had my offices occupied by angry students and had my name vilified – sometimes with good cause, sometimes not – in student newspapers, but I have also watched my law school change from having practically no minority students at all to seeing African-American graduates heading major corporations in society, sitting as judges in the courts throughout the land and becoming senators and members of Congress in our national legislature. Barack Obama and his wife Michelle are both graduates of that law school and Barack Obama, of course, has become the first African-American President of the United States. So, with all of our problems along the way and all the difficulties that I have seen, no experience that I have had in 50 years in higher education has brought me greater satisfaction than the ongoing struggle to create real diversity and make of it not a problem but an opportunity for the enrichment of the educational process.

Let me move to my second question. If universities are the gateway to leadership in our society and in our professions, it is important to educate our students to be responsible civic leaders and not merely competent professionals. What does that entail? Certainly, it means more than just the skills and the knowledge to be successful in the professions. As educators, we have to help students recognise larger responsibilities to the community, and that is a problem that is harder than it used to be. Society is more fragmented, and diversity, for all its benefits, weakens the common bonds that build solidarity. Moreover, students today are more preoccupied with making money, more suspicious of authority and more cynical towards our government than they used to be. In spite of all that, we have to prepare them to be ethically sensitive, civically engaged graduates.

Part of the task is to help students understand the problems of society and recognise the ethical issues they will face. But knowledge is not enough by itself. We have to encourage a quality of empathy for the problems of society and those who suffer from them. We have to develop a commitment to live by ethical and civic principles and to engage actively in civic life. How well are universities in my country succeeding in preparing this kind of leadership? Not well enough. Instead, faculty in the United States often assume that a good liberal education is enough by itself to prepare students for citizenship and for civic and ethical responsibility. Alas, that is clearly not the case.

Over half of American college students do not take the courses that are essential to their future role as citizens. Does not every informed citizen need instruction in economics, political science and political philosophy? Fewer than half of our undergraduates take such courses. Fewer still study ethics and moral reasoning, particularly as they apply to the kinds of problems they will encounter as professionals and as citizens. In fact, there is recent research in the United States that shows that some popular courses of study – in which I would include business, engineering, and science – actually weaken civic responsibility. The more courses students take in these subjects, the less likely they are to vote and the less likely they are to participate actively in civic life. I suspect that this research is virtually unknown to professors in American universities.

There is one bright spot in what has been going on and that is the recent growth of community service. We now have students working in homeless shelters and old age homes or tutoring poor children. Through this engagement students encounter many of the more urgent problems of society. Most high schools also provide such opportunities and many of them actually require some community service before students can graduate. In many colleges, including my own, two thirds or more of the students, by the time they graduate, will have participated in some serious work of community service. In most of the professional schools as well, there are opportunities for law students to represent poor clients in various kinds of legal proceedings, for medical students to spend time in impoverished communities, for education students to teach in inner-city schools. This is a great step forward. It not only helps to bring talented young people to address neglected problems of society, it also exposes them to problems and awakens their empathy and concern as no lecturers or textbooks could possibly do. But one must build on these experiences and help students understand the larger weaknesses of public policy and the shortcomings of the professions that help to create and perpetuate the problems that they are encountering in their service activities. They have to recognise what is wrong with a health care system that is the most expensive in the world but leaves 47 million Americans without health insurance, a legal system that is again the most expensive in the world but often leaves poor and middle-class families without adequate legal representation that they can afford, or a business sector that pays its chief executives enormous sums even when companies fail in international competition or engage in reckless or irresponsible ventures.

One reason for those problems is that professional schools in the past have not prepared their students to deal with them or even to recognise and think about them constructively. Accepting that kind of responsibility requires knowledge acquired through study. You cannot do it through community service alone. It is wonderful to have students working in homeless shelters, but they must also understand why homelessness exists in the wealthiest country in the world. Of course, this does not just happen in the United States. Every time someone comes up and begs for money, there is a social problem lurking that requires creative solutions. Our students will either participate in finding a solution or ignore the problem, as the case may be. If we are honest, we should acknowledge that we have a great deal to do if we mean to prepare our students to make the right choices to give effective leadership in society and the professions.

The problems I have mentioned – and I now get to my third question – represent new challenges. My thesis is that it will not be enough to meet these challenges simply by adding new courses, which is the way our universities typically adjust to new problems and new topics. We have to change our attitude towards education and even change the ways in which we teach. Teaching a diverse student body requires more than simply giving lectures, however polished those lectures may be. We need to discover how to help students from poor families surmount their initial handicaps and how to help minorities perform up to their capabilities. That demands more than just conveying information. Teaching ethical awareness and moral reasoning or developing intercultural understanding and building civic responsibility are not only important; they are much harder than the tasks that we have traditionally set out to achieve in higher education.

If we are going to meet those demands, we have to begin by acknowledging some hard truths about the way in which we currently function. Let me try to illustrate that by looking again at universities in the United States. Compared with other successful organisations, American universities are very conservative in the way in which they educate students. What do I mean by that? To begin with, professors are not trained as educators. Their graduate training does not tell them anything about how students learn, about how advances in cognitive science have changed the way people think about how students learn and why they do not learn, about the relative effectiveness of different methods of instruction, or about the history and the development of the curriculum in the United States. Rather, the preparation of graduate students focuses on research. The prevailing assumption is that if doctoral students acquire sufficient knowledge about their subject, they can learn to teach by themselves.

This assumption, of course, has consequences. Lacking real preparation as educators, young professors do what any of us would do; they emulate whoever they remember as the best teachers they had themselves. That is a very sensible strategy under the circumstances, but what it means is that teaching today is very much like it was 50 years ago when I went to college. There are a few technological flourishes – material is put online and there are PowerPoint presentations – but 75% of undergraduate teaching is still done by the lecture method very much as it was

when I went to college. And it is no wonder that we see no problem in that, because we have not made a practice of evaluating how much our students are learning.

If you do not know how much your students are learning, if you do not know how well your methods of instruction are succeeding, you do not see any reason to change your teaching. Since neither the professors nor the universities have spent a great deal of time experimenting with new methods of teaching, they are largely unaware that new methods might be needed. Yet, unless we begin to take teaching and learning more seriously, unless we look more carefully at what our students are actually learning, we have very little chance, I think, of meeting the new challenges that I have discussed in this article: helping students become more understanding of social and cultural differences, more civically minded and more ethically aware.

How can we help our faculties to do better? What is our responsibility as leaders? In my view, it is to try to prepare our faculty to adapt creatively to the new problems that their position in society has thrust upon them. Our professors are not going to change their attitudes towards teaching and learning by themselves. It is not that they do not care. They *do* care. Most of the professors I have met in my life, and they are my closest friends, sincerely want the best for their students, but they do not, however, recognise the problem they are facing. In the United States, and I suspect the same is true in Europe, we have discovered that well over 90% of American college professors believe that they are above-average teachers. There is nothing that compels them to think otherwise and to recognise that they might need some improvement, some creative experimentation, some new methods. If they see any problem in teaching, it is simply that professors tend to spend a bit too much time with their research and not enough in organising and preparing their classes. That is *not* the most important problem, however. What we need is not more time spent polishing lectures and improving the way they are organised and presented. We need new and better ways of teaching that will help meet a more difficult set of educational responsibilities.

More than anything else, we need to develop a culture in universities of continuously evaluating how much our students are learning, discovering where they need to do better and then experimenting with new methods that will meet the weaknesses that we have identified. In that way we can gradually improve in the only way human beings ever improve – through a process of conscious and enlightened trial and error.

Academic leaders have a critical role to play in helping to achieve that goal. Rectors and presidents cannot command professors to teach differently, and they cannot teach the courses themselves. What they *can* do is to try to help their faculty understand what the real problems are. That is the classic responsibility of leaders in any organisation. Professors are certainly conscientious enough and concerned enough about their students to respond when they are convinced that genuine problems exist. But they are not going to be convinced without good evidence, and they should not be. To persuade them, we must first ascertain how much our students are learning and how much they are progressing towards goals that we want them to reach.

It is not possible to do this perfectly, of course. Some forms of learning cannot be measured, but a lot of important goals in education *can* be measured so that we can find out where our weaknesses lie. We can measure how much progress has been made in learning mathematics or statistics or other forms of quantitative reasoning. We can provide pretty good evaluations of how much students are improving in critical thinking, which 95% of American college professors say is the most important objective in undergraduate education. We can certainly measure progress in foreign languages or in writing ability. We can test pretty well whether one method of teaching works better than others, and we can certainly know very clearly whether particular groups of students are performing below their potential.

Once you try to find out these things through careful methods of evaluation, the next and more difficult step, of course, is to convey the results to the faculty and let them see where the weaknesses exist. That has to be done with great diplomatic skill. Professors like what they are doing; they are very pleased with the lives they are leading and they will not want to change those lives and to take the trouble to experiment with new methods unless they are presented with good reasons for doing so. As a leader, you will encounter plenty of scepticism from colleagues who will claim that it is impossible to measure the intangibles of what we are teaching to students. Many faculty members will argue that methods of evaluation you are using are defective. Still, I am convinced from personal experience that they will respond when they see the problems carefully explored and documented. Faculty care about their students, they respect good evidence and they respond to good evidence in all of the research they do. Once they are persuaded that many students are not learning as much as they thought they were or not performing up to their abilities, faculty will want to do something about it and to improve matters. With encouragement and modest funding from a generous administration, they will begin to experiment with ways of doing better and there will be a period of creativity and change to overcome the weaknesses identified.

In this way, we can gradually begin to build the culture of continuous self-examination and improvement that every well-run organisation ought to achieve. In saying this, I do not mean to underestimate the difficulty of the task. The problems I have outlined are very difficult, and yet in the end, although I am critical about current practices, I am very optimistic about the future. It is exciting that our institutions have assumed such an important role, a more important role than ever before. It is exciting to know that what we do, and how well we do it, really matter to the success of our country. And if it is true that the challenges are very difficult, it is also true that they are certainly not impossible. If we meet them successfully, I am convinced that the next 20 years will be one of the great creative periods in the history of higher education. Just to share in such an accomplishment in our own institutions, at such a critical time, will certainly be no ordinary triumph and bring no ordinary satisfaction. In short, this is a great undertaking that we are embarked upon. I have pretty well done what I can do along these lines, but I am delighted to see new leaders and new generations take up the torch. I wish them every success in

that endeavour and in the ultimate success of these glorious universities, which represent the finest ornaments of our civilisation and can become the finest exemplars of progress in the future.