Looming Challenges: Beyond Our Borders

Bryan Alexander and Mark Rush
(Alphabetically, Spiritually, etc.)
Quick Bio/BG

• Mark Rush: Stanley D. and Nikki Waxberg Professor of Politics and Law; occasional dean

• Bryan Alexander: recovering professor of English lit; consulting futurist
Main points

• Our international expansion is running into profound issues for liberal education and democracy

• American liberal education is deeply *not* about access

• Is technology democratizing or illiberal?
Big questions

• Should liberal arts institutions expand their overseas campus presence?

• Are we ready to risk expanding access?

• Will MOOCs grow into a major piece of higher education, because of demand?

• Will foreign institutions start competing with US colleges and universities?
Premise

• Contemporary U.S. discussion about role of liberal education, challenges from online and MOOCs is narrowly focused on USA.

• Internationalization poses additional challenges beyond the tension, as described in *A Crucible Moment* as a:
  • “zero-sum choice between the fullest preparation for economic success and education for citizenship”. (CM 10)
Liberal Education and Liberal Democracy

- Liberal Education is intimately connected with liberal democratic citizenship.


- University as a training ground for civic engagement.
Domestic challenge 1: substance of Lib. Ed.

It is time to bring two national priorities—career preparation and increased access and completion rates—together in a more comprehensive vision with a third national priority: fostering informed, engaged, responsible citizens

*(Crucible Moment 13, bold in original; italics added)*
Domestic Challenge 2: Form

Of technology and scale: online/MOOC v. large classroom v. small classroom

(image by Alan Levine)
Domestic Challenge 3:

Democratization of Access

v.

Selectivity of Admissions
Daphne Koller: Democratization of Education

- [http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_koller_what_we_re_learning_from_online_education.html?%a0%c2%a0It](http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_koller_what_we_re_learning_from_online_education.html?%a0%c2%a0It)

- At 1:10 – 1:44
• Tech is a democratizing trend (democracy is good)
• Liberal Education is premised on instrumental and foundational relationship with liberal democracy (liberalism is good)
• Democratizing tech is cast as antithetical to liberal education (democracy is bad(?))
Thus: The Current Crisis in Liberal Education
Has the battle for Middle Earth begun?


Or is it just…
Democracy?

Wendell Smith

• “Nothing was killing Negro baseball but Democracy.”

• Democratization of educational access v. selectivity(?)
The domestic front

• Propagation of liberal democratic values through selective channels for the few

or

• Propagation of those values AND quality thought and education through less selective/more democratic channels for the many.
Pause
Moving beyond Middle Earth…

http://www.johnstoncc.edu/globaleducation.aspx

We are not alone.
American Liberal Ed in the Global Context

- We perceive an additional challenge:
- What if liberal education leaves the confines of liberal democracy?
- Besides challenges at home from democratizing impulses, liberal ed faces challenges from abroad from undemocratic or illiberal impulses
Competing World Views

Francis Fukuyama
THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN

Fareed Zakaria
THE POST-AMERICAN WORLD
Freedom in the World

- Percentage of the World’s population in countries that are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Free</th>
<th>Partially Free</th>
<th>Not Free</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>21.71%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
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- Note: increase in free countries came largely from partially free countries
Political Shifts away from Liberalism?

- Zakaria: Rise of Illiberal Democracies
- Law and Verstaag: Declining Influence of US Constitution abroad
- What if the People don’t want Democracy?”
- http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/201222086791170.html
Accreditation trends

- **U.S. Accredited universities in countries that are Free, Partially Free, not Free:**

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Free</th>
<th>Partially Free</th>
<th>Not Free</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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Innocents Abroad?

• Freedom House Rankings of Countries hosting U.S. University Branch Campuses (open as of 2012)


<table>
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<tr>
<th>Freedom House Rating 2013</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>NOT FREE</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>79.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARTIALLY FREE</td>
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<td>20.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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Challenge or Opportunity?

• We are increasingly accrediting, expanding into unfree/partially free countries. Did this change us?
• Back to basics: why go abroad?
  • “Diversity and Income”
One more reason

Domestic Enrollments
Impact Abroad

• Liberal Arts under Siege?
  • UAE arrest of scholars:

• Liberal Arts Ascendant?
  • Chronicle article on Doha welcoming U.S. Scholars:
Or simply competing?

• Ian Gow, principal and chief executive of the Sino-British College in Shanghai and former provost of the University of Nottingham’s campus in Ningbo. “The assumption is that you can only be a great educational and research power if you do it the American way. I think you could be proved very wrong and it may be too late when you find out,” he says.”

• http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/features/feature-china-on-the-fast-track/2009923.article
| Pause |  |
Enrolled in Prof. Koller’s Soc 101

Screen capture from http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_koller_what_we_re_learning_from_online_education.html?%a0%c2%a0It, 12:40)
Impact at Home

• Democracy for you but not for me: CHE story re: Saudis’ rejection of online courses.


• Online learning is global, not national
1. Can our current, selective model serve the coming generations of young people between Casablanca and Shanghai?

2. Will online/blended/MOOCs become modalities of necessity if not of choice?
   • E.g., Maldives development of online ed due to geographic constraints.
Liberal Education in an Illiberal World

• The Observer effect: will Liberal Education succeed where liberal democracy is struggling?
• Or will Liberal Education change as a result of its forays into less liberal parts of the world?
Find us

• Mark: RushM@wlu.edu
• Bryan: bryan.alexander@gmail.com