

Chapter 4

Administrative Challenges

ABSTRACT

Business led the e-learning development in the 1990s, capturing the market. Public universities watched and wrote papers. It took 15 years for the non-profits to recapture the market. The next online market is global. Borderless online degrees are needed in Africa, Asia, and South America to supply industry with skilled workers. The problem is that many of the countries cannot afford to build the campuses that will be required. One solution is low-cost borderless online degrees that quality graduates for jobs in industry and further education. The degrees generate income for the providers. The degrees also provide a public benefit for the receiving nations that cannot meet the educational demand. This chapter discusses the administrative approaches that will be used to infuse a business mentality within public education without destroying the sense of public service.

INTRODUCTION

Borderless online degrees are an inexpensive means to deliver training anywhere in the world. In the discussion of borderless online degrees, it is important to realize who are the current online market leaders and how much of the current student distance learning market is international. The fact is that public institutions in the United States enroll 70% of all online learners, but that 98.5% of all the online students reside within the United States (Seaman, Allen, & Seaman, 2018). The borderless online degree market has yet to begin.

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Borderless online degrees are needed to assist nations otherwise unable to educate rapidly growing populations. Countries with weak economies cannot fund the campuses that will be needed. Borderless degrees have another advantage, flexibility. Students to select from the type of education that meets their needs. Brick-and-mortar universities cannot afford to provide such range of programs.

Borderless online degrees also benefit the providers because online delivery is more profitable and scalable compared to face-to-face delivery. Campuses are unnecessary. Instead, when educational demand increases, online providers add more teachers. There is no need to add seats because students bring their own chairs. A decade ago, global economics still seemed a distant aberration. Today, mass postsecondary education has become an inter-continental requirement for economic, social, and political success.

In the past, public postsecondary institutions did not need to consider new markets. Enrollment was increasing, governmental funding was sufficient, and institutions had protected markets. That security no longer exists. Community-college and public university administrators work in an era of reduced funding, declining enrollment, and growing competition. Basken (2019, February 7) reported that even the international student market is not immune. International enrollment has dropped 4% with first-time enrollment declining by 1% (Kennedy, 2018).

Laissez-faire is the new global reality for higher education. The closure of Green Mountain College in Vermont signaled that even quality institutions with niche markets are not safe (Green Mountain College, 2019). Deming, Lovenheim, and Patterson (2016) proposed that schools add online courses to expand their market size. The international borderless-online-degree market will a free market without boundaries. There are three reasons. First, online education is not an import needing entry approval. Students enroll in the home country of the online provider but do not visas. As a result, borderless degree providers are not subject to local control. Nations may attempt to block borderless degree web sites but that will be difficult, in part because there will be so many.

Borderless-online degrees will be viewed by many countries as a benefit since they increase educational access that the country cannot provide. In-country access to higher education reduces the need to study and to work abroad. As the economy strengthens, workers can return home, Countries will less likely to block borderless competition because they too can offer borderless degrees that will generate income.

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