

Universitas 21
Deans of Education
Meeting 5 in San Diego
(prior to the Annual Meeting of the American
Educational Research Association – AERA)

Sunday, April 11, 2004
2 to 6 pm

VENUE: Bayview Meeting Room, Hilton Hotel
401 K Street, San Diego

Participants

David Clarke – University of Melbourne (convenor)
Walt Heinecke – Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Roger Slee – McGill University, Montreal
Anthony Paré – McGill University, Montreal
Hirek Kwiatkowski – Glasgow University
Alastair McPhee – Glasgow University
Robyn Gillies – University of Queensland
Karen Wixson – University of Michigan
Do Coyle – Nottingham University
Paul Chandler – University of New South Wales
Rob Tierney – University of British Columbia, Vancouver
Wong Kam-Cheung – University of Hong Kong

Apologies received from Viviane Robinson, Judy Parr and Helen Timperley (Auckland), Carolyn Callahan (Virginia), Lennart Svensson (Lund), Pamela Munn and Jim O'Brien (Edinburgh), Mark Bray (Hong Kong) and Adrian Ashman (Queensland).

Report

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. Brief Reflections on the Past Year**

David Clarke outlined the history of the U21 Education group for those who had not attended any of the previous four meetings, and reviewed the activities of the group since the last meeting in 2003, including:

- The establishment by Jim O'Brien at Edinburgh of an affiliation between the U21 group and the European Educational Research Association and the

possibility of a U21 symposium on the program of the annual conference of EERA (ECER)

- The publication in the December issue, 2003, of *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education and Development* of a subset of the papers on International Issues in Teacher Education, originally presented as a symposium at the 2002 meeting of AERA
- The acceptance of a U21 symposium on Teacher Professionalism for inclusion in the 2004 AERA conference program with involvement from Australia, Canada, the UK, Hong Kong and the USA.
- Continuing correspondence in relation to Professional Portability, since the tabling of Bart McGettrick's draft report at the last meeting of this group.

3. Professional Portability Agreement

The remainder of the meeting was entirely taken up with the discussion of Professional Portability.

Rob Tierney provided a very comprehensive overview of the Portability issue and tabled the paper "The portability of teaching credentials: An overview of some issues, agreements and practices."

Among the items addressed during this discussion:

- Various participants in the meeting shared details of the professional portability situation in relation to the recognition of teaching qualifications in Canada, Scotland, England, and the USA.
- A distinction was made between mobility and portability – in Canada, mobile teachers moving between Provinces are routinely required to take additional courses for local accreditation
- Canada continues to move towards national accreditation
- It was suggested that the criteria for portability of professional credentials should be not what was the course completed, but how were the graduates assessed
- Exchange programs between U21 institutions was suggested as a strategy towards portability

Hirek Kwiatkowski contrasted the ethos of the General Teaching Council for Scotland in recognizing teaching credentials with that of the Exceptional Admissions to the Register committee of the Council. He suggested that the agenda of the Council was an exclusive one, while that of the second was inclusive.

Do Coyle reported the increasing significance of nationally-driven regulated teaching standards in the UK.

K-C Wong reported on difficulties of teacher transfer between China and Hong Kong.

David Clarke reminded the group of the need to distinguish three levels of portability (identified at the previous meeting):

1. Mobility within teacher education programs
2. Access to postgraduate programs

3. Portability for professional practice

The group re-affirmed the feeling of the previous meeting that action on levels 1 and 2 was entirely practicable, but that level 3 was substantially more challenging and would require careful liaison with local accrediting agencies.

A need was identified for baseline data, including:

- Patterns of Portability for each country
- Attitudes to Portability within the profession in each country
- Procedures for Portability operating within each country
- Documentation of “Exceptions to the rule” (i.e. success stories, such as the Canadian “Deans of Education Accord”)

Some key questions were identified:

- Why pursue portability agreements?
- What is the impact of professional portability on local institutions?
- What are the available models by which portability might be achieved?
- What are the relevant considerations: Teacher Knowledge, Experiences, Examinations, or Educational Programs?

Rob Tierney suggested that the U21 group produce a “values statement” on Professionalism. Such a statement would include:

- On-going professional development of teachers
- Teacher professional development and internationalization
- Issues of standardization and distinctiveness (avoiding minimizing variability)
- Conceiving the profession internationally as together rather than as in competition (attention was drawn to the United Nations Joint Declaration on Higher Education – quoted in the paper tabled by Tierney)
- Benchmarking and international comparisons
- Issues that threaten teacher professionalism

Walt Heinecke suggested a series of initiatives that might be taken by the U21 Education group:

- Clarification of local issues
- Bringing together those involved in practice from around the world to provide input into the group’s deliberations on professional portability
- Establish a better understanding of what is good teacher practice and integrate portability as a component of better professional practice
- Distinguish the portability agenda from moves to commercialise education
- Establish the legitimacy of Context-driven comparisons based on Context-driven definitions of competence
- Widen the group of stakeholders in the issue of professional portability

Robyn Gillies reasserted the need for baseline data and raised the issue of benchmarking professional outcomes. Alastair McPhee connected this point to the question “What makes a good teacher?” and suggested that position papers from the U21 group could act as antidote to the functionalism presently dominating teacher education in the UK.

It was suggested the U21 Group should undertake collaborative research into issues related to Professional Portability. Discussion then centered on what would be a focal research question. Salient issues included: Focus on outcomes rather than content and on what constitutes teaching competence.

Do Coyle commented that what was needed was a research question likely to have tangible outcomes, and that Professional Portability was a rich enough research topic to sustain collaborative research between U21 institutions.

Paul Chandler stressed the need for the forum to have a clear focus (or foci) and to involve practitioners, and suggested that the forum have a formal conference structure with reviewed papers.

Roger Slee connected the establishment of a research agenda with the earlier proposal for a U21 Values Statement in relation to Professional Portability and noted that such a values statement would need to be research-based.

Proposal 1.

That an international research forum be convened by the U21 group focusing on research into Professional Portability and related matters. The Forum should be of two days duration with a formal conference structure including reviewed papers.

It was stressed by several participants that the Forum should be a Working Conference with discussion around several related themes. The identification of these themes was the subject of discussion.

David Clarke suggested that each participating U21 institution should convene a local forum for the purpose of identifying salient themes. This was generally endorsed and Anthony Paré made the point that in that way values would be emergent from the forum rather than centrally determined. In particular, consideration of salient themes at a local level would assist in identifying “What makes portability possible and what hinders it?” (Paré)

Hirek Kwiatkowski suggested that a section of the UNESCO statement, quoted on page 14 of the Tierney paper, could serve as a catalyst for such a local forum.

The mission of higher education is to contribute to sustainable development and improvement of society as a whole by educating highly qualified graduates able to meet the needs of all sectors of human activity; advancing, creating and disseminating knowledge through research; interpreting, preserving and promoting cultures in the context of cultural pluralism and diversity; providing opportunities for higher learning throughout life; contributing to the development and improvement of education at all levels; and protecting and enhancing civil society by training young people in the values which form the basis of democratic citizenship and by providing critical and detached perspectives in the discussion of strategic choices facing societies (taken

from UNESCO's *1998 World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action*).

It was felt by the meeting that it should be possible to translate this statement and these questions into research questions at the local level.

It was suggested that the procedure for each local forum would be:

- (i) Look at the UNESCO statement and interpret its contents in terms of teacher education and, by implication, professional portability (this could be posed as a preparatory task)
- (ii) Construct a research agenda drawing on the interpreted statement as appropriate (what has been done, is being done, and should be done)

Reports of the outcomes of the Local Forum for each participating U21 institution would be collated and used to frame the agenda for the proposed U21 International Research Forum (Proposal 1, above).

Hirek proposed the question: "What is happening (internationally) to give meaning and practical reality to this statement?" "What is the extent to which this is and is not being enabled?"

Karen Wixson pointed out that the US involvement in U21 now only consisted of the University of Virginia, but that the School of Education at the University of Michigan would be happy to be involved in the proposed Research Forum and that it would be useful to involve the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE). Karen offered to mediate between the U21 group and AACTE.

Walt Heinecke suggested involving the international counterparts to the AACTE.

The group reasserted the need to establish what research has been conducted internationally on teacher professionalism and the value-addedness of teacher education.

In Summary - The following Plan of Action was proposed:

1. Taking the above statement as a catalyst for discussion, a local forum would be convened by each participating U21 School or Faculty of Education, at which the UNESCO statement would be interpreted in terms of Teacher Education. Each local forum would address the question: "To what extent is this agenda (the Teacher Education analogue of the UNESCO statement) being enabled or not enabled?" The local forum would address the additional question: "If you were to accept the premises of this statement, what research would entail?" and "What research has already been done?"
2. Such a Local Research Forum would be convened by each institution by June 30 and a report provided from each meeting. These reports would form the basis for planning the proposed Universitas 21 Research Forum.

The Organising Committee responsible for the agenda of the Forum is yet to be identified.

Proposal 2.

As an additional initiative, it was suggested that a working group be established to address the question: “Is there evidence for the value-addedness of teacher education?”

[Editorial addition (DC): Action on Professional Portability levels 1 and 2 (student exchange within teacher education courses, and admission of graduates from one institution into the higher degree programs of another institution), was identified earlier as more immediately do-able than level 3. Arrangements in relation to these forms of portability, should be established on a case-by-case basis between pairs of institutions in the first instance. Any Level 1 exchange in which students of one institution (eg Melbourne) participated in classes and particularly in the school practicum program of another institution (eg UBC) would strengthen any subsequent proposal for Level 3 professional portability between the two countries.]

4. Future Meetings

It was agreed that David Clarke would contact Jim O’Brien regarding the possibility of the U21 Education group meeting at the ECER in September, and also regarding the possibility of offering a symposium on the program of that conference. [Subsequently, Jim agreed to pursue both matters with the EERA and to act as convener of any U21 meeting at ECER].

Meeting closed at 6pm