

Millennium

## The Glion Declaration

"To the university: a call to imaginative boldness and responsible freedom."

"Creating new intellectual alliances within the university and new partnerships outside it."

"We call on our colleagues in the universities to recognize their unique responsibilities and opportunities to the world and the larger global society."

## The University at the Millennium

"Providing new structure, flexible career paths and selective support"

"at its worst, it is seen as an archetype of bureaucratic bumbling and learned inefficiency"

"Developing new patterns of governance, leadership and management that promote effective learning, creative scholarship and responsible service."

"For 900 years of the present Millennium, the university..."

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## Preface

*The industrial countries of the West have much in common in defining and meeting the great challenges facing their Higher Education systems in the new millennium. Recognizing this, a small group of Western Europeans and Americans, long closely associated with Higher Education, arranged for a Colloquium to examine these challenges in depth and to propose promising initiatives for meeting them. Toward this end, a group of ten Europeans and ten Americans met in Glion, Switzerland during May 13-17, 1998.*

*At the request of the members of the "Glion Colloquium", Professor Frank H. T. Rhodes, President Emeritus, Cornell University, gave expression to the collective views of the participants in the form of this Declaration. The participants are grateful to him for his sensitive and eloquent summary, the first draft of which was circulated to all participants, who then contributed editorial comments and suggestions.*

*While the principal focus is on research intensive universities in Europe and North America, significant portions of the Declaration also speak to the colleges and other institutions of Higher Education in both Europe and North America, e.g., information technologies, new patterns of governance, leadership and management, and issues of accountability.*

*We thank the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Swiss Science Agency, the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, the University of Geneva, the Swiss Rectors Conference and Swissair for their generous financial support. We are also indebted to the Association of European Universities in Geneva which kindly put Mrs. Mary O'Mahony, Deputy General Secretary, at our disposal for the full length of the Colloquium.*

*Werner Z. Hirsch  
University of California*

*Luc E. Weber  
University of Geneva*

## Participants and Signatories

- **Prof. Paolo BLASI**, Rector, University of Florence, Chairman of the Italian Rectors' Conference, Member of the Board, International Association of Universities
- **Prof. James J. DUDERSTADT**, University Professor of Engineering, President Emeritus of the University of Michigan
- **Prof. David P. GARDNER\***, President, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, President Emeritus of the University of California and of the University of Utah
- **Prof. Hans Van GINKEL**, Under-Secretary-General and Rector of the United Nations University in Tokyo, Vice-President International Association of Universities and Association of European Universities
- **Prof. Werner Z. HIRSCH\***, Department of Economics, University of California at Los Angeles
- **Prof. Stanley O. IKENBERRY**, President of the American Council on Education, President Emeritus of the University of Illinois
- **Prof. Charles F. KENNEL\***, Director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and Vice-chancellor, University of California at San Diego
- **Dr Guy NEAVE**, Research Director of the International Association of Universities
- **Prof. Howard NEWBY**, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom
- **Prof. Jacob NUESCH\***, Member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, President Emeritus of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich
- **Mr. Peter PREUSS**, President, The Preuss Foundation and Regent of the University of California
- **Professor Frank H. T. RHODES**, President Emeritus of Cornell University
- **Mrs. Auriol STEVENS**, Editor of the "Times Higher Education Supplement"
- **Prof. Chang-Lin TIEN**, NEC Distinguished Professor of Engineering, Chancellor Emeritus of the University of California at Berkeley
- **Prof. Martin TROW**, Graduate School of Public Policy, University of California at Berkeley
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## The Glion Declaration: The University at the Millennium

The new millennium, into which we move and which our children will inherit, confronts us with a bewildering mixture of promise and threat. On the one hand, we glimpse the promise of revolutionary advances in biomedicine, communications, information technology, alternative energy sources, new materials, automation and globalization; on the other hand, we contemplate the looming threats of balkanization, tribalism, terrorism, sectarianism, north-south inequalities, hunger, the intricate balance between population, resources and environment, the challenge of sustainable development and the relationship of all these to the future of traditional nation-states. And, if the balance between promise and threat is unclear, what **is** clear is that the essential key — though not the only key — to human well-being in this daunting new world is knowledge.

Now knowledge is not a free-good; it is not a naturally-occurring resource. It is a personal discovery, an individual creation. It comes only to the prepared mind, coaxed into existence by personal reflection and inquiry, individual discovery, sophisticated research and costly exploration. And it can be received, understood, and applied only by the educated and informed individual. Those things on which the future of humankind will chiefly depend in the new millennium — education, personal skills, natural resources, effective capacities, sustainable communities, as well as wise leadership, informed choice, national discipline, sound policies, international agreements, the humane use of technology and the judicious and benevolent use of resources — will depend increasingly on knowledge: knowledge discovered, knowledge gained, knowledge tested, knowledge shared, knowledge applied. And these things, in turn, will require wisdom: the way in which knowledge is weighed and used.

Knowledge is the core-business of the university. In every aspect of its discovery, testing, dissemination and application, the universities of the world play a crucial role. In this role, they are not alone. They

are part of a great network of tertiary education; they depend on the work of schools and colleges; they are partners with professional associations, non-government organizations, industry, business, research institutes, hospitals, government agencies and international organizations; they share the concerns and contribute to the needs of their communities, regions and nations. But, beyond all these alliances and dependencies, vital as they are, the universities play a unique and crucial role. They are the chief agents of discovery, the major providers of basic research that underlies new technology and improved health care, they are the engines of economic growth, the custodians and transmitters of cultural heritage, the mentors of each new generation of entrants into every profession, the accreditors of competency and skills, the agents of personal understanding and societal transformation. In them, on a daily basis, the young and the old seek to bring wisdom, insight and skills to bear in the daunting complexities of human affairs.

The university is one of the greatest inventions of the present millennium: although created more than nine centuries ago, it remains one of the glories of human aspiration and one of the triumphs of the power of imagination. We, as members of its community of learning, challenge it to play a transforming role in society, and thus to transform itself.

## **To the university:**

### **a call to imaginative boldness and responsible freedom**

#### **Universities are learning communities,**

created and supported because of the need of students to learn, the benefit to scholars of intellectual community, and the importance to society of new knowledge, educated leaders, informed citizens, expert professional skills and training, and individual certification and accreditation. Those functions remain distinctive, essential contributions to society; they form the basis of an unwritten social compact, by which, in exchange for the effective and responsible provision of those services, the public supports the university, contributes to its finance, accepts its professional judgment and scholarly certification, and grants

it a unique degree of institutional autonomy and scholarly freedom. Within this compact, the university has a reciprocal obligation for impartial scholarship, the highest professional competence and integrity, the cultivation of advanced knowledge and a love of learning among its students, and a sensitivity towards the need for its services in society at large.

### **The situation confronting all nations**

— both industrialized and developing — now requires, as never before an informed citizenry, an educated workforce, skilled in handling changing and increasingly sophisticated tasks, and this, in turn, requires not only achieving an optimum level in student enrollment, but also the means of providing and pursuing life-long learning. At the very time of these new demands, the universities are experiencing severe financial constraints, with increasing competition for scarce public funds for other pressing public needs. Yet these other social needs demand, in turn, a renewed public investment in higher education, as the need increases for creative solutions to social problems, sustainable development and the expansion of skilled professional services. Wise political leadership will be required to sustain long-term investment in learning, without which social advancement is an empty dream.

### **We call on our colleagues in the universities**

**to recognize their unique responsibilities and opportunities to their communities, regions and the larger global society by :**

#### **Their affirmation that teaching is a moral vocation,**

involving not just the transfer of technical information, however sophisticated, but also the balanced development of the whole person. That will mean an emphasis on the development of a creative learning environment — rather than relying solely on the traditional pattern of formal lecturing and “one-way” teaching — the cultivation of a student-centered and student-friendly atmosphere and the goal of producing not only highly skilled, but also broadly educated, self-motivated graduates, with a thirst for life-long learning, aware of their heritage, conscious of their civic obligations and ethically responsible in their professional careers.

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**Their affirmation that scholarship is a public trust.**

All members of the university community — young and old — are committed to learning, and to the discovery and exploration on which it is based. Scholarship, though it is rooted in individual insight and personal inquiry, is a cooperative venture, supported by public funds and private patrons as a social enterprise, because it enriches human understanding and contributes to human well-being. That public support presupposes the impartiality and independence of the scholar, and the integrity of the scholarship. Two opportunities — new alliances and the use of information technology — now offer the possibility of expanding the range and usefulness of scholarship and providing unprecedented benefits to society.

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**Creating new intellectual alliances within the university and new partnerships outside it.**

Traditional disciplines, with their deliberate concentration and abstraction, are powerful engines of scholarship but, for all their power, they impose self-created canons and constraints on broader inquiry. Strong departments, for all their benefits, may restrict the range and limit the scope of critical investigation. Strong disciplinary expertise will continue to be essential, but, wedded to the insights and skills of those from other disciplines and professions, it now offers unusual promise in confronting broader public issues.

Partnership with institutions, agencies and corporations beyond the campus can supplement and extend the skills of the academy. Scholars have been slow to apply their skills to pressing social issues, partly, one supposes, because of their complexity and intransigence; partly, perhaps, because of a lack of both means and incentives to address them, and partly because the issues are often controversial and the risks of failure are high. But society needs the insight and expertise of the academy in all areas of great public concern. New alliances, new support and new incentives are needed to address them, just as the land grant university was created in response to the needs of mid-19th century America. These new alliances will not replace the norms and canons of traditional disciplines, but will be a powerful supplement to them.



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### **Employing new information technology (IT),**

which now allows the organization of these partnerships on a grand scale, whether locally-focussed, or globally-based. This new technology can now provide massive interdisciplinarity, and experiment and simulation of undreamed-of power. It is likely to transform every aspect of the university's activities, but if its capacities are to be fully employed in their learning, research and public service, universities will need to encourage flexibility, entrepreneurship, experiment and breadth within their organizational structures and among all their members.

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### **Recognizing public service**

as a major institutional obligation and providing the means and the incentives to pursue it. For all its independence and autonomy, essential as these are, the university has a social responsibility and a public obligation. It must use its autonomy, not as an excuse for isolation, indifference or advocacy, but as a means of making an independent contribution to society, providing an impartial voice and professional service to the public good.

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### **Providing new structures, flexible career paths and selective support**

for new patterns of creative inquiry, effective learning, and responsible public service. Universities have proved remarkably adaptive over the centuries in responding to new challenges and novel opportunities. Financial constraint will, however, require the future development of new initiatives more by substitution, than by addition; this will strain existing hierarchies and structures, require new patterns of appointment and employment and demand new methods of funding and support. Antiquated structures, cumbersome procedures and narrow, exclusive career tracks are likely to require substantial modification if universities are to make the most effective contribution to changing challenges and opportunities.

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### **Developing new patterns of governance, leadership and management**

that promote effective learning, creative scholarship and responsible service. Universities have prospered to the extent that they have

developed an effective and responsive pattern of shared governance, which has served them well. This has typically involved a three-fold pattern of public oversight and trusteeship, shared collegial internal governance and informed — and generally consensual but often short-term — administrative leadership. Though the particulars have varied with time and place, this overall three-fold pattern has proved both durable and effective, but it now shows signs of intense strain. Some public governing boards have become more politicized than has been historically true, asserting authority over areas once viewed as faculty prerogatives; government ministries and state agencies in some countries have engaged in micro-management of university affairs; faculty councils have sometimes used their powers to promote special interests, delay action, and prevent proposed reforms; administrative leadership has been seen as too weak in some institutions and unwisely assertive in others, while effective management is widely seen as the casualty of these competing interests, held hostage to indecision, compromise and overlapping jurisdiction. At its best, the contemporary university is seen as a model of effective participatory governance; at its worst, it is seen as an archetype of bureaucratic bumbling and learned inefficiency.

All universities need to work with their stakeholders to ensure the preservation of the benefits of collegial governance and openness with the achievement of excellence, responsiveness and effectiveness in all their various activities. This will require institutions to clarify and redefine jurisdiction and responsibility; it may also require rethinking and strengthening the role of the rector/chancellor/president and the terms of appointment to this office.

### **Accepting the obligation for accountability.**

It is the public, through direct state and federal payments, tax exemption, voluntary support, corporate contributions and private gifts — as well as fees for service — such as student tuition, housing charges and patient fees, for example — who sustain the university. To them, the university must be openly and appropriately accountable for the prudent use of its resources. This accountability requires, of course, the fullest level of professional financial reporting and independent professional auditing. What it does not mean, however, is accommodation to every political pressure, popular-demand, public interest, scholarly

fashion or social whim, whether from within or without. The university must be properly accountable for its "output"; the integrity of its scholarship, the quality of its professional standards, the impartiality of its judgments and the competence of its graduates. But, beyond those things, it must remain sturdily independent, yielding neither to internal activist interests, nor to external pressure, but changing deliberately, selectively and responsibly, in the light of public needs and changing knowledge. Anything less would make it truly unaccountable, as well as fundamentally compromising its essential function.

### **Affirming the ancient values**

upon which the academy is established. In a society of shifting goals and uncertain values, the university must stand for something more than accurate data and reliable information; more, even than useful knowledge and dependable standards. The university is the custodian, not only of knowledge, but also of the values on which that knowledge depends; not only of professional skills, but of the ethical obligations that underlie those professional skills; not only of scholarly inquiry, disciplined learning and broad understanding, but also of the means that make inquiry, learning and understanding possible. In its institutional life and its professional activities, the university must reaffirm that integrity is the requirement, excellence the standard, rationality the means, community the context, civility the attitude, openness the relationship and responsibility the obligation upon which its own existence and knowledge itself depend.

### **For 900 years of the present millennium,**

the university, as a community dedicated to those values has served society well. Its effectiveness in the new millennium will depend on its reaffirmation of those ancient values as it responds creatively to the new challenges and opportunities that confront it. This is the moment for both society and the university to reaffirm the social compact, on which the future of all our peoples will so largely depend, and for their leaders to work together towards the achievement of their common goals.