



Workshop

Academic Cooperation between Latin American and European Business Schools

November 4-7, 2009 – University of Guayaquil, Ecuador

The CLADEA and AVH associations, *the ESAN higher-learning institutions and Groupe Sup de Co Montpellier* are jointly organising a workshop at the University of Guayaquil, Ecuador, on November 4-7, 2009, to consider and work on conditions for in-depth academic cooperation between business schools in the EU member countries and those in Latin America. The objective of this 48-hour workshop, consisting of Latin American and European experts as well as deans and directors of international relations in Latin American and European universities, will be to consider and work on the following points:

I. Is there a Latin American student mobility strategy comparable to those we known in Europe, like Erasmus and Socrates. Is this something Latin America needs? Is this something needed within Latin America? Is this something Latin America needs in its relations with Europe? How can the European Socrates- or Erasmus-type model be used in Latin America as a model for a strategy similar to the European one: creation of combined student and teacher mobility spaces? Creation of a Latin American university space? Creation of Latin American standards in terms of professional qualification, diplomas and conditions for issuing diplomas? Search for compatibility with the major world systems (Anglo-Saxon world; Europe) What is the situation

A - among the Latin American countries?

B – between the Latin American states and the member countries of the European Union?

Unknown needs?

II. Is there a strategy in Latin American education ministries to facilitate international academic relations and exchanges in the area of business operation and management? How would such a strategy among the Latin American states be a factor for developing training in Latin American business management and research in these areas? (doctoral and post-doctoral studies). Improved service provided by universities to the Community through quality research and intellectual innovation. How would establishing interfaces with their European counterparts be useful for the international visibility of Latin American education in business and management?

III. A strategy assumes the resolution of legal, regulatory and practical issues

Cooperation between Latin America and Europe between a system of relatively standardised credits (European ECTS) and a great Latin American diversity: what measures can Latin American education ministries take among them to implement a system for assessing and allocating Latin American credits that would offer standardised readability and would facilitate the evaluation of programmes and examinations according to a standardised system comparable to the ECTS in Europe? Benchmarking with Socrates/Erasmus in Europe.

IV. The issue of methods of recognition and validation, as well as the transfer of credits obtained at a Latin American university to a European university, and vice-versa, must also be examined.

In this context, it is reasonable to question the relevance of a recognition-based system based on a credit-by-credit examination (level of credits, weight of credits by course time, number of credits per academic year, content that necessarily varies from one country to the other – which is a cumbersome and simplistic method) and to raise the possibility of validation methods based on overall evaluation of a degree path and its main aspects, validation then being functional (comparison of the diploma issued, the position of the diploma in the university system, the state of the student's progress on a degree path, etc. ... ?) This would involve replacing the credit-by-credit transfer, a cumbersome method, with a system of recognition between portions of the degree path. The differences would then be identified, evaluated, accepted and considered as so many internationally oriented electives. The identified and accepted differences that vary from partner to partner would then be a strength, an extension of the range offered and no longer a weakness that one is or is not resigned to.

V. How to establish parity between diplomas and, consequently, parity between degree paths while taking the differences into account? How to settle the matter of the articulation of the degree path over an unequal number of years (in the European system, the Bachelor's can be obtained after 3 or 4 years of study)? What is the place of dual diplomas?

VI. Can a task force be set up by CLADEA and also AVH to maintain the level of consideration and the work of explaining so as to examine proposals and arguments with public agencies and universities, to ensure protection of the validity of diplomas and compliance with university ethics?

The issue is knowing how these two units can be equipped with the methods and guidelines to manage the necessary cooperation and integrate diversity, i.e., how to make their differences an advantage rather than a weakness.

VII. Practical organisation of the Cladea workshop

Given the current situation, several configurations are possible and may be subject to modifications according to the needs and perspectives to be considered on a priority basis by each one.

This workshop may consist of several round tables. One would bring together 3 or 4 experts representing Latin American and European higher education ministries, for a 20 or 25-minute presentation followed by a debate, which would lay out the situation of the university systems of the countries involved, and the ministries' ambitions in terms of university policy in Latin America on the one hand and Europe on the other.

Another round table would consist of a meeting of Latin American and European deans for the purpose of sharing the practical experiences of these various university systems, their organisation, operation and evolution.. This presentation could also be used as a panel to examine needs in terms of international opening up and development.

Another round table would invite experts from the European Community speaking for about 30 minutes, followed by a one-hour debate, to explain the integration of Europe's university systems: What is the integration method? What are its basis, structure and development? What is its objective? What is European policy in terms of university cooperation, especially between Latin America and Europe?

Setting up technical workshops might also be considered, to explain the finer technical details of the system for recognition of the value of diplomas by ECTS credits: its operation, value, strengths and weaknesses.

Also, with an eye towards Latin America's adoption of a standardised diploma recognition system, what are the obstacles lifted by this standardisation?

Another workshop would be intended to measure the worthiness of a system for diploma recognition system using a credit system (ECTS-type) or a system for diploma recognition using the "degree path". This workshop could also evaluate the adaptability of the diploma recognition system by the degree path and the problems raised by its implementation in Latin America.

Finally, another workshop could work on the conditions for validating a dual diploma.

Of course this list is not exhaustive and remains open to suggestions from Cladea, which, on issues such as programmes, standards and credits, may take a different approach because of the political, social, technical and legal conditions that the various Latin American university systems depend on.

The success of this event depends on participation by bodies representing Latin America and the EU: your institution's participation would contribute substantially to our debates and their productivity.

Our institutions would be delighted to be able to count on your institution and of course are at your disposal to discuss your participation with you.

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