



Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University

for tomorrow

Port Elizabeth & George - South Africa

2016 **NMMU** Family Week Colloquium

Commercialisation & Commodification of Higher Education

Is neo-liberalism influencing collaboration?

Wednesday, 17 August 2016 - Bird Street Campus, Port Elizabeth



Introduction

Since neoliberalism came to dominate economic and development thinking in the 1980s, the mainstream thinking and planning in the higher education sector around the globe has been driven by neoliberalism. Higher education is often treated as a commodity that can be traded on the marketplace and sold to those who have money to pay for it.

Throughout the world, many higher education institutions see profits, market share and rankings as the main drivers of their management focus. Knowledge production and research have been heavily commodified and commercialised and are seen as capital and products instead of public goods. For many institutions, commercial gain is the key motivation for internationalisation, leading institutions into global expansion driven by profits. This is often at the expense of contextual relevance and quality.

Before the emergence of commercialisation and commodification, higher education space was limited and reserved primarily for the elites and well-off members of the middle class. Things started changing with massification of higher education, when universities expanded their capacity to be able to accommodate more students. In most cases, the cost of massification was not absorbed by governments but by the 'consumers.' Many universities around the world had no option but to increase/introduce student fees, commercialise and commodify their teaching and research and in this way expand their capacity.

The 2016 NMMU Family Week Colloquium will explore the following questions:

- Is neoliberalism influencing international collaboration in higher education? Is this influence good or bad?
- If commercial gain is the key motivation and/or driver of internationalisation and international collaboration, how does this

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influence the role and effectiveness of higher education in addressing global issues?

- In the age of neoliberal dominance, can we expect higher education institutions to think collectively about solving pressing global challenges, especially the challenges that do not necessarily affect [at present] the powerful?
- How can we bring the local and global together when many cannot afford to be part of the process? Will those who cannot afford simply be excluded?
- Are there alternatives to commodification and commercialisation of higher education?
- Can we find a way to balance the need to make [some] profit necessary to continue to provide quality education and research and collaborate across the world while ensuring that higher education remains a public good committed to finding solutions for complex global challenges facing all of us?

Programme

08:30 - 09:00 **Arrival, registration, tea/coffee**

09:00 - 09:10 Opening - Dr Nico Jooste

09:10 - 10:00 Commodification and the Changing Economics of Higher Education: Impacts on Consumer Costs, Access, the Academy and Internationalisation - Prof John Hudzik, Michigan State University, United States

10:00 - 11:00 Panel discussion on neoliberalism and its influence on higher education

Panellists:

- **Prof Margaret Cullen**, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Business School, South Africa
- **Prof Aziz Choudry**, Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University, Canada
- **Mr Ulrich Bauer**, University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrueck, Germany
- **Dr Savo Heleta**, Office for International Education, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa

11:00 - 11:20 **Tea/coffee break**

11:20 - 12:10 Theoretical Concerns in Internationalisation of Higher Education, Dr Sonja Knutson, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

12:10 - 13:30 **Lunch**

13:30 - 14:20 The Unique Origins of Provider Programmes in the United States, Mr Leo Van Cleve, California State University, United States

14:20 - 15:10 Commodification and Commercialization of Higher Education: The Influence on Internationalisation in the Developing World, Dr Nico Jooste, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa

15:10 - 15:30 **Tea/coffee break**

15:30 - 16:00 Summary, conclusion - Prof John Hudzik

17:00 Colloquium cheese and wine at the Bird Street Campus Art Gallery



Colloquium Abstracts

Commodification and the Changing Economics of Higher Education: *Impacts on Consumer Costs, Access, the Academy and Internationalisation*

Professor John Hudzik | Michigan State University, United States

To commodify or not to commodify: The answer is not simple. To commodify something is to think of it as having economic value to be traded or bought and sold. There are deep divisions of opinion whether some things should be treated as commodities - access to education being one. Among the criticisms of commodification is that it corrupts a higher good by assigning a commercial value to it - that is, what ought to be a non-commercial good becomes commercialized. The 20th century higher education 'social compact' saw government and society providing higher education with sufficient public funds to insulate it from having to offer services shaped by political and corporate influence. Companion concepts included seeking knowledge for its own sake, not for its commercial value; freedom to explore and express viewpoints; and liberal learning. However, there was political interference and corporate influence on higher education imbedded within the social compact.

This paper argues that there are three prime and interlinked factors giving rise to commodification in higher education. One is the global trend toward public disinvestment or at least inadequate investment in meeting growing demand for higher education spaces and inflationary cost increases. The second is a global march toward massification of higher education participation and to a somewhat lesser extent its internationalisation. The third is the spread of neoliberal political and economic philosophy touting the virtues of market mechanisms applied to higher education. The three factors are powerful realities that cannot be easily dismissed by simply calling attention to their challenge to core and traditional higher education practices and values.

Theoretical Concerns in Internationalisation of Higher Education

Dr Sanja Knutson | Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

While the definitions of internationalisation of higher education attempt to distil internationalisation to its basic function, they do not address the widely differing ontologies and epistemologies of the concept itself. These theoretical frameworks reflect national interests related to globalisation, economic and political influence and institutional needs for stable resourcing which may or may not intersect with loftier goals of student learning related to both pragmatic and civic-minded outcomes. In addition, internationalisation scholars rarely discuss neoliberalism and neocolonialism, and any references to globalization fall within two categories: expressions of concern that globalization is increasingly the context and driver of internationalisation.

Internationalisation of higher education purports to ground itself in supporting institutional and social transformation, but it masks a neoliberal approach of market-driven maintenance of the dominant (Western) hegemony which seeks to assimilate difference into a homogenous, economically defined global entity. This presentation will examine the ongoing theoretical concerns of scholars and professionals in the field of international higher education as we balance increasingly neoliberal goals with aspirations of institutional transformation.

The Unique Origins of Provider Programs in the United States

Leo Van Cleve | California State University, United States

At major conferences, many observers have noted the large presence of programme providers in the United States. This is often seen as a symptom of the increasing role of money in the higher education generally and international education specifically. This presentation will examine the history of the growth in study abroad in the United States after the end of World War II and attempt to place the emergence of these programs in the broader context of international affairs of the time. In doing this we will look more closely at three key areas. First, the focus will be on the perceived importance of international relations in the post-war era. Second, the role that private higher education plays in the United States. Finally, the constructive role these programmes have played in the development of study abroad as an important part of the higher education landscape.

Commodification and Commercialization of Higher Education: *The Influence on Internationalisation in the Developing World*

Dr Nico Jooste | Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa

Internationalisation of higher education was introduced to higher education institutions as an activity that is inherently beneficial due to its public good characteristics. At its inception the focus was mainly on different modes of student mobility whose value and activities were not questioned. It was believed to be of such importance that all should do it. As with most of the modern developments in higher education it had its origins in Western higher education systems and was exported to and promoted in the developing world as part of the public good mission of a university. With the changes that became part of modern higher education, including the massification and introduction of managerialism into the life of the modern university, internationalisation of higher education also formed part of this focus. The modern university has become an organisation that is so many things to so many people that it is at war with itself, as well as with the ideologies which conflict with the original purpose of the university. This has now become an integral part of the internationalisation debate: internationalisation is also so many things to so many people that it is often at war with itself.

The different demands on higher education internationalisation are part of the competing expectations from contemporary higher education, including commercialisation and commodification. Re-positioning questions about the ideological and practical implications of the changing social contract between higher education internationalisation and society will be addressed in this paper. The focus will be on the developing and emerging world – with specific reference to Africa – and the responses as well as the effect of these competing demands on their higher education systems.





Profiles

Professor John K. Hudzik

Michigan State University, United States



A Professor at Michigan State University (MSU) and the NAFSA Senior Scholar for Internationalization. He is past President of the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) and also past President and Chair of the Board of Directors of NAFSA-Association of International Educators. From 1995 to 2010 he was Dean of International Studies and Programs at Michigan State University and then Vice President for Global Engagement and Strategic Projects. He is President of the Scientific Committee of the Centre for Higher Education Internationalization at UCSC, Milan Italy. He was Acting University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at MSU in 2005. He has served on numerous international policy and advisory boards and is a frequently invited speaker at global conferences on higher education internationalization, and publishes frequently on the topic. His most recent book will be published in late 2014 by Rutledge Publishers with the title 'Comprehensive Internationalization of Higher Education: Institutional Pathways to Success.' He is the recipient of several awards for his scholarly work in judicial systems and in international education, including the AIEA Charles Klasek Award for outstanding service to international education. He was a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Australia in 1987.

Sonja Knutson

Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada



Dr Knutson has a dual role as scholar and as a practitioner at Memorial University, as both a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education and Director of the Internationalization Office. Her primary research interest is the role of the senior leader of internationalization on a campus and the responsibility to engage the campus community in transformative international/intercultural experiences. Her research interests arise from her practitioner role and interests in indigenization and internationalization of higher education as two drivers of transformative institutional change. As Director of the Internationalization Office at Memorial University of Newfoundland, she is responsible for leading, partnering and supporting the Internationalization Office to implement the actions of the Strategic Internationalization Plan 2020 at Memorial. She is a frequent presenter at international conferences and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at the Faculty of Education at Memorial. She has served for six years on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Bureau for International Education, and is chair (elect) with the NAFSA International Education Leadership Knowledge Community.

Leo Van Cleve

California State University, United States



He is the assistant Vice Chancellor, international and off-campus programs, for the California State University (CSU) system based in the office of the Chancellor in Long Beach. The CSU international programs work with more than 50 universities in 19 countries to offer study abroad programs for an academic year. He is responsible for international program operations, policy development for internationalization and international programs. He oversees the operation of the CSU Summer Arts program which provides students the opportunity to work with CSU faculty and highly regarded guest artists. In addition to being director of the system-wide study abroad program, he works with campuses to promote international programs and with Chancellor's office staff to develop policy and implement system-wide initiatives.

Dr Nico Jooste

Senior Director, Office for International Education, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University



Dr Jooste is the Senior Director of the Office for International Education at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). He has been in this position since July 2000. He was responsible for the development of the office as a self-funding entity. During this time international student numbers grew from 130 in 2000 to 1700 in 2016. The comprehensive internationalisation of the university has been implemented during this period as a strategic imperative of NMMU. Dr Jooste is involved in the re-thinking of higher education internationalisation globally and as such has helped arrange the Global Dialogue on the Future of Higher Education Internationalisation, held in January 2014 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He is currently the President of the International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA). Prior to his appointment at NMMU, from June 1998 to June 2000, he was the Executive Director of the Eastern Cape Higher Education Association. He was the Deputy Registrar Academic from January 1993 and acting Registrar of the University of Fort Hare from January 1995 to December 1996. Dr Jooste was also a lecturer and senior lecturer in the Department of History and Economic History at the University of Fort Hare from February 1982 to February 1992. His areas of specialization are the Eastern Cape history and international relations of South Africa during the Cold War. He has published widely on South African history as well as on higher education management and presented numerous papers at local and international conferences on both topics.



Panellists

Professor Margaret Cullen | *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*



An associate professor to MBA and DBA students at NMMU Business School. She is actively involved in the general management of the NMMU Business School's MBA and PDBA programme. This includes building the Business School's image and recruiting students to the programme. Prof Cullen has co-authored and authored several research articles and attended numerous academic conferences, both nationally and internationally. In 2010, Prof Cullen was the winner of the Business Women's Association's Business Women of the year in the Professional category (Eastern Cape).

Professor Aziz Choudry | *McGill University*



An associate professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He is Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Social Movement Learning and Knowledge Production. Prof Choudry is also a visiting professor at the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) in the Faculty of Education, at the University of Johannesburg. He is the author of numerous journal articles, book chapters and books, including *Learning Activism: The intellectual life of contemporary social movements* (2015).

Ulrich Bauer | *University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrueck*



The academic director for international summer university at the University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrueck, Germany.

Dr Savo Heleta | *Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University*



Manager of Internationalisation at Home and Research at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Office for International Education (OIE) and researcher in OIE's Research Unit for Higher Education Internationalisation in the Developing World. Savo's research focuses on higher education internationalisation, higher education in post-war settings, conflict analysis and post-war reconstruction and development in general.



**Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University**

International

visit our website: international.nmmu.ac.za

Tel: +27 (0) 41 504 2161, Fax: +27 (0) 41 504 2771, E-mail: international@nmmu.ac.za

PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031, South Africa

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