



Country Databank

AUSTRALIA

o Construction on a new university--to be called Chifley University--will begin in 1988 with the first students expected in 1990. The university, which will be located at Werrington in western Sydney, will operate first as a university college under the auspices of the University of Sydney and will become fully autonomous in 1996. (Association of Commonwealth Universities, ABCU, No. 79, June 1987)

BELGIUM

o The Free University of Brussels has announced that it will undertake measures to better prepare students for university life and to decrease the failure rate in the examination used to select students for further study and specialization. Beginning Fall 1987, selection will be made after two years' study rather than the current one year thus allowing students more time to adjust to university life and determine whether their specializations are appropriate to them. (The Times Higher Education Supplement, July 3, 1987)

BULGARIA

o The Bulgarian Politburo has recommended that, beginning in 1988, all privileges concerning admission to higher educational institutions be abolished. The new ruling will affect applicants who otherwise would have been granted special consideration because of their parents' achievements or their place of birth and, to a lesser extent, those who win national academic contests. Admissions will be based solely on grades and the available spaces in accordance with the projected needs of the national economy and regional requirements. Higher education in Bulgaria is strongly job-oriented; for the past ten years, the number of places per subject has been determined by expected needs five years hence. (Times Higher Education Supplement, Sept. 4, 1987)

DENMARK

o The Danish Government has provided funding to promote the internationalization of higher education. Two thirds of the monies will be used for studies or practical training abroad while the remaining third is earmarked for the development of study programs for Danish students wishing to go abroad. (International Association of Universities, Bulletin, Vol XXXV, 1987, No. 2)

o New specialized vocational training programs for data mechanics (computer maintenance) have been developed in direct response to industrial needs. A basic five-year program combines practical and theoretical classroom instruction with in-house corporate training. The program emphasizes computer systems and data transmission, equipment maintenance, and tracing and rectifying faults in hardware and software. (CEDEFOP News, Vocational Training in Europe, No. 4, 1986)

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FRANCE

o At the center of the Futuroscope de Poitiers, a new lycée dedicated to new technologies began enrolling students in 1987/88. This institution, which has been dubbed 'lycée of the future,' offers first-cycle university programs leading to the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales/DEUG as well as the traditional secondary curriculum. The initial postsecondary programs are: economic and social administration; and visual communications and media languages. A curriculum in communication science and technology is in the process of implementation. (*Le Monde de l'Education*, November 1987)

o Created by a decree on May 29, 1987, Université du Pacifique is a new university located in Tahiti with branches in Papeete (French Polynesia) and Noumea (New Caledonia). It is expected that enrollment will reach approximately 1,000 students by 1990. In addition to existing programs leading to the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales/DEUG, new first- and third-cycle programs will be introduced shortly. Branches of several national research laboratories are already located on the Tahiti campus. (*Le Monde de l'Education*, November 1987)

GREENLAND

o The University of Greenland, the first autonomous university in Greenland established in Fall 1987, will offer undergraduate and graduate programs in Greenlandic and Eskimo language; literature; history; culture and civilization; and divinity. Undergraduate courses in business management and administration will also be available. The University of Greenland, located in Godthaab, has an initial capacity for 60 students with 10 full-time and 10 part-time lecturers. Initial student intake is expected at 10 students per year. (*Times Higher Education Supplement*, Oct. 23, 1987)

HONG KONG

o The Hong Kong Government announced in January 1987 that its third university will be located at Tai Po Tsui in the new Territories and will be named the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. (*Association of Commonwealth Universities*, ABCU, No. 78, April 1987)

INDIA

o A University of Health Sciences was established in Andhra Pradesh. All medical colleges in the State will now be affiliated with this University which will maintain a uniform curriculum and conduct a common entrance examination. Students will work both in teaching hospitals and in community-based satellite institutions. (*IAU Bulletin*, Vol. XXXV, 1987. No. 2)

ITALY

o Milano's prestigious Bocconi University has instituted a post-laurea corso di perfezionamento in the economics of tourism. Taught by university professors and industry experts, classes began Oct. 17, 1987 and will conclude June 25, 1988. Divided into 180 two-hour sessions, the program is open to candidates who possess an Italian university degree or its equivalent. The course is multi-disciplinary in approach, covering topics in history, art, geography, sociology, politics, law, accounting, and marketing, as well as in economics. With this program, the Bocconi hopes to respond to a growing demand for qualified managerial personnel in one of

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Italy's most important economic sectors. (Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Sept. 27, 1987)

o The University of Basilicata, with its campus in the provincial capital of Potenza, has awarded its first degrees. On Nov. 10, 1987, a total of eight degrees (lauree) were conferred: one each in forestry and mathematics and six in modern foreign languages and literature. Founded in 1982, the university was part of a legislative package designed to reconstruct and develop areas of southern Italy devastated by the earthquake of 1980. Its four faculties--Agriculture, Engineering, Letters and Philosophy, and Sciences--offer nine degree programs. The university enrolls some 2,000 students and employs 192 faculty and researchers. (Il Progresso Italo-Americano, Nov. 11, 1987)

KENYA

o Kenyatta University will establish a German Language Department with assistance from Bayreuth University in the Federal Republic of Germany to train teachers at the graduate level. Degrees awarded to graduates of German institutions similar to Kenya's national polytechnics will also be recognized. (IAU Bulletin, Vol. XXXV, 1987, No. 2)

MALAYSIA

o As part of its efforts to cut costs, the Malaysian Government has announced that it will freeze most scholarships and loans for graduate study in foreign universities with the exception of highly specialized programs unavailable in Malaysia. Scholarships and loans will only be given for attendance at local universities. (Times Higher Education Supplement, Aug. 28, 1987)

NEW ZEALAND

o Massey University, the largest provider of distance education in Australasia, reports that approximately 14,000 extramural students are enrolled in about 400 courses within nine degree, twenty diploma, and four certificate programs. All of the courses offered to extramural students are also offered to on-campus students. All courses are prepared, taught, and administered directly from the Massey University campus with identical syllabi and examinations. Since many of the programs still have a residency requirement, Massey University has initiated regional weekend

courses supported by the appointment of a network of four program advisors in regional centers. (Association of Commonwealth Universities, ABCD, No. 80, October 1987)

UNITED KINGDOM

o Brighton Polytechnic has initiated a new hotel and catering management program leading to a CNAA degree. This four-year program emphasizes the behavioral sciences' relation to management effectiveness in service industries. During the third year, students work directly for hotels and restaurants. (Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), Higher Education News, June 1987)

o The master of engineering (M.Eng.) awarded by the University of Leeds is a first degree requiring four years of study rather than the usual three. The University of Leeds no longer offers a B.Sc. in Engineering. The higher (graduate) degree in engineering is called M.Sc. (Eng.). (8/6/87 letter to World Education Services, Inc. from the Postgraduate Office of the University of Leeds)

o In an effort to standardize vocational qualifications, the British Government has established the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). Currently over 300 organizations including the Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC), the City and Guilds of London Institute, and professional and industrial associations award vocational degrees. The NCVQ will initially establish qualification standards according to four distinct criteria levels. For more information write: NCVQ, 222 Euston Road, London LNWL 2BZ, United Kingdom. (CNAA Higher Education News, June 1987)

o The governing bodies of Queen Mary College and Westfield College have agreed that the two institutions should merge. The new school will temporarily be known as the United College of Queen Mary and Westfield and be established at the University of London. (Association of Commonwealth Universities, ABCD, No. 70, June 1987)

o Huddersfield Polytechnic, Humber-side College of Higher Education, Leeds Polytechnic, and Sheffield Polytechnic have joined forces to offer a regional MA in Art and Design. Students will be based at one of the centers and take part in group lectures, special day schools, and summer schools with students from other institutions. CNAA has given conditional approval for this MA to begin January 1988. (Times Higher Education Supplement Sept. 4, 1987)

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U.S.S.R.

o The Azerbaijan Institute of the National Academy has been closed following charges of administrative and academic misconduct. This university-level institution enrolled about 8,000 students. (Times Higher Education Supplement, Aug. 7, 1987)

o The Soviet Union is launching a campaign to computerize classrooms and expects to introduce one million computers in secondary schools by 1990. Although 1984 guidelines passed by the Supreme Soviet, and supported by General Secretary Gorbachev, call for particular attention to computerization, educational computing in the U.S.S.R. remains in its infancy due to the unavailability of hardware and software and the lack of trained teachers. Currently teachers are instructed about computers without physical access to computers. "Computer Clubs" are being organized with participants receiving free lessons. Access hours on computers are, however, limited. In a few large cities, demonstration labs exist containing three to four computers and students are bussed to them on field trips. (SUNY at Buffalo, Faculty and Educational Studies NEWSLETTER, Fall 1987)

Questions & Answers

How is the U.S. master's degree assessed within the German educational system?

Erika Popovych
World Education Services, Inc.

The Zentralstelle fuer Auslaendisches Bildungswesen (Center for Foreign Education) responds that a U.S. master's degree may be considered equivalent to a German Diplom, Magister, or to the First State Teacher's Examination if the degree program's length, content and performance standards are commensurate with the main studies (Hauptstudium) following the Preliminary Diploma (Vordiplom) offered at a German university.

As such, the U.S. master's degree program must include a minimum of 36 graduate-level semester credits, require a thesis, and the curriculum must incorporate one major and two minor areas of study.

In Brief

o The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities was established in January 1987 in Heerlan, Netherlands. The organization's objectives are to: promote distance education in Europe; develop technology and new teaching methods; coordinate cooperative projects in the fields of research, program development, and course and credit transfer; and to act as a network for contact among participating institutions' academic staffs. Member institutions are: Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (Belgium); Jutland Open University (Denmark); Deutsches Institut für Fernstudien an der Universitaet Tuebingen, Fernuniversitaet (Federal Republic of Germany); National Distance Education Centre and National Institute for Higher Education (Ireland); Consorzio per l'Università a Distanza (Italy); Open Universiteit (The Netherlands); Norwegian Association for Distance Education (Norway); Projecto Universidade Aberta (Portugal); Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spain); and Open University (U.K.). (IAU Bulletin, Vol. XXXV, No. 2, 1987)

o The Association of European Correspondence Schools (AECS) has launched a two-year pilot Diploma in Correspondence Education. Most of the students participating possess a university degree or professional qualification related to their specialist work. Students must take the "Essentials of Distance Education" plus two courses from one of the following areas: administration; counselling; editing; writing; tutoring; or marketing. Students must complete assignments and either pass an examination or submit a dissertation to qualify for the Diploma. They may, however, enroll in individual modules. AECS has established a Diploma Foundation to oversee the diploma. (IAU Bulletin, Vol. XXXV, No. 2, 1987)

o The fall in the price of oil, coupled with the devaluation of the dollar against European currencies, has led U.S. companies to cut the number of expatriate employees. Accordingly the number of American children attending American schools in Europe has declined. Since 1980 American enrollment has declined from 80 per cent to 50 per cent of the student body at the American School in Paris, and from 30 per cent to 16 per cent at the International School in Geneva. In the past two years, the number of American students has dropped from 1,160 to 900 at Boitsfort International School in Belgium and from 1,400 to 1,200 at the American School in London. (Le Monde de l'Education, November 1987)

Evaluating International Credentials: Problems of Transfer Credit

Part I

by Alan Margolis

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No aspect of the evaluation of undergraduate foreign educational credentials requires more intellectual rigor than the determination of transfer credit. In admitting freshmen, our view is totally outward. Based on applicants' external education, we determine whether they possess the background with the appropriate quality of performance to meet the standards we have set. We make little or no connection between previous experiences and our own curriculum, except to determine whether the student is likely to succeed in our environment. For example, in admitting freshmen engineering students, we seek the skills -- generally a strong background in mathematics--that will meet the basic course requirements of the specialized program. And although CLEP and Advanced Placement programs allow freshmen to begin their collegiate life with a small number of credits in introductory courses, these constitute advanced-standing credit rather than transfer credit. Additionally, this represents so few credits and their determination is so ritualized, that our intellectual involvement is minimal.

Transfer students, on the other hand, present us with a completely different set of problems. While the intellectual process used to admit them may be similar to that applied to freshmen--that is, the assessment of the ability of the students to perform successfully in our environment--the added dimension of assessing postsecondary-level coursework taken at a foreign institution minates the global decision-making process.

In dealing with foreign transfer credits, not only must one understand the general principles of credit transfer created for domestic circum-

stances, one must also be able to apply these principles to educational experiences for which they were not intended. What follows, then, is a review of those general principles.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

When granting credit to transfer students, assumptions are made which, when viewed together, provide a basis for making judgments. The first assumption is that the previous work is equivalent in academic level to that offered at our own institution. The second is that the work is equivalent in substance and depth; i.e., that the depth of subject matter and the degree of specificity of knowledge, including differentiation between theory and practice, are comparable. The third is that performance levels are measured in a way comparable to how we measure performance, and that we understand the grading system.

For example, in evaluating the British "A level" examination in Chemistry, as one applies the assumptions above, one can determine whether to consider this level of achievement for credit as follows:

1. Academic level equivalency --The Sixth Form (the two-year academic program which leads to the examination) requires prior secondary school work in chemistry (in fact, the passing of the "ordinary level" examination in chemistry) for admission. This prior work is, at minimum, equivalent to that taken at U.S. high schools. (It also needs to be noted that U.S. colleges do not usually require high school chemistry for admission into an introductory chemistry course.
2. Equivalency in substance and depth--A review of the syllabus will indicate that the subjects usually

SPECIAL REPORT

