

Innovation, Globalization, and AACSB International



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Critical issues at the top of the agenda for many business schools around the world include innovation, globalization, and sustainability. AACSB International is at the forefront of these issues with key initiatives underway through the activities of the Committee on Issues in Management Education (CIME) and a variety of specialized seminars and conferences. This year, a taskforce led by Robert S. Sullivan, dean and Stanley and Pauline Foster Endowed Chair at the Rady School of Management, University of California, San Diego, will finalize a report on the role of business schools in supporting innovation in society. The report will be released to the AACSB membership at the 2010 International Conference and Annual Meeting (ICAM) April 18–20 in Anaheim, California, USA. This year's ICAM event will focus on innovation and the report's findings. A second initiative being led by Robert R. Bruner, dean, Charles C. Abbott Professor of Business Administration, and distinguished professor of business administration at the Darden School of Business, University of Virginia, is focused on developing a report to address the globalization of management education. This report promises to be a comprehensive, forward-looking review of a major transformation in the development and strategies of business schools worldwide. The report is scheduled to be released in the later part of 2010. Next, AACSB will continue its Sustainability Conference, which will be held June 14–16, 2010 in Denver, Colorado, USA. The numerous activities similar to those described above will provide critical and timely analyses of the key issues that are facing AACSB members. At the same time, innovation and globalization are also important elements of AACSB's organizational strategy.

With regards to globalization, AACSB has continuing concerns surrounding the explosive growth of business schools worldwide. Recent estimates indicate there are as many as 12,000 degree-granting institutions around the world today. At this point, 579 of these schools are AACSB accredited. Given AACSB's mission "to advance quality management education worldwide through accreditation and thought leadership," a strategic issue relates to what extent AACSB can and should provide guidance, support, and potentially accreditation to these emerging, developing, and well established schools. In order to further analyze this issue, an important taskforce was formed—the Special Committee on Global Accreditation Strategy (SCOGAS). The committee's goal is to study the critical issues surrounding globalization and recommend a course of action to the AACSB Board of Directors. The committee is chaired by Howard Thomas, dean and Lee Kong Chair at the School of Business, Singapore Management University. The progress and direction of SCOGAS is a major initiative for AACSB this year and will be the focus of numerous conference sessions beginning with AACSB's International Conference and Annual Meeting in April. These sessions will be the first opportunities for AACSB members to become involved in the topics this committee is discussing. The sessions are intended to obtain member feedback on the options under consideration. AACSB hopes that its members will attend conference and seminar events that surround SCOGAS initiatives in order to collaborate and provide feedback to AACSB and its board.

As for me, I am honored to have been elected as AACSB International's chair and I applaud the leadership of former chairs Richard A. Cosier, dean and Leeds Professor of Management at the Krannert Graduate School of Management and School of Management, Purdue University and Howard Thomas, who have set the stage for the major initiatives described above. The upcoming year promises to be very significant for both business schools and the strategic direction of AACSB. I look forward to working with each of you on the issues that are most critical to your institution and/or organization, and hope to receive your input on the future path for AACSB International.