



Quality International

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEA INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP

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Dear Colleague:

Greetings! As the new director of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CIQG), I am pleased to present this fourth issue of our Quality International newsletter.

This issue includes a summary and full report from the 2014 CIQG Annual Meeting held in Washington, DC, a perspective on the latest developments with massive open online courses (MOOCs) in Europe and CIQG's interview with the founder of University of the People, a tuition-free online institution, Shai Reshef.

Please take advantage of the [CIQG Website](#) to find the latest information on international quality assurance and accreditation important to institutions, quality assurance organizations, governments and business. And remember to urge others to join CIQG and our increasingly important quality assurance and accreditation community!

Warm regards,

Mark Grace
Director, CIQG
grace@chea.org



CIQG 2014 Annual Meeting January 29-30, 2014

CHEA International Quality Group

“Imperatives for Quality Assurance: International Standards and Innovation”

2014 Meeting Report
January 29-30, 2014

Peter Okebukola, CIQG Advisory Council member and President, Global University Network for Innovation – Africa, has provided a thorough [summary](#) and [full report](#) of the 2014 CIQG Annual Meeting built around the themes of international standards and innovation. This comprehensive report details the six plenary sessions and meeting events as well as the most salient and significant points taken from the lively discussions that took place. Speakers and attendees explored many of the compelling issues for international quality assurance and accreditation such as the benefits or disadvantages of a single set of international quality standards, rankings as a measure of quality, recent developments in regional and country-based quality standards and the implications of post-traditional provisions for quality assurance.

Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) Euro-Euphoria – eMOOCs 2014 Conference in Lausanne



Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić

In the United States, the *New York Times* proclaimed 2012 as the “year of the MOOCs” although some researchers predict a shakeout in 2014. Meanwhile, to judge by press coverage and conferences, we are witnessing MOOCs Euro-Euphoria.

This was on display at “eMOOCs 2014,” a European stakeholder summit hosted by the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in early February 2014. It attracted some 500 participants, over a hundred from France alone. All major MOOC players were there, including the corporate sector, Coursera, edX, Udacity, and FutureLearn, as well as Google, the sponsor of the event.

The MOOCs drive in Europe and the Lausanne event owe much to the lead given by Patrick Aebischer, EPFL’s charismatic president. Following a visit to Silicon Valley, he integrated MOOCs as a core element of EPFL and took a sabbatical in Africa to promote MOOCs in key disciplines for development. One result was a Network of Excellence in Engineering Sciences of the French-speaking Community (RESCIF).

Looking to the South is also part of the French MOOCs strategy. Its platform, France Université Numérique (FUN), now offers courses from 10 universities. The French government has invested significantly in this initiative and will bring it to Africa in cooperation with the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, a global organization of French-speaking universities. Catherine Mongenet, head of FUN at France’s Ministry of Higher Education, presented the MOOCs thrust within a wider strategy of getting universities to go online.

An institutional example is the Netherlands’ Delft Technical University, which offers MOOCs in two key development disciplines, solar systems and water treatment. Students enroll from Africa, Indonesia and India, and, for the five highest-scoring students who complete the MOOC course, the university offers the opportunity to take the master’s course free of charge.

Despite the declared focus on the global south, African presence at the Conference was minimal. A rare and impressive example was 2iE, Burkina Faso’s International Institute for Water and Environment Engineering. Interestingly, the star of the Conference was from the developing world. Arnab Banik, a 16-year old boy from Bangladesh had taken 32 Coursera and edX MOOCs in the last year of secondary school, founded a student community, “Education for Everyone in Bangladesh,” and launched a Bangladesh Coursera Portal to promote MOOCs. His dream is to win a scholarship to an elite university in the West.

Most European countries are developing their own MOOCs and their own platforms to avoid dependence on North American systems and also as a matter of national pride. Another potentially significant example is FutureLearn, which was still in start-up mode at the time of the Conference and not able to accept all interested learners.

However, there are few MOOC initiatives that bring together Europe as a whole. One, OpenUpED, led by the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU), is little more than a portal giving access to courses from its member institutions. Matthieu Cisel, a PhD student from France’s Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan (a training college for university teachers) who is doing a thesis on MOOCs, suggested that such pan-European projects “stood out by their mediocrity,” adding little to efforts by individual institutions.

No clear conclusions about the accreditation and certification of MOOCs emerged. Quoting my own views in a 24-page review of the Conference, the French economic magazine *Challenges* presented MOOCs as part of the wider emergence of “post-traditional” higher education. It also noted that CHEA, the prestigious U.S. Council of Higher Education Accreditation, is creating quality indicators for these developments. Credible certification is an obstacle that MOOCs must overcome in both Europe and North America if they are to become part of mainstream higher education.

Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić,
Senior Advisor on International Affairs, CIQG



Interview with University of the People Founder Shai Reshef



Shai Reshef, Founder of UoPeople

Entrepreneur and educational innovator Shai Reshef is founder of University of the People (UoPeople), a tuition-free online institution. Shai built UoPeople to reach unserved and underserved students, a “digital education for people of Earth.” In early 2014, UoPeople received accreditation from the Distance Education Training Council (DETC). DETC is a U.S. accreditor of distance education institutions. Shai takes a moment to answer a few questions on his experience with accreditation.

Why did University of the People, an international university, decide to go for a U.S. accreditation as opposed to another country?

but its curriculum, organizational structure, operations, etc., are no different than would be found in any other American institution. The fact that it is an online institution does mean, however, that it has access to people and resources both from within the United States and from around the globe.

The quality of an American higher education is well known all over the world and attending an American university is a dream for many students in other countries. We are thrilled that our institution has now been accredited by the DETC and believe that achieving this milestone will enable us to continue to meet the needs of the unserved and underserved wherever they may be and truly achieve our mission.

Did accreditation affect any of the innovative features of University of the People?

work with us every step of the way and to learn about the different model we represented. At the same time, our accreditor was always working to ensure that the highest standards were being maintained. It was constant in its focus on quality assurance, but it did not dictate the pathway to meeting its standards. The accreditation process only made us work harder in order to become a better institution.

How might you expedite the quality assurance/accreditation process?

institution to begin operating before being fully accredited and not be penalizing its students. Institutions need to be fully operational before they can begin the accreditation review process. This means that its first students, its “pioneers,” are studying at an unaccredited institution. My suggestion is to adopt a policy which is already common practice in several other countries whereby a new university approaches the accreditation organization before it begins enrolling students and, if based on a paper review, the accreditation organization is sufficiently convinced that this institution is likely to become a quality institution, it is given provisional accreditation. This means that, if the institution subsequently meets all accreditation requirements within a prescribed number of years and becomes accredited, its first graduates will also have a degree from an accredited university. If the institution does not meet the standards within this period, it probably does not deserve to be operating until it has had more time to develop and mature.

With accreditation, are there any differences now in University of the People’s approach to student success?

It was our intention from day one to create a high-quality university, one which would produce well-rounded students who would be prepared for citizenship in the 21st century. Our different advisory boards include professors from top universities as well as practitioners who not only supervise our curriculum but keep UoPeople updated on the evolving needs of the global economy. From that perspective, the university has not changed. At the same time, the feedback that we received during the accrediting process has motivated us to be sure that we are constantly working to improve every aspect of the university. For example, UoPeople has always had a sense of what it wanted to accomplish and has tried to keep track of how it was progressing. The DETC standards led us to be crisper in articulating our goals and objectives and in developing more effective mechanisms for measuring our achievements and using the results in the broader decision-making process. Things are definitely more systematic now.

We initially decided to establish UoPeople in the United States because students around the world know and respect U.S. education. Many see the opportunity to study in the United States as a way to advance their careers, so we would naturally seek to be accredited by a U.S. accrediting organization. Its student body does indeed come from all parts of the world,

No. As a tuition-free online institution, UoPeople is able to offer its programming to students who might otherwise be barred from higher education because of financial, personal, geographic or social constraints. We were pleasantly surprised by the extent to which the DETC was ready to

Accreditation is an extremely important process that every university should undergo, step by step, before receiving this stamp of approval. Saying that, I believe that there should be a mechanism that would allow a quality



Most Recent CIQG Members

Institutions and Organizations

- Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education - Chicago, Illinois, USA – Joined October 2013
- American Academy for Liberal Education - Alexandria, Virginia, USA – Joined December 2013
- College of the North Atlantic - New Foundland and Labrador, Canada – Joined October 2013
- Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation - Mongolia – Joined January 2014
- Standards for Educational Advancement & Accreditation Trust - Delhi, India – Joined October 2013

Individuals

- Peter J. Wells, Romania, Educational Consultant – Joined October 2013
- Nicole de Leeuw, Netherlands, Breda University of Applied Sciences – Joined January 2014
- Peter Williams, Malvern, U.K., Educational Consultant – Joined December 2013
- Mohsen Elmahdy Said, Giza, Egypt, Cairo University – Joined October 2013
- Louise Zak, Vermont, USA Accreditation Consultant – Joined October 2013
- Virginia Stead, Toronto, Canada, Founding Editor, Higher Education Book Series – Joined February 2014
- Sheryl L. Moody, Arizona, USA – Joined October 2013
- Douglas S. Franklin, Texas, USA – Joined October 2013



20 CIQG Members in the Europe and Eurasian Region.

Why Become a CHEA International Quality Group Member?

The CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) is an international forum for colleges and universities, accrediting and quality assurance organizations, policy makers, businesses, foundations and others worldwide to address issues and challenges associated with quality and quality assurance in the international setting.

CIQG membership brings you into an international discussion of the value and importance of higher education quality assurance and accreditation to society and students as well as its significance



7 CIQG Members in the South and Central Asia Region.

to government policy and legislative decision making and to businesses and corporations with international presence and needs. You are part of a dialogue that can set strategic direction in such areas as international quality standards, academic freedom, innovation in colleges and universities, and higher education that meets the needs of today's and tomorrow's employers.



5 CIQG Members in the Africa (Sub-Sahara) Region.

to the *CIQG International Directory*, which provides reliable and comprehensive information on quality assurance bodies and ministries of education around the world. CIQG offers an annual meeting, webinars and other gatherings that provide extraordinary opportunities to participate in cutting-edge discussions on the future of international quality assurance and higher education. Expand your network; encourage a colleague to join by forwarding this [application](#).

CIQG...an international forum...a thought leader...a strong, strategic and effective voice....building the future of international higher education and enhancing its quality.



14 CIQG Members in the East Asian and Pacific Region.

Membership includes the use of the CIQG logo, subscription to the *Quality International* newsletter and the informative *CIQG Policy Briefs*, as well as research on significant topics related to the quality of higher education in an international setting today and in the future. Consultation services are available on a fee-for-service basis. You also have access



75 CIQG Members in the Western Hemisphere Region.



11 CIQG Members in the Near East Region.



CIQG 2014 Advisory Council Meeting following the CIQG Annual Meeting - January 30, 2014. Washington, DC

Save The Dates

2014 CHEA Summer Workshop

June 24 (evening) - 25, 2014 – CHEA Summer Workshop

Positioning Accreditation: Role, Responsibilities and Expectations

Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel

2600 Woodley Road NW

Washington, DC

2015 CHEA Annual Conference

January 26 (evening) - 28, 2015 – CHEA Annual Conference

January 28 (evening) - 29, 2015 – CIQG Annual Meeting

January 30, 2015 – CIQG Advisory Council Meeting.

Location: Capital Hilton, Washington, DC

CIQG Advisory Council

- **Nadia Badrawi**, Past President, Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Egypt)
- **Barbara Brittingham**, President, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (USA)
- **Sir John Daniel**, Education Master, Beijing DeTao Masters Academy (China)
- **A. Lee Fritschler**, Professor, School of Public Policy, George Mason University (USA)
- **Allan Goodman**, President, Institute for International Education (USA)
- **Madlyn L. Hanes**, Vice President, Commonwealth Campuses, Pennsylvania State University (USA)
- **Maria Jose Lemaitre**, Director, Centro Interuniversitario de Desarrollo and Immediate Past President, International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (Chile)
- **Michael Milligan**, Executive Director, ABET (USA)
- **Judy C. Miner**, President, Foothill College (USA)
- **Deane Neubauer**, Senior Fellow, Globalization Research Center, University of Hawaii – Manoa (USA)
- **Michal Neumann**, Deputy Director General for Quality Assessment, Council for Higher Education (Israel)
- **Carol Nicoll**, Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer, Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (Australia)
- **Peter Okebukola**, President, Global University Network for Innovation – Africa (Nigeria)
- **Ved Prakash**, Vice Chairman, University Grants Commission, New Delhi (India)
- **Jamil Salmi**, Consultant, Global Tertiary Education Expert, Global View on Tertiary Education (USA)
- **Craig Swenson**, Chancellor, Argosy University (USA)
- **Lesley Wilson**, Secretary General, European University Association (Belgium)
- **Richard Yelland**, Head of Division, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (France)
- **Jianxin Zhang**, Director, Research Institute of Higher Education, Yunnan University (China)

Ex Officio Members

- David G. Carter**, Immediate Past Chair, Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
Board of Directors
- Judith Eaton**, CHEA President
- Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić**, CHEA Senior Advisor on International Affairs

Launched in September, 2012, the CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) serves as a U.S.-based international forum for quality assurance and accreditation. The CIQG provides services to CIQG members intended to advance understanding of international quality assurance, assist institutions and accreditation/quality assurance organizations in their expanding international engagement and further enhance capacity for academic quality in international higher education.



The CHEA International Quality Group



JOIN NOW!

The CHEA International Quality Group offers a venue for institutions and organizations to take part in the international conversation on quality assurance.

This exciting venture brings together people, ideas and resources to tackle issues ranging from defining quality to the growing role of rankings.

132 institutions and organizations from 43 countries have joined the CIQG since its launch in September 2012!

Learn more about exclusive member benefits and how to join by visiting the CIQG Website at:

www.cheainternational.org

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
One Dupont Circle NW • Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 955-6126 • (202)-955-6129 fax
Email: info@cheainternational.org