

▼ GLOBALIZATION

Past decade has seen growth of positive trends in post secondary education

You know you're busy when it didn't even dawn on me that the decade was coming to an end until I read an article about the 10 best movies of the zero decade.

Since then I have read more than one list and decided I could probably write my own list on the most significant changes in post-secondary education these past 10 years.

Globalization was a catch-phrase which popped up around 2004. Since then we have seen colleges and universities recruit and accept international students from all over the world. Students are coming from the Middle East, South America, the Caribbean and even the United States.

Exchange programs also grew where letters of agreements between schools allowed Canadian students to complete semesters of study with foreign colleges or universities.

At Okanagan College our School of Busi-



SCHOOLS IN

Jane Muskens

ness provides exchange programs with 23 different universities throughout Europe, the United States, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico and Korea.

Cross-border integration (which is also tied to globalization) includes the sharing of ideas, curriculum and faculty between post-secondary institutions worldwide. This cooperation builds new markets and helps countries improve the quality of their credentials.

A good example of this process is the Bologna accord which will align post-secondary institutions across the European Union to meet the same standards for credentials. This is also happening in India where

growth in post-secondary institutions is being aligned with the opening of American and British university satellite campuses.

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Trades education and training set record student enrolments in the last 10 years. Okanagan College more than tripled the number of students in apprenticeship programs and although housing starts have declined re-

cently, students are still enrolling in the trades. With Red Seal certification, trades professionals are on par if not higher (depending on the trade) with university graduates when it comes to wages.

Getting a credential from a university or college while never setting foot on campus or attending a class became a reality for many people in the past decade. Online learning took on a new meaning as technology improved to deliver courses; online learners met classmates through online chat. I was a part of this shift in education delivery and took an online course which required group work. One member of my group was from New York City, another from Brazil. Online learning has and will continue to increase competition between schools.

Along with online learning also came other technologies. Students entering post-secondary education programs are generally on

the cutting edge of what's hot and what's not. Mid 2000s they were on MSN and email addresses were cool. Today they are on Facebook and YouTube, and texting is the new medium—email is passé. All of this leads post-secondary schools to continue to figure out new ways to communicate with students. Those who can do this well will find they have a competitive edge, those who don't may be at risk for losing students.

It will be interesting to see where we are in 2020. Globalization and technology go hand-in-hand and can impact immensely on the growth of post-secondary in countries that in the last century may have had few universities or colleges, let alone graduates. It is these grads and their Canadian counterparts who will shape post-secondary in the years to come.

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