



**Global Development of  
Community Colleges and  
Further Education Programs,  
Revised Edition**  
(Create Space Independent  
Publishing Platform, 2008 ,  
Continuum International Publishing  
Group, 2008, 418 pages)

**By P.A. Elsner, G.R. Boggs, &  
J.T. Irwin**

**Book Review**

By

**Uttam Gaulee  
University of Florida**

For someone with general interest and background in the internationalization of higher education and as a member of an independent policy forum working with community college in America, I was pleased to see this volume promising a useful resource for anyone working in the field. The community college is an American innovation in higher education and economics. By creating access to real economic opportunities for a large number of young men and women with increased educational attainment, the community college reduced income inequality (Brown, 2012). By focusing on multiple constituencies within the community, community colleges identified the community needs and provided increased opportunities for education for

larger numbers of both new, traditional-aged students and older incumbent workers. Mellow and Heelan (2014) argued that the community college model might form a powerful example for developing countries that are in need to educate an increasing percentage of their populations. Obviously, there was a clear need of a volume such as this one to provide insights on how/if this powerful idea cuts across the globe. The editors and contributors of this volume have done a tremendous job of fulfilling this gap by creating a useful resource for the leaders in educational administration and policy.

Paul Elsner, George Boggs, and Judith Irwin will be known to many higher education leaders, scholars and practitioners for having in 2008 edited a ground-breaking book on global advancement of community college (Elsner, Boggs, & Irwin, 2008), to which *Global Development of Community Colleges, and Further Education Programs ~ Revised Edition ~* might be regarded as a long-awaited sequel. Elsner and Boggs, and Irwin, are well placed to edit a book on this movement given their own extensive experience in community college leadership and deep commitment to engaging the world through the expansion of the powerful idea of American community colleges. Drawing on their experience as well as on the collective insights of the 50 other contributors, what these three editors have presented to the higher education community is a gift of knowledge distilled in a small volume of less than 400 pages.

As I unpacked the entire thirty-one chapters in Paul A. Elsner, George R. Boggs, and Judith T. Irwin's *Global Development of Community Colleges, Technical Colleges, and Further Education Programs (Revised Edition)*, I was impressed that the volume features systems from about three dozen countries providing alternative (to Ivory-tower-selective-institutions) pathways from a cross-section of the globe. This is one of the most authentic volumes in the field with a global coverage. Editors are global thought leaders in post secondary education and the contributors include high level policy makers, system architects, founders, administrators, international educators, trainers, and professors with a wide array of experiences from the respective institutions and/or countries. Chapters explicate contextual and specific issues of postsecondary education, many cross-cutting common threads such as affordance, relevance, governance, access, and accreditation.

Probably the most precious part of the book is in the very beginning where the editors provide insightful highlights of trends and patterns from lead chapters from various writers' observations and summary of the issues and conclusions that emerged from editors' comparison of each country's experience. for example,

- there are no universal solutions
- stakeholders can be better involved
- national governance affects higher education decisions
- most countries have central further education policies
- some countries remain in a state of flux
- culture can play a strong role

The volume is divided into seven sections covering various geographic areas of the earth. Each section then features specific countries within those geographic regions. Chapters mostly begin with a historical overview of how the development of institutions that provide postsecondary pathways. Highlighting the key issues of such institutions, the chapters and then goes on to provide the insightful analysis of current situation of these institutions including successes and/or challenges.

**Section ONE** is dedicated to Africa and contains two chapters. First chapter covers the French West Africa. The chapter author Sawadogo reviews historical, cultural, political rationale that led to the establishment of the technical school, and discuss their place and effectiveness in either West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Senegal, and Togo). The authors go beyond platitudes to provide recommendations on how technical schools can contribute to region's economic development. These suggestions are based on author's critical analysis of the impact of French colonial influence and strategy on cultural assimilation of Africans into French culture than on focus on training workforce for economic development. And second chapter gives special focus on South Africa's re-centralization of the system provides an intriguing policy case.

**SECTION TWO** covers the Americas featuring case studies from 8 countries: Brazil's growing education system, Canada's community colleges, Chile's experiment with private providers, Columbia's CERES program, Haiti's community colleges, Jamaica's experience of creating opportunities, Mexico's extension of higher education, and United States of America's community colleges.

**SECTION THREE** covers Asia by featuring a wide range of systems and structures throughout the continent covering eleven countries (including four from the Middle East). Chapters in this section provide insights on China's vocational and continuing education (includes a recent development in higher vocational and professional education (HVPE); Hong Kong's growing associate degrees; Indonesia's community college development; Japan's

transitioning institutions looking more like community colleges; Qatar's thorough planning process for community colleges; Singapore's commitment to education; Thailand's community college system; Turkey's vocational and technical schools of higher education; UAE's higher colleges of technology; Vietnam's community college development (global & local dialectic); and Yemen's community college system.

**SECTION FOUR** covers Europe by providing five cases from Denmark, England, Ireland, Netherlands, and Spain. Denmark's further education; England's entrepreneurial colleges; Ireland's further education system; Netherland's learning villages; and Spain's vocational system. Finland is surprisingly missing, however.

**SECTION FIVE** is dedicated to Oceania. By providing a separate section for Oceania, the volume presents three systems from Australia, New Zealand, and Kiribati. Australia's vocational education and technical sector; New Zealand's further education system; and Kiribati's technical and vocational education and training sector are discussed.

**SECTION SIX** provides a cross-continental perspective from India, Dominican Republic, and Georgia. Finally, **SECTION SEVEN** provides some helpful resources including lists of associations that provide development support for individuals and institutions serving a resource guide.

As the idea of community college translates across the globe, it is intriguing to see how the concept adapts to local contexts. Obviously, there is variations on terminology: community colleges, technical colleges, and further education. Overall, this revised edition describe the systems of postsecondary pathways in three dozen different countries across the globe shedding light on many critical issues of higher education.

Even though it is hard to find one framework that describes the various case studies making it somehow difficult to compare the cases, the value of book lies in providing a range of issues covered and unique aspects of these institutions described in their contextual contours. A precious resource in global higher education arena, the book also points to an important direction -- international partnerships for development. The editors and authors concur with Mellow and Katopes (2009) in arguing that the best way to address this new global challenge, is to adopt the framework embedded within the structure, mission, and ideals represented by the American community college model.

Edited by the global thought leaders and advocates of entrepreneurial spirit in post-secondary education, this volume is useful for policymakers, educators, and ministries throughout the world engaged in globalizing further education community college and technical college systems across the globe. Contributors include high-level policy makers and system architects, founders, administrators, international educators, and professors with wide array of experiences. The book provides a wide array of structures, history, and issues and challenges of further education. Hence, this authoritative and comprehensive volume on community college development in the global context is required reading for anyone interested in international higher education practice and policy - be it the faculty, administrators, researchers, policy analysts, and decision makers at every level. I think it would be most appropriate to conclude this review with the remarks of Dr. Brice Harris, the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges: "If you are involved in higher education, this is a must read!"

---

### **About the Reviewer**

Uttam Gaulee serves as program director at Community College Futures Assembly, an independent policy forum at University of Florida's Institute of Higher Education. His research interests include impacts of global economy in higher education.