Speculations on the Future of Higher Education

James L. Morrison
Professor Emeritus, UNC-Chapel Hill
Editor-in-Chief, Innovate
http://innovateonline.info
Change Drivers

- Demographics
- Globalization
- Economic Restructuring
- Information Technology
Demographic Change Drivers

- Ethnic identification mix is changing
- Age structure is changing
- Nature of students is changing
- Demand for access is increasing
Economic

- Globalization
- Economic Restructuring
- Downsizing
Constant training, retraining, job-hopping, and even career-hopping is the norm.
Graduates Must Be Able To

- Function in a global economy for job success in the 21st century
- Work effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds
- Work as a team member
- Use information technology tools effectively
- Function creatively and innovatively
- Access, analyze, process, and communicate information
- Engage in continuous, independent learning
The Internet Assists Educators To:

- Center learning around the student
- Provide intensive interaction about authentic data
- Focus on the strengths of individual (and more diverse) learners around the globe
- Make lifelong learning a practical reality
Technology-Enhanced Active Learning

- MIT’s Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department
- peer-to-peer learning
- x-tutor
Networked Enabled Open and Distance Education

- MIT’s Open Courseware Initiative
- MIT’s iLab
- Open Courseware Consortium
- Global education
The Changing Higher Education Environment

- Certification monopoly at risk
  - employers concerned about competency
  - employers relying less on diplomas
- Outcomes assessment coming on line
  - Western Governors University
  - Accreditation agencies
  - Bologna Process
- New competition
  - Traditional “service areas” fair game
  - New for-profit educational providers
Pew Learning and Technology Program

- BYU first-year writing course enrolls 3,400 students in about 170 sections redesigned; cost per student dropped 41%
- Drexel introduction to computer programming; cost per student dropped 36%
- Florida Gulf Coast into fine arts, cost per student for 2,400 students is $50 compared to $132 students in traditional format
The Changing Higher Education Environment

- The “bookless” campus
- e-Libraries
  - NetLibrary
  - Questia
  - XanEdu
  - Jones e-global Library
- Services
  - 24-7 reference desks
  - Online chat book advice
  - e-Book reading devices on loan
The Calendar

- Rio Salado College in Phoenix
- The University of Phoenix
Old Paradigm       New

- Faculty: lecture
- Faculty responsible for content, media, assessment
- Faculty role = actor
- Student role = empty vessel

- Faculty: projects
- Faculty work as part of instructional team
- Faculty role = director
- Student role = knowledge creator
Old Paradigm

- Semester/tri-semester/quarter
- Set enrollments (e.g., once a year)
- Institutions act independently

New

- Varying lengths of time for learning modules
- Continuous (e.g., once every two weeks)
- Institutions act with partners
Old Paradigm

› Degrees based on credit hours
› Information transfer via classrooms
› Libraries: stacks

New Paradigm

› Degrees based on competency exams
› Information transfer anytime, anywhere
› Libraries: Starbucks
Old Paradigm

- Publications refereed via professional associations and commercial publishers
- Print publication the primary mode of information transfer

New

- Institutions publish professors’ papers, drafts, notes via open Web access and sponsor professors’ manuscripts to refereed Web-based open access professional journals.
How do we assist educators meet the challenges of the new paradigm?
References

- US Higher Education in Transition
  http://horizon.unc.edu/courses/papers/InTransition.html

- Using a Futures Approach in Organizational and Instructional Development
  http://horizon.unc.edu/projects/seminars/ELME.html
References

- Education Leaders Forum (Paris, April, 2008)
  http://blogs.msdn.com/elf08/default.aspx
- Innovate-Ideagora
  http://innovate-ideagora.ning.com/