

# GLOBAL HE VALUES FOR A GLOBALIZED WORLD

- Published on May 12, 2022

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### **Global HE Values for a Globalized World**

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This article first appeared in [IAU Horizons issue, vol. 27, no. 1, 2022](#)

Higher education systems around the world have become more diverse and inclusive as the demand for higher learning has increased across all demographic groups and as societies have become increasingly knowledge-driven due to increased globalization, international trade, and technological change, among other factors.

### **Higher education challenges**

As a result, in higher education, new business models and institutional types have arisen in response to the growing demand of the emerging knowledge society. Thus, higher education is now widely viewed as a vehicle for social, economic, and technological growth at all levels.

In addition to the economic, social, and technological influences, higher education has also been confronted with various epistemic challenges, such as, how best to address different knowledge systems, how best to provision and deliver knowledge, and which pedagogical approaches are most appropriate and effective for facilitating the varied types of learning.

Moreover, higher education is also confronted with several challenges in which the relevance of some educational practices has come under pressure to change in order to better meet the social and economic needs of society as well as the personal learning needs of students. It is within this complex milieu of diverse educational systems, varied epistemologies, and emerging educational practices that higher education institutions continue to rethink their role and relevance in the modern era.

## **The importance of values**

Within this context, a renewed focus on values has emerged. Values can be defined as principles and beliefs that motivate or guide institutional behavior. Simply put, values are those ideas that are most important to the effective functioning of institutions. Values are those principles and beliefs that are considered most desirable and are often expressed through policies, professional and ethical standards, student outcomes, and the like. Values are necessary because they provide a framework for enduring standards of behavior, competence, and expectations.

Because higher education institutions continue to operate within an increasingly complex playing field, it is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that many higher education institutions are now re-evaluating themselves in order to better adapt to the contemporary realities of the modern era. More specifically, many higher education institutions have begun to reevaluate their mission, vision, and values statements in order to better align them with the contemporary realities of the modern era.

Having a clear understanding of values is also important because it helps inform an institution's position on key issues such as academic freedom, institutional autonomy, human rights, and diversity, equity, and inclusion, among other issues. It is imperative that higher education institutions define and communicate their values explicitly and clearly to all their stakeholders.

## **Global higher education values**

Thus, given the importance of values in defining the identity of higher education as a global system, two key questions arise:

- Is there a universal set of core values that all higher education institutions can ascribe to?
- Can the global higher education system be founded on a commonly accepted universal set of values that defines its core purpose(s)?

If the answer to these questions is yes, then, presumably, a core set of universal humanistic values can serve as a common framework for bridging a highly diverse higher education system.

As such, if values are one of the defining elements of a global higher education system, it follows that it is important to have a clear understanding of values so they can be reflected within an institution's vision, mission, and values statements, and, in turn, can help shape and bring clarity to an institution's policies and strategies.

For example, organizations such as the Magna Charta Observatory [1] have defined a core set of university values to guide higher education institutions. The interpretation of these global values is then implemented within the unique

political, cultural, and economic environment within which the institution is embedded.

### **Values as a positive force for change**

Research suggests that institutional values are linked to societal values [2]. Also, research such as Hofstede's value-dimensions model suggests a positive correlation between certain societal culture indicators and certain pedagogical approaches [3].

Because the modern higher education landscape is defined by increasing diversity and complexity, the International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association has undertaken a new book project titled, *Worldviews and Values in Higher Education*, to better understand the role of values in a contemporary higher education context and the role that values play at all levels of higher education. Defining a core set of universal humanistic values for the global higher education community will provide a contemporary framework to help institutions define their core values at an institutional level. This research will help institutional leaders understand the emerging role of values as a positive force for change in higher education.

### References

[1] [www.iau-aiu.net/Observatory-Magna-Charta-Universitatum](http://www.iau-aiu.net/Observatory-Magna-Charta-Universitatum)

[2] [www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org)

[3] <https://immi.se/intercultural/nr9/kragh.htm>

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### Suggested Citation:

Blessinger, P. and Singh, A. (2022). Global HE values for a globalized world, IAU Horizons, volume 27, number 1, <https://www.iau-aiu.net/IAU-Horizons-issue-vol-27-no-1-2022>

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