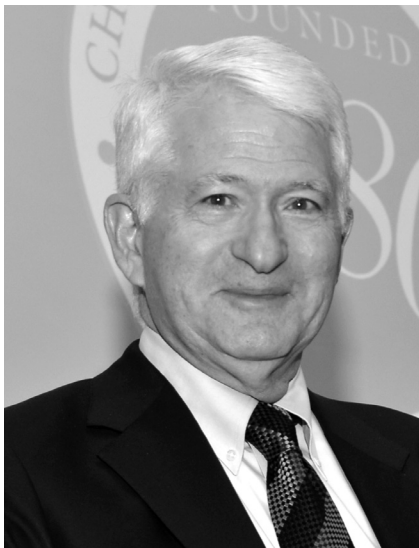


From Local to Global: Public Research Universities in the 21st Century

On February 4, 2016, the Academy hosted a meeting at the University of California, Los Angeles, on public research universities in the twenty-first century. The speakers included Gene Block (Chancellor of the University of California, Los Angeles), Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (Wasserman Dean of the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies), and Kim A. Wilcox (Chancellor of the University of California, Riverside). The program, which served as the Academy's 2033rd Stated Meeting, included a welcome from Jonathan F. Fanton (President of the American Academy). The following is an edited transcript of the discussion.



Gene Block

Gene Block is Chancellor of the University of California, Los Angeles. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2010.

Our discussion today goes to the heart of our identity as a public research university that is both local and global. That dual mission is a challenge and creates tension among our stakeholders. We must ask ourselves, as others are asking, what is the value proposition?

This year, UCLA received 97,000 applications for admissions. We will accept international students and nonresident domestic students, and not every qualified California resident will gain entry. Why are we educating international students when our

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own daughters and sons can't get in? I hear this regularly.

Why are faculty engaged in research in Asia and Africa when we have enormous problems right here in Los Angeles? Why are we so distributed in our research interests? These are important and relevant questions that we need to address before others come up with their own answers.

Adding to this tension, the California legislature has introduced legislation that would cap nonresident undergraduate enrollment in the University of California (UC) system at its current level of 15.5 percent for the nine undergraduate campuses. Assembly Bill (AB) 1711 would also require that 50 percent of revenue from international and out-of-state students be used to support the enrollment of more California students at all UC campuses. Should AB 1711 become law and were UC to exceed the imposed cap on nonresident students, the state legislature could withhold funds from the university.

I was struck by a comment made by one of the bill's sponsors. He was quoted in the media as saying, "Out-of-state and interna-

tional students enhance college campuses by bringing a diversity of experiences and perspectives." I agree with that; however, enrollment of nonresident students cannot come at the expense of access for Californians. How can we manage our responsibilities to a region and a state along with our efforts to remain competitive on the international stage?

As a public institution, we are an engine of social mobility and economic opportunity, especially for deserving students from underrepresented populations, and much of the underrepresented population we serve comes from within the state. Our healthcare and other human services improve the lives of countless members of our community.

We address big city challenges, from pollution to poverty. Our extension programs provide personal development and professional advancement to thousands who are striving to get ahead in life. UCLA's extension service is one of the nation's largest providers of professional continuing education, offering over five thousand diverse courses per year and serving approximately thirty thousand people as part of our ex-

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tensive local role. Most important, we educate our students to be good citizens, people with an orientation toward service who participate fully in civic life.

A myriad of national college rankings track our efforts as a public university, applying a diverse set of metrics, many of which are important to the state. For instance, *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*, in its ranking of the best college values, takes into account admissions and retention rates, student-faculty ratio, and four-year graduation rates, as well as tuition and data on financial aid, and student debt load upon graduation.

Kiplinger's also looks at the financial outcomes for students who receive federal financial aid, using a salary yardstick to estimate the median earnings of each university's former students ten years after they enrolled in the institution. Other well-known national rankings focus on freshman retention rates or the economic diversity of the student body.

The metrics for measuring global excellence and influence are strikingly divergent from those used for national models. International rankings such as the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* and the *Shanghai Jiao Tong University Academic Ranking of World Universities* do not recognize the many ways public universities serve the local community.

Instead they tend to focus on the research power of institutions, measuring research productivity, tallying citations and scholarly publications, and tracking research funding. Whatever one thinks of them, they have

increased in number and importance, and they affect our reputation and our ability to attract top students and faculty.

The challenge for us as leaders and faculty is to find a creative way to reconcile the local and the global roles of our institutions, especially in the minds of the general public for whom the value proposition of the public research university is not always clear. Many California citizens struggle to understand why we accept international students, why we are spread all over the world when so much needs to be done right here.

We need to demonstrate to the public that the presence of international students and faculty enriches the classroom experience by teaching our local students about diversity and the increasing globalization of research. Employers are looking to hire graduates who have cross-cultural competencies that enable them to learn and adapt to new situations and surroundings. Exposure to an international student body helps develop these skills.

We must show taxpayers that many of our international students will eventually settle in the United States. They represent a real potential for strong immigration to the state. But even those who return to their home countries may become our partners in international business, research, education, and healthcare – partnerships that can be valuable to our local economy.

We need to emphasize to our local community that research our faculty conducts overseas is directly beneficial to us here at home. From stopping the spread of pan-

demics to developing new solutions to issues that impact the environment, education, and the economy, this critical research activity has a local effect. Conversely, our local activities have global impacts. What makes for a better Los Angeles – in terms of sustainability, smart manufacturing, education, and disease prevention – makes for a better world as well.

We need to draw attention to and enhance the synergy that is present in this tension between the local and the global. We need to demonstrate that restricting one in favor of the other ultimately does a disservice to both. Let's pursue that synergy with all the creativity, focus, and vision we possess. This is our challenge. I think it is answerable, but we have to do a better job of explaining to our local community the importance of public research universities that have a truly global reach.



Marcelo Suárez-Orozco

Marcelo Suárez-Orozco is Wasserman Dean of the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2014.

A few years ago, I was in Manhattan, Kansas, giving a university lecture on the anthropology of mass migration, the topic of my own scholarly work. After the lecture, after the dinner, after the receptions, I was politely asked by my host if I would mind spending an hour or so with the global education program office to talk about their global initiatives. From then on, I noticed a soft pattern.

Routinely during lectures, whether at Michigan State or the University of Nebraska or many other public and private research universities, the issue of globalization and global programs would come up. Even Santa Monica Community College here in Los Angeles advertises itself on NPR radio as a “global community college for the twenty-first century.”

To be a university, public or private, large or small, in the twenty-first century is to be in the business of global. The global now

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lives in the cognitive schemas, in the taken-for-granted practices of students, faculty, administrators, philanthropists, and many others. They live in these spaces for disparate and not always commendable reasons.

In the twenty-first century, from the point of view of students, you are not having a culturally normative college experience if you don't have a menu of global options. This is true in Manhattan, New York and in Manhattan, Kansas. This is actually less a case of “it's the economy, stupid” and more a case of “it's the culture.” To be a university now, to be a student now, is to have a global set of options.

In reflecting on the challenges and opportunities that public research universities face, I often get the feeling that what is true is not necessarily new, and what is new is not necessarily true. What we now call “global” is in the mitochondrial DNA of scholarship, of science, of the humanities, of the very spirit that animates the research university now and always.

We think of Einstein, von Neumann, and Gödel coming together at the Institute for Advanced Study to realize the brilliant dream of Abraham Flexner, Louis Bamberger, and Caroline Bamberger Fuld. We think of the Frankfurt School scholars at the University in Exile (The New School). We think of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and the other French intellectuals at the École Libre des Hautes Études during World War II. We think of the French, Lévi-Strauss, but also Fernand Braudel and Roger Bastide, along with scholars from Italy, Spain, Germany, and other European countries creating the nucleus of today's University of São Pau-

lo. We think of the Spanish Civil War refugees founding La Casa de España en México, which later became El Colegio de México. The list goes on and on. So when I hear the hype about NYU in Abu Dhabi or Yale in Singapore, my mind whispers, “Been there, done that.”

What do we mean by *globalization*? From the time you woke up this morning to the time you go to bed tonight, markets will have moved a trillion dollars, the equivalent of one-tenth to one-eighteenth of the entire U.S. economy, across national boundaries. That is the first of the three Ms of globalization. The second is media: the new information, communication, and media technologies that not only deterritorialize labor, which is new in human history, but also put a new premium on the knowledge-intensive work we do. The third M of globalization is mass migration, the human face of globalization.

This last M is, I believe, the most relevant to public research universities in our great cities in the twenty-first century. The dimensions of today's migrations are pharaonic, monumental. Over a billion people today live lives shaped by the experience of immigration, including 250 million transnational migrants – of whom, some 60 to 70 million, half women and children, have been forcefully displaced – and an estimated 800 million internal migrants.

By the middle of this century India alone will have migrated some 700 million people from the rural hinterlands to the cities, a population almost equivalent to two United States put together. In China, more children are impacted by immigration than there are

people in Canada, and hundreds of millions of people are separated from family members because one part of the family lives in Los Angeles, another in Armenia, another in Israel, another in Mexico, another in Guatemala.

For the first time in human history, every continent on earth is experiencing a mass movement of people. Unlike earlier mass migrations, however, such as those during World War II or the Cold War (e.g., the exoduses from Vietnam and Cuba), today's mass displacements of people result from collapsing or anemic states. We have all been witnessing the cataclysm unfolding in Europe as the displaced in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (together representing 80 percent of new arrivals) seek new refuge.

Because of immigration worldwide, cities are more diverse than ever before. Leicester and Amsterdam will soon – probably this year – become the first European cities with nonwhite majorities. Europe's largest port, Rotterdam, is 45 percent immigrant. Frankfurt today is about 30 percent immigrant.

encompasses the entire range of the human condition. Although unique in human history, this is now the new normal. The same pattern was repeated this morning in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague – and that's just the Netherlands.

Today Los Angeles is the world's second capital. Thomas Jefferson once said, "We all have two cities, our own and Paris." Today people around the world have two capitals, their own and LA. From Armenia to Korea, Mexico to Iran, Cambodia to Israel, LA is home to the second- or third-largest number of citizens of more than a dozen states. We are the other Armenia. We are the other Cambodia. We are the other Israel, the other Vietnam, the other El Salvador, the other Mexico.

University of California President Janet Napolitano says, "At UC, we teach for California. We research for the world." A way out of the contradictory demand to serve the local and remain players in the global is to create, to engineer more credible synergies between the global and our own backyards.

weekends to learn Spanish. He said, "You can't run the greatest city on earth if you don't speak Spanish in the twenty-first century." Secretary Clinton once told me that without Spanish you can't be an effective politician or a senator from New York City.

In the great cities of the twenty-first century, the global is the new local. We need to engineer better ways to make that reality work in the service of basic research, in the service of teaching, learning, creativity, and citizenship.

A way out of the contradictory demand to serve the local and remain players in the global is to create, to engineer more credible synergies between the global and our own backyards.

Sweden is a fascinating case. A century ago, Sweden sent over 1.5 million immigrants to the New World. Thanks to its 1.8 million new immigrants, it has now gained back nearly 100 percent of the population shed a century ago. In Stockholm today, 40 percent of schoolchildren come from non-Swedish refugee or immigrant homes.

In New York this morning, children from approximately 180 countries and territories got up, got into subways, got into cars, got into buses, and went to school. One city now

Better yet, the global in our backyard. Growing numbers of transnational citizens today live both "here" and "there." This is the fundamental reality of the twenty-first century.

Mexican history is made in Los Angeles. Haitian history is made in Miami. Dominican history is made in Manhattan. This, like the second law of thermodynamics, is not going away. You can't be a politician in the twenty-first century and not understand that. Michael Bloomberg once told me he would go to the Dominican Republic on the



Kim A. Wilcox

Kim A. Wilcox is Chancellor of the University of California, Riverside.

Most of us here are academics in one way or another. When we wear that hat, we can't do anything but agree that we have a responsibility to be globally engaged as universities in service to our students, our state, and our nation.

But I ask you to take off your academic regalia for a moment, put on a baseball cap, and imagine you are Joe- or Jane-six-pack. My mother, a daughter of the Great Depression, graduated valedictorian of her high school class of twenty-five people. Her father died when she was nine, and so she never researched going to college, never had a sense of what a university is or what it does. Let me tell you about a university as seen through my mom's eyes.

My university, the University of California, Riverside, is sixty years old, or about half as old as UCLA. We have twenty-two thousand students, a bit more than half of UCLA's forty-two thousand. And we are not too far away: an hour and 15 minutes some days, three hours on other days.

We all know the solutions. Find supportive and sustaining international partnerships. Find research collaborations that feed on one another so faculty members engage in a way that encourages students to engage. Create study abroad programs that complement that.

Our undergraduate student body is 97 percent California residents, 2 percent international, and 1 percent nonresident domestic. We are 86 percent students of color. We are 57 percent Pell eligible, the highest rate in the country. We are almost 60 percent first generation, and we are getting a lot of credit around the country for having graduation rates that are relatively comparable across all groups of students.

In most places, richer students graduate at a higher rate than poorer students, and African-American students don't graduate at the same rate as Caucasian students. At Riverside, they all graduate at about the same rate, which is amazing.

My mother would say, "Kim, you have done a great job. You are serving your state in a very inclusive way. You are assuring that students from all stripes and backgrounds succeed. I can't think of anything better for a state university to do than that."

Now put your academic hat back on.

I realize I basically have a large California high school running in Riverside. Most of the students are actually from Southern California. They have spent their whole life in the same political system, in the same environment, in the same culture with the same kind of people, first in grade school, then junior high, then high school, and now college.

If you think about the role of a public research university from the eyes of these students, I sincerely believe we have done our students a great injustice. People don't ap-

preciate how far behind California is in educational access at the advanced level. We are 47th in the nation in the percentage of our students who attend college, and 80 percent of those who do pursue a postsecondary education attend a public university: community college, Cal State, or UC. We owe it to the future of the state to think differently about this.

By running a large, research-oriented university that caters essentially to California residents, I am doing what my mother and many other citizens think is the right thing to do. But I know I am doing a disservice. So

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what do we do? We all know the solutions. Find supportive and sustaining international partnerships. Find research collaborations that feed on one another so faculty members engage in a way that encourages students to engage. Create study abroad programs that complement that.

But those programs take investments. So now put on your chancellor's hat.

We probably receive between \$20,000 and \$25,000 more per student for an international student than for a California stu-

dent. If I had a thousand international students, that is as much as \$25 million. I could seed a whole bunch of the programs I need to make the environment whole for my California students. To get to where UCLA is, with about one-quarter of my students from outside California, I would need six thousand international students.

That is \$120 – \$150 million. Think of the transformation that sort of money would make on behalf of the twenty-two thousand California students who are there already, who will continue to be there. The rhetoric may sound like a chancellor grubbing for money, trying to balance a budget, but it is driven by an entirely different set of values. Part of our challenge in the twenty-first century as public research universities is to help shape that rhetoric in a way that is meaningful to all of our constituencies. I think it is clear that we have failed in large measure on this point.

Still, I have the benefit of being a part of the largest and best university system in the world. Many universities around the country don't have the research prowess Riverside does, they don't have the support systems Riverside does, but they have the same challenges, and their student populations are going to shape America in the future. As individual scholars and administrators we have an obligation, a responsibility, and an opportunity to think about this in the local sense. ■

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