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Director of ACSDE and Editor of AJDE: Dr. Michael G. Moore.

DEOSNEWS Editor: Melody M. Thompson

 EDITORIAL

One manifestation of distance education's expansion and maturation is the increasing number of publications being written by scholars and practitioners in the field. Early reports intended to describe or justify the practice of teaching and learning at a distance have been joined by thoughtful studies on a variety of specific aspects of distance education. This issue of DEOSNEWS describes a number of publications that will be of interest to distance education students and professionals. A complete book review by Peter Dirr evaluates a publication from the Open Learning Institute on economic issues in distance education. Also included are listings and annotations of 1) publications sent to the American Center for the Study of Distance Education (ACSDE) for review and 2) new publications from ACSDE.

BOOK REVIEW

Peter Dirr

Vice-president, Public Services Telecommunications Corporation

p.dirr@CapAccess.org

Economics of Distance Education: Recent Experience. G. Dhanarajan, P. K. Ip, K. S. Yuen, C. Swales. Hong Kong: Open Learning Institute Press, 1994, 280 pp.

Economics of Distance Education: Recent Experience is the first publication of the Open Learning Institute Press, the publishing arm of the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong. Written by the then Director of the Institute and three faculty members, the book comprises a selection of papers presented at the 1993 Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in knowing how different institutions consider the economics of their distance education programs.

The twenty presentations chosen for inclusion in this book detail the results of work in England, India, Korea, Japan, Canada, China, Hong Kong, West Indies, Thailand, Australia, and New Zealand. Some of the articles reflect an assessment of the economics of the distance education programs of individual institutions: the British Open University, the Korea Air Correspondence University, the University of the Air of Japan, the Open Learning Agency (Canada), and the Open Learning Institute (Hong Kong). Other articles examine broader questions relating to the economics of various approaches to distance education: comparative costs, economic impact on students, and distance education's benefits to society, for example.

For the most part, the articles are easy to read and understand.

Many include charts and graphs that illustrate the points the authors are making and the data they present to defend those points. The breadth and depth of the articles make readers wish they had been able to attend the conference and discuss some of the issues with the presenters.

In "Comparative Cost of Distance Teaching in Higher Education: Scale and Quality," Hilary Perraton of the University of the West Indies, Barbados, offers an especially honest study of comparative costs of distance education courses at sixteen tertiary institutions in various parts of the world. I use the term "honest" because Perraton takes pains to point out the limitations that plague most comparative cost studies: the quality of data gathered by or from the institutions varies; the institutions do not share a single form of distance education; the balance of subjects taught and research conducted varies from institution to institution; open universities make different assumptions about their staff members' duties than do conventional institutions; studies rarely match groups of students studying at a distance and conventionally; and few studies mention graduation rates.

In spite of those rather severe limitations, Perraton is able to draw some conclusions on the macro level. The data have a consistent pattern showing that costs per student are lower for distance education programs than they are in conventional systems. However, the graduation rate information necessary to substantiate a conclusion of lower cost per graduate is lacking. Perraton also notes that because many countries' funding policies for tertiary education favor full-time students, those studying at a distance--generally part-time students--often bear a higher "burden of fees" than do those in conventional systems, even though part-time students are usually less able to afford those fees. This situation might explain, in part, the apparently higher drop-out rates at some distance education institutions.

Finally, Perraton notes that few studies comparing the cost of conventional and distance learning deal with the issue of quality. He concludes with the suggestion that this research challenge deserves considerable attention.

In "Comparison of Public Funding of Distance Education and Other Modes of Higher Education in England," G. Peters and J. S. Daniel of the Open University, United Kingdom examine funding patterns of tertiary institutions in two sectors in England. This study is especially interesting because England has recently moved to a unitary system of higher education. Nevertheless, a double standard of funding still exists: Part-time students are funded differently from full-time students, and most students at distance education institutions attend part time. As a result, students at distance education institutions such as the Open University "still receive markedly lower public funding when compared with full time equivalent (students) elsewhere."

A similar line of discussion is followed by Jarin Teswanitch of the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) in Thailand in "Educational Investment for Distance Education: Inequality that Needs to Be Changed." The students who take advantage of the "open system" in Thailand tend to be very poor and have to work for a living. Those who attend the traditional "closed system" usually come from middle- or upper-class families who, with

income almost four times that of the poorer students, could well afford to pay the cost of higher education. However, Teswanitch found that STOU students pay about 9,000 to 10,000 baht per year for direct study expenses compared to 2,500 to 4,000 baht per year paid by those in the closed system. Overall, the state has allocated a budget to the open system of approximately eighteen times less than that to the closed system.

The situation seems to be no different in India. In "Some Economic Aspects of Conventional and Distance Education Systems in India," C. Gajendra Naidu of the Indira Ghandi National Open University (IGNOU) explains that the "conventional colleges depend heavily on government funding, receiving 94.18% of their total income. They receive only 4.48% from students..." (p. 60). In contrast, IGNOU recovers about 26.37% of its income from students, and another distance education institution, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, recovers as much as 71.10% of its total income from students. Naidu's article is of further interest because it examines and compares some of the component costs of higher education: course-related costs (e.g., course design, development and production of course materials, and maintenance of courses) and student-related costs (e.g., duplicating and distributing materials, student counseling, and other student support services). Naidu did not compare drop-out rates and the cost per graduate in the open and conventional systems of education because, as in Perraton's example, data were lacking. The sparse data that do exist are used well by M. M. Ansari of the Association of Indian Universities in "Economics of Distance Education in India."

Other articles in this collection are as interesting as those highlighted above. Although they do not lead to a unified approach that would permit a cross-institution, cross-country comparison of costs, the articles provide the reader with a sense of the relative costs and funding strategies for distance education in many locales. They also suggest some areas of research appropriate for international collaboration.

One problem some readers of Economics of Distance Education may encounter is a difficulty in understanding the references to economic models based on local currencies. To make the financial data more understandable, readers are advised to tear out the "Currency and Interest Rates" chart published in most daily newspapers and keep it handy when reading the articles.

This first publishing venture serves the Open Learning Institute Press well and sets a level of expectation that future publications will have to strive hard to match.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The books described in this section were sent to the American Center for the Study of Distance Education for review. Readers interested in ordering should contact the publishers directly; these materials are NOT available from ACSDE.

Brave New Schools, Jim Cummins and Dennis Sayers, New York: St. Martin's Press, 384 pp., ISBN 0 312 12669 7.

This book represents both a vision and a guide for challenging cultural illiteracy in the next century. The technological changes that are transforming our world can either exacerbate or ameliorate educational disparities between rich and poor. The authors of Brave New Schools argue "for the rights of all children to gain access to the communication tools that are essential for genuine democratic participation and that will define the workplace of tomorrow" (viii). To advance this goal, they discuss the potential for a global community of students, teachers, and parents connected by the Internet for communication across geographical and cultural barriers. Additionally, they provide a guide to the Internet that includes K-12 networking resources, a listing of available published materials, and descriptions of successful networking relationships.

Computer Assisted and Open Access Education (Aspects of Educational and Training Technology XXVIII), Fred Percival, Ray Land, and Denis Edgar-Nevill (eds.), London: Kogan-Page, 1995, 328 pp., ISBN 0 7494 1414 6.

Representing the proceedings of the 1994 International Conference of the Association for Educational and Training Technology, this volume addresses key questions related to educational technology: What are the characteristics of these new technologies? How will they change the learning experience? What will be the effect on the role of the teacher? How will the culture and management of our organizations change? Contributors discuss current theory and best practices on topics including multimedia and hypermedia; open and distance learning; computer-based tutorials; computer-based training; course and academic management; and use of information technologies to cut costs and increase flexibility.

Distance Education. An Annotated Bibliography, Terry Ann Mood, Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1995, 202 pp., ISBN 1 56308 160 1.

Teaching and learning, rather than technology, is the focus of this annotated bibliography designed to provide information necessary to teachers, students, and administrators involved in distance education. The sources included are organized into seven main topic areas related to distance education: history, philosophy, management and administration, the teacher, the student, special groups served, and the international scene. Two appendices list journals in distance education and on-line distance education resources, while the author, title, and subject indices facilitate the finding of specific information sources.

Distance Education: A Systems View, Michael G. Moore and Greg Kearsley, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1996, 300 pp., ISBN 0 534 26496 4.

Distance Education: A Systems View presents a comprehensive introduction to distance education. Designed to synthesize key concepts, issues, theories, and scholarly research on distance education, it uses a systems perspective to integrate the many elements of a distance education program, including content, design, communications, interaction, learner environment, and management. Additionally, the authors situate distance education within both its historical and international contexts, provide relevant examples of each topic discussed, and suggest areas for further research.

Distance Education for Language Teachers, Ron Howard and Ian McGrath (eds.), Clevedon, UK and Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, 1995, 224 pp., ISBN 1 85359 291 9.

Distance Education for Language Teachers targets language teacher educators, graduate students and researchers in language education, and those involved in educating teachers at a distance in other content areas. Writers of the individual chapters work in major United Kingdom institutions concerned with distance education and language teacher education. These authors take a variety of perspectives on the topic, ranging from broad views of the advantages and disadvantages of distance education for language teacher training to specific case studies.

In Search of the Virtual Class. Education in an Information Society, John Tiffin and Lalita Rajasingham, London and New York: Routledge, 1995, 222 pp., ISBN 0 415 12483 2.

Preparing people for life in an information society should begin with teaching via the technology of an information society; this premise provides the focus for In Search of the Virtual Class. The authors examine the nature of education as a system of communication and apply their findings to the traditional classroom setting, which has successfully resisted replacement by various telelearning technologies. Building on their analysis of the traditional classroom as a powerful communication system, the authors suggest that the combination of existing technologies and technologies currently being developed--virtual reality, nanotechnology, and artificial intelligence--will both challenge and complement the traditional classroom.

The Internet University. College Courses by Computer. D. Corrigan, Harwich, MA: Cape Software, 1996, 500 pp., ISBN 0 9648112 0 0.

This publication represents a distillation the country's most comprehensive database of college courses offered on line. Readers will find valuable information about choosing an Internet provider, getting on line, and selecting a course or courses from the more than 700 offered by over 30 colleges and universities. The Internet University is organized around four main topics: fundamentals of the Internet, the catalogue of courses, study resources, and equivalency and personal enrichment courses. The audience for this publication includes those whose family or job responsibilities interrupted their academic progress, people needing to upgrade their job skills or knowledge requirements, career counselors, and high school and university educators and administrators. The Internet University has a companion website at URL: <http://www.caso.com>.

Open and Distance Learning Today, Fred Lockwood (ed.), London and New York: Routledge, 1995, 395 pp., ISBN 0 415 12759 9.

Contributors from around the world together provide a comprehensive account of research and development in open and distance learning. Articles are organized around eight topic areas: trends and directions, the student experience, information technology, learner use of media, course design and assessment, learner support and management, textual materials, and evaluation

and quality. Lessons from the first generation of open and distance teaching and learning provide "the keys to successful practices, they describe the wheels that do not need to be reinvented, and they show new ways of accessing knowledge and skills that can liberate millions of human beings" (p. xv).

Open Learning in Further and Higher Education, Roger Lewis and Richard Freeman, Lancaster, UK: Framework Press Educational Publishers, 1994, 128 pp., ISBN 1 85008 106 9.

This staff development manual is aimed at those responsible for planning open learning programs in further (continuing) and higher education contexts. Included are six units covering the topics of definitions, assessment, learning materials, learner support, program management, evaluation, and costing. Each unit is introduced with information for the leader/instructor on the purpose of the session, approximate length of the session, necessary resources, recommended grouping criteria, and tasks as leader. A glossary of common pedagogical terms is appended.

Putting the Student First. Learner-Centred Approaches in Open and Distance Learning, Alan Tait, ed., Cambridge, UK: Open University East Anglia Region, 1995, 265 pp., ISBN 0 7492 7308 9.

Demonstrating "in the variety of their provenance the international nature both of the occasion and of the issues," this volume presents the collected conference papers of the Sixth Cambridge International Conference on Open and Distance Learning held in July 1995 at the Open University United Kingdom. Contributors from a variety of geographical and educational contexts focus on open and distance learning from a number of perspectives: characteristics of learners, instructional design, evaluation, student support, etc. The common focus on student-centered" approaches draws together the authors of these individual papers into a global commitment to "revolutionary change" in educational philosophy and practice.

Unlocking Open Learning, Michael S. Parer, Victoria, Australia: Centre for Distance Learning, Monash University, 1994, 264 pp., ISBN 0 7326 0527 X.

The availability of new technologies is challenging those in higher education to expand open learning opportunities for students. In Unlocking Open Learning, distance educators from Australia and the United Kingdom discuss pedagogical and professional issues relating to open learning. These discussions are used as the basis for the development of a theory of open and distance learning "as a movement from behavioural psychology and instructional technology towards constructivism, post modernism, cognitive psychology and phenomenology" (p. 11).

Why the Information Highway? Lessons from Open & Distance Learning, Judith M. Roberts and Erin M. Keough (eds.), Toronto: Trifolium Books, 1995, 276 pp. ISBN 1 895579 39 2.

This publication is a resource of practical applications from the field of distance education that can be used to interpret and exploit the challenges and opportunities offered by the new communications and information technologies, that is, the "information highway." Why the Information Highway? is organized into three parts:

Emerging Issues, Case Studies, and Analysis. Contributors, whose work is grounded in research and practical experience, provide information and perspectives useful to both experts and novices who use information technologies in teaching, training, or learning activities.

Writing Open Learning Materials, Richard Freeman and Roger Lewis, Lancaster, UK: Framework Press Educational Publishers, 1994, 128 pp., ISBN 1 85008 107 7.

The activities in this staff development manual are designed to provide well-tested, step-by-step direction in the writing of open learning materials for further (continuing) and higher education contexts. Adaptation of the workshop activities presented here can expand their applicability to schools and industrial training contexts, as well. The topics covered include preparation, principles applicable to all media, writing for nonprint media, writing a study guide, preparing supplementary materials, and the writer's role in the production process. The overview at the beginning of each unit provides information on the purpose of the session, necessary resources, recommended grouping criteria, and tasks for the leader.

ACSDE PUBLICATIONS

The following publications are available from the American Center for the Study of Distance Education. Interested readers may obtain more information by contacting the Center:

ACSDE

The Pennsylvania State University
403 S. Allen Street, Suite 206
University Park PA 16801-5202
Tel: (814) 863-3764
Fax: (814) 865-5878
E-mail KJB8@PSUVM.PSU.EDU

Please include your mailing address on any request for information.

ACSDE RESEARCH MONOGRAPH SERIES

This series is published in conformity with the Center's missions of promoting distance education research, scholarship, and teaching and serving as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of knowledge about distance education. It complements the comprehensive scope of The American Journal of Distance Education by providing a forum for articles of a more technical or specialized nature.

ACSDE Research Monograph No. 10

Internationalism in Distance Education: A Vision for Higher Education

These selected papers from the International Distance Education Conference held at The Pennsylvania State University in June 1994 focus on the practice of teaching and learning across national

borders. The papers of twenty-two authors representing nine different countries discuss the techniques of successful international distance instruction, the challenges of administration, the development of policy, and the problems and potentials of accelerating exchanges between different cultures around the world. This monograph is edited by Melody M. Thompson with an introduction by Michael G. Moore.

ACSDE Research Monograph No. 11
Distance Education Symposium 3: Policy and Administration

Monograph No. 11 comprises selected articles based on discussion papers presented at the Third Distance Education Research Symposium held at Penn State in May 1995. Edited by Becky S. Duning (symposium discussion moderator) and Von V. Pittman, this publication presents the perspectives of distance educators from the United States, Canada, and Mexico on topics such as partnerships, national initiatives, and faculty incentives. Also included are the two keynote addresses.

ACSDE Research Monograph No. 12
Distance Education Symposium 3: Instruction

This second monograph based on the Third Distance Education Symposium focuses on instruction. Included are papers related to interaction in a variety of instructional settings, teaching and learning processes in distance education, and library support. Michael F. Beaudoin, who served as discussion moderator for this topic, is editor of the monograph.

READINGS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION SERIES

Publications in the Readings in Distance Education Series comprise articles selected from _The American Journal of Distance Education_ that focus on a single topic. The Readings are designed to provide instructional and resource materials for those involved in distance education activities, particularly in training and educational environments.

Readings in Distance Education No. 4
Video-Based Communications in Distance Education
 Edited by Michael G. Moore and Margaret A. Koble

This newest volume of selected articles from _The American Journal of Distance Education_ features article reprints from Volumes 1 through 8. It focuses on learners, course design, instruction, and policy issues related to video-based telecommunications in distance education.

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