

# Recommendations to AACSB International from the Globalization of Management Education Task Force



AACSB International –  
The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business  
777 South Harbour Island Boulevard  
Suite 750  
Tampa, Florida 33602-5730 USA  
Tel: +1-813-769-6500  
Fax: +1-813-769-6559  
[www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)

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## **Recommendations to AACSB International from the Globalization of Management Education Task Force**

We have just completed a three-year study of the globalization of management education. In *Globalization of Management Education: Changing International Structures, Adaptive Strategies, and the Impact on Institutions* we summarize what we learned from the study for management educators and others with a stake or interest in the industry. The report describes an industry in which globalization has begun but has thus far come up short of achieving its full potential. The book closes with a discussion of the implications of management education globalization for various constituents and the actions they should take. This document is intended as a supplemental report focused on the potential role of AACSB in responding to the challenges of globalization.

Through AACSB, business schools can and should do more to accelerate the pace of globalization, improve the success of business schools in responding to globalization, and manage the benefits and costs of globalization. Working toward these goals is important because of the impact that globalization has more broadly on business and society. By augmenting accreditation standards and processes, rethinking accreditation strategy, expanding services to help business schools improve, and by redoubling efforts to collect and disseminate data and information, AACSB can make a substantial and positive difference for quality management education, business, and society.

### **I. Accreditation: Standards, Processes, and Strategy**

Generally speaking, accreditation, as well as related quality assurance and regulatory schemes, serve two purposes. First, for the institution and the higher education system of which it is a part, accreditation is a process and framework that enables and fosters quality improvement. Through accreditation, an institution holds itself accountable for its commitment to maintain high quality. The institution identifies areas for improvement and acts to enhance the quality of the services it offers and the activities in which it engages. Second, for the institution's stakeholders (students,

organizations, and the community), accreditation is an indicator of quality along a given dimension or set of dimensions that informs the development of future relationships between those stakeholders and the institution. We refer to the first purpose as “quality improvement” and the second purpose as “signaling.”

The globalization of management education has increased the demand for improvement frameworks as more business schools have sought to increase quality as well as their reputations for quality. Increasing mobility of the participants in management education has also amplified the need for credible signals about the quality promises made not only to attract students and employers, but also to attract qualified faculty. The globalization of management education has especially made international accreditation programs that stretch across borders more important (valuable to society) and desirable. We see international accreditation as having the most potential to accelerate and improve the globalization of management education.

Unfortunately, accreditation programs worldwide are highly inconsistent. We see substantial variation in the philosophies of accreditations, which shape their approaches to monitoring, control, quality assurance, and influence. Important differences also exist in the scope of the accreditation review. While some standards and processes focus on individual degree programs, others focus on a segment of the institution or its activities (e.g., the business school and/or array of business programs), and yet others focus on the entire array of activities supported by an institution. Differences occur in procedures and enforcement, such as the amount of time between reviews, the level and form of reporting for which the school is responsible, and the level of guidance or assistance provided to schools that seek accreditation. Finally, no two accreditations have the same criteria. Even among accreditations that operate with the same scope of review (i.e., program, unit, or institution), they may have substantial variations in their standards, which schools must demonstrate they have achieved.

Accreditation can be examined at two levels: the school level and industry level. The main concerns at the school level are (a) educational objectives and curriculum, (b) intellectual contributions, and (c) strategies and processes for achieving the educational objectives. At the industry level, the main concern is whether accreditation is fulfilling its mission to advance high-quality management education worldwide.

### *School Level—Content and Skills*

The AACSB accreditation standards identify and specify broad knowledge and skill areas such as “multicultural and diversity understanding” that should be learned by graduates at both the undergraduate level and master’s level as well as the area of “domestic and global environments of organizations” that is more relevant to the master’s level. However, the standards rightfully do not stipulate the specific content, concepts, and techniques that ought to be learned by graduates of programs within these areas. Nor do the standards specify that the learning must be attached to a particular course or sequence of courses. To develop and enforce this type of detail in a field that is as fluid and diverse as management would certainly be disastrous.

On the other hand, despite the fact that specifying the content of curricula would be a difficult task, it is a foregone conclusion that businesses expect business schools to prepare graduates for a global environment. Standard 15, which addresses curriculum management, is accompanied by a special statement that “contents of the learning experiences provided by programs should be both current and relevant to needs of business and management positions.” In fact, the example given to illustrate the main point is that “present day curricula will prepare graduates to operate in a business environment that is global in scope. Graduates should be prepared to interact with persons from other cultures and to manage in circumstances where business practices and social conventions are different from the graduate’s native country.” The statement goes on to say that curricula that exclude globalization would not normally be considered current and relevant.

The evidence collected in Chapter 4 of the report suggests a divergence between what we expect to observe based on accreditation standards and what is actually observed. The chapter also suggests general agreement that change is needed. A survey by Ghemawat, Yeung, and AACSB reveals that only 4 percent of thought leaders think that the attention business schools pay to globalizing their educational programs should stay the same—96 percent believe that it should increase or increase significantly.

Pressure to change curricula could presumably come from a variety of sources, including students, recruiters, rankings, and faculty, but none of these groups has had a major impact. Although students and recruiters can be influential, they do not have a deep enough grasp of the subject to know what to include. Some rankings claim to represent the views of students or

employers and as such are quite influential, but their measures related to globalization tend to center on more readily quantifiable characteristics of student and faculty diversity. Structural challenges in research and business school organizational frameworks limit the motivation and ability of faculty to push change.

Through accreditation, business schools can help themselves by applying mutual pressure to include more international content, but accrediting bodies have recently avoided being prescriptive about topics, opting instead to allow schools wide leeway in defining what globalization means to them. This has been a familiar tension at AACSB; while on the surface, pushing schools to include more global content in curricula appears desirable, mandating the content that should be included does not make sense.

Results of the Ghemawat, Yeung, and AACSB survey suggest a robust organizing framework for questions related to content. In the survey, thought leaders across disciplines were asked the following question: “What international elements of [your discipline] do you believe are important for functional/general managers with expertise in the international dimension of business to master?” Six categories of environmental/contextual differences emerged from a careful analysis of the responses: cultural, legal/regulatory, political, economic, and other. This outcome suggests a method for schools to evaluate content across traditional functional areas or whatever curricula orientation is appropriate. As is noted in Chapter 4, the model can be quite useful for its cross-functional applicability and as a “meta-cognitive frame for organizing observations about individual countries.” That is, “the idea is not to learn about the specific differences between particular countries but to develop a way of thinking about differences that can be applied to any pair (or group) of countries.”

AACSB also has not mandated how learning should be organized to achieve program learning goals. However, our research indicates that “infusion” and “insertion” models are complements rather than substitutes in delivering content. As noted in Chapter 4, “insertion is a recipe for isolation and infusion potentially for invisibility.” These limitations suggest a third model, “interlock,” in which “a globalization course provides a cross-functional platform for talking about the phenomenon that is used at least to some degree by the functional courses.” Evidence of this approach suggests a more serious commitment to global content and presents an

opportunity to recognize that both insertion and infusion are necessary to “break down barriers to the globalization of curricular content that have historically proven paralyzing.” Through accreditation, schools could pressure each other to credibly evaluate and subtly encourage other schools to consider an “interlock” approach. This approach still leaves a great deal of leeway for schools to address the topic.

Finally, pedagogy and other content supplements are important for developing the skills appropriate to globalization. Our view is that skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking, communication, and the like take on additional importance and complexity in global settings. Without some experiential treatment, applying these skills in global settings is difficult.

AACSB accreditation standards address this point, but rather vaguely. Standard 12 states that, among other things, the business school's faculty in aggregate, its faculty subunits, and its individual faculty, administrators, and staff share responsibility to (a) evaluate instructional effectiveness and overall student achievement, (b) continuously improve instructional programs, and (c) innovate in instructional processes. The standard's interpretive material frames this need within the context of globalization, technological advances, and evolution in the pedagogy and delivery mechanisms of higher education. This framework presumes that accredited schools have appropriate instructional models for developing skills as well as transferring knowledge. Further, this is a rather subtle reference to the need for business schools to keep pace (in the curriculum content and delivery) to changes in the global business landscape.

### ***School Level—Intellectual Contributions***

AACSB accreditation Standard 2 specifies that “the mission incorporates a focus on the production of quality intellectual contributions that advance knowledge of business and management theory, practice, and/or learning/pedagogy. The school's portfolio of intellectual contributions is consistent with the mission and programs offered.” The standard and its interpretive language do not specify any topical areas that must be addressed by an accredited business school.

On the other hand, if a school claims to have a strong emphasis on international education, and the mission reflects this emphasis, then one could reasonably expect a portion of the school's

research to be in the area. The standards state that one of the main purposes for research and scholarship in the form of intellectual contributions is for a business school to “ensure intellectual vibrancy across and among faculty members contributing to the currency and relevancy of management education programs” and that another purpose is to “ensure the business school contributes and is an integral part of an academic community of scholars across all disciplines within an institution and in a larger context.” This explication comes close to the statement regarding curriculum: the “contents of learning experiences provided by programs should be both current and relevant to the needs of business and management positions.” Again, we do not propose augmenting the standards to require specific topics. Instead, we propose that questions about international content of intellectual contributions be posed and considered alongside other questions related to globalization.

In Chapter 5, we argue that the global content of top management journals is surprisingly small. Excluding the *Journal of International Business*, the percentage of articles with “cross-border” content in a top-20 group of management journals is less than 4 percent. The percentage appears to be even smaller in other disciplines. To some, such low percentages are not surprising; after all, many of these journals seek basic research contributions.

A more general concern has been reinforced by this Task Force. In Chapter 4, we wrote that “many globalization topics do not fit well in the functional or disciplinary orientation of business school research.” Yet, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary contributions are not listed as one of the three forms of intellectual contributions (learning and pedagogical research, contributions to practice, and discipline-based scholarship) in the accreditation standards. The omission is minimized by the interpretive language, which states that intellectual contributions that are “cross-disciplinary in scope are appropriate outcomes for faculty scholarly activity and are consistent with the spirit and intent of this standard.” Nonetheless, the question of whether the addition of interdisciplinary scholarship as a fourth type of intellectual contribution would make sense is worth asking.

### ***School Level—Strategies and Processes***

Another layer in which accreditation is applied to schools relates to strategies and processes that affect the capacity of each school to deliver on learning outcomes. If institutions were able to

effectively measure whether program learning goals have been met by graduates, the assessment of inputs or approaches by the school to achieve adequate results would not be necessary. But “assurance of learning” has not yet come close to this stage. At the present time, schools can significantly benefit from an evaluation of their ability to deliver high-quality education today and on an ongoing basis.

We believe that business schools have had a tendency to respond hastily to globalization. Their actions have been fragmented and their strategies and processes have been pieced together. As a result, globalization initiatives often appear to be underdeveloped and inconsistent. Moving forward, schools face a host of uncertainties that will only exacerbate their strategic challenges. We believe that opportunities exist to more proactively encourage more strategic globalization development through accreditation. Again, we acknowledge a deep appreciation that the purpose of mission-linked accreditation is to ensure that the school achieves overall high quality in alignment with its mission. Nothing proposed in this section is intended to conflict with this overarching policy of AACSB accreditation.

As noted above, AACSB accreditation standards tend to address globalization implicitly rather than explicitly. In addition to the standards noted above, other standards with implicit relevancy to globalization include the following:

Eligibility criteria E states that, “consistent with its mission and its cultural context, the institution must demonstrate diversity in its business programs.” The interpretive material following the standard goes on to say that “at a minimum, the school must show that within this [cultural, historical, legal, and regulatory] context its business programs include diverse viewpoints among participants and prepare graduates for careers in the global context.” This section references the need for students to have exposure to other cultures, but it does not require a certain level of citizenship diversity among the student and faculty populations. Rather, by its focus on cultural differences, this section leaves open the possibility that diverse cultures could be achieved through an entirely national student population. The emphasis is on the diversity of perspectives rather than on the circumstances through which the diverse perspectives were developed.

Standard 5 states that “the school has financial strategies to provide resources appropriate to, and sufficient for, achieving its mission and action items.” The interpretive language goes on to indicate that “the competition-induced evolution of business practices in a global business environment creates a subject matter for business education that changes rapidly and relentlessly. The school must continuously enhance the intellectual capital of the faculty to ensure that instruction keeps pace with the subject matter.” This statement speaks to the importance of ongoing development of international awareness and perspectives among faculty members in order to effectively incorporate those dimensions into the curriculum. In other words, international learning experiences should not be limited only to students. The inclusion of this guidance under the Financial Strategies Standard may be taken to imply that the school’s financial strategies should allow for appropriate faculty development in this way. Still, substantial room remains for varied interpretation of what is meant by “business practices in a global business environment.”

The basis for judgment for Standards 9 and 10 include the expectation that participating faculty as well as academically and professionally qualified faculty be “distributed across programs, disciplines and locations consistent with the school’s mission.” In other words, programs that are delivered in multiple locations (whether through a branch campus, partnership, franchise agreement, etc.) should have consistent faculty resources in all locations.

The challenge with these standards as they relate to globalization is that a school is not asked to tie its globalization activities together and demonstrate the way that its mission, strategy, intellectual contributions, and the like complement one another. How accreditation might respond to all of the concerns raised above is discussed next.

### ***School Level—Proposed Globalization Questions***

As the preceding sections illustrate, while AACSB accreditation standards related to globalization exist, they do not reveal an overall picture related to globalization. That is, the current AACSB accreditation standards do not afford the opportunity for peers to engage a school at a deep level on questions related to the strategy, processes, and education related to

globalization. For example, the standards do not address concerns about comprehensiveness, competencies, and consistency in what a school does in the area of globalization.

In this case, we recommend that AACSB rely more heavily on accreditation to accelerate and support change. As we note in the overview of accreditation, AACSB accreditation standards related to globalization tend to be more implicit rather than explicit. Accordingly, our recommendation does not mean that additional or more specific requirements should be imposed; instead, to accelerate progress toward globalization, we encourage every accreditation visit to include structured dialogue about the curriculum and globalization strategies and processes. As a basis for discussion, we suggest a set of generic questions to be addressed by schools in Self Evaluation Reports and Maintenance of Accreditation Reports. These questions would be linked to existing standards. They would allow ample flexibility depending on the school's mission and context but would provide some structure to draw out the relevant issues and help the school think about and frame its globalization agenda. Peer review teams should be trained and encouraged to address the responses to these questions throughout their visits with host schools. For schools that seek initial accreditation, discussions should revolve around the standards. For schools that seek to maintain accreditation, discussion might be focused on consultative advice. Potential questions are explored in the remainder of this section.

#### Potential Questions about Globalization for Accreditation Reviews:

1. **Mission and Strategy.** To what extent is globalization addressed in the mission and strategic plan of the business school? Are objectives and actions complete, coherent, and consistent with the mission of the school and institution? Does the school have access to or plans to acquire the necessary resources to achieve strategic objectives related to globalization?

Although accreditation does not specify exactly what must be included in a mission statement, schools should explore whether their mission statements provide guidance for efforts related to globalization. Schools should consider how effectively their leadership communicates the international orientation, aspirations, or commitment to community participants. Explicit mention of globalization in the mission statement should lead peer review teams to craft their reviews to ensure that this portion of the mission is appropriately addressed. If globalization is part of the mission, is it addressed by the school's strategic

plan? Are plans that are related to globalization reasonably integrated and consonant with the mission of the school? Does the school have a financial plan, and does that plan ensure that globalization initiatives will be appropriately supported?

2. **Intellectual Contributions.** Does the school's portfolio of intellectual contributions include topics related to globalization that are consistent with its mission? Have these intellectual contributions achieved their objectives related to the advancement of basic knowledge, practice, and teaching of globalization topics? Beyond intellectual contributions, how do various activities of the school and its faculty contribute to creation and growth of intellectual capital?

The creation of intellectual capital is central to a collegiate school of business. It is generated through a variety of learning and outreach activities. Intellectual contributions are tangible representations of intellectual capital. For any school that emphasizes globalization in degree programs, we would expect that a portion of the portfolio of intellectual contributions touch upon it and that the intellectual community engage around global topics.

3. **Participants.** Are any criteria or procedures used in the selection and continuance of students and faculty that contribute to or detract from the globalization objectives of the school? Do faculty and support staff have access to and take advantage of development opportunities that support the school's globalization objectives? How does international diversity among participants support learning?

Having internationally diverse students, faculty, and staff does not imply globalization objectives are being met. What matters is that the criteria for student, faculty, and staff recruitment, retention, and development be aligned with the globalization strategy.

4. **Curriculum Content and Skills.** Has the school defined the educational objectives and curricula content appropriate to globalization for each program? Does the curriculum model (insertion, infusion, or interlock) reasonably support the attainment of these objectives? To what extent is the curricula content a part of the school's efforts to develop leadership and management skills?

Although specific content and curricula are not mandated, they can be organized and presented in a way that illuminates strengths and gaps more effectively. In particular, schools should consider the distribution of content aligned with a framework, such as the six broad categories mentioned earlier, that provides a way of thinking about differences in any pair (or group) of countries. Schools should also consider the curriculum structure with respect to infusion, insertion, and interlock.

5. **Assurance of Learning.** Has the school defined and utilized procedures to assess whether globalization-related learning objectives have been met? Does the school's assurance of learning program address learning goals related to the global environment and management? How has assessment data contributed to improvement of "global" management education?

We propose that schools respond to these questions in a separate section of their accreditation documents. Ideally, doing so only requires pulling elements from the remainder of the report together into a separate summary. Also, the process of pulling this information together is, by itself, a learning experience for the host school.

### ***Industry Level***

AACSB accreditation also has an important industry role that stems directly from its mission "to advance quality management education worldwide." The number of institutions that offer business degrees, especially outside the U.S., was found to be greater than originally thought, and the proportion not within reach of AACSB accreditation was much larger than anticipated. We show in Chapter 2 that only about 5 percent of the estimated 12,600 institutions known to offer business degrees have been accredited by AACSB. Approximately 9 percent are accredited by a management education organization that operates on a regional or international scale, including AACSB International, EFMD (EQUIS and EPAS), AMBA, CEEMAN, FIBAA, ACBSP, IACBE, ECBE, and AMDISA (SAQS). The majority of the remaining institutions are subject to some level of national accreditation or quality assurance, although, as pointed out previously, the standards, processes, and foci of national and international accreditation reviews vary substantially. In many cases, standards apply broadly across all programs and activities of the institution and are not specific to management education. Furthermore, more than 90 percent

of the institutions with AACSB, EQUIS, and/or AMBA accreditation are located in countries that the World Bank classified as “High Income.”

If current trends continue, management education stakeholders likely will see further fracturing of quality assurance systems, which will possibly result in increased confusion about the comparable quality of the institutions they accredit or regulate. The emergence of new accreditation providers can be positive if the providers help support quality in diverse forms, but it can be negative if they result in “accreditation mills” that do nothing more than promote schools that pay for their approval.

Current trends also suggest that gaps in the application of management education quality assurance schemes will remain substantial. An inherent risk in the growth of management education (not only in the number of providers, but also in evolving forms) is that it will outpace the ability of quality assurance schemes to keep up. Consequences may include a trend toward mediocrity among the majority of management education providers as well as subsequently deteriorating reputations of business schools, if low-quality schools dominate production of graduates.

Finally, growth in sources of information about individual business schools (including additional rankings) may result in additional strains on institutions to provide data (often similar data in different forms) at the expense of investing resources into more valuable endeavors.

These observations have raised concerns about the extent to which AACSB has been fulfilling its mission, which is to advance quality management education worldwide through accreditation, thought leadership, and value-added services. The mission is based on a shared belief that elevating the overall quality of management education is good for society. This elevation of quality corresponds to the improvement purpose of accreditation. Furthermore, the absence of credible and easily understood data about increasingly complex organizational arrangements (e.g., franchising, etc.) has made international accreditation, as a signal of quality, much more important today than ever before.

Three industry-level opportunities for improvement exist.

First, the management education industry has room for incentives that are more far-reaching and that challenge a greater number of management education providers globally to enhance educational quality. The primary gap along this dimension results from low expectations by quality assurance schemes to which most schools are subject or from the lack of expectations in the quality assurance schemes that are unique to business schools.

One approach is for AACSB to expand its model of accreditation to a larger group of schools. At a minimum, AACSB should continuously evaluate its standards for relevance and applicability worldwide. We also recommend that AACSB consider a new quality improvement/assurance service that is clearly differentiated from the association's current accreditation. The service could be designed in line with the high quality standards of AACSB and could apply to a wider range of schools around the globe. Our belief is that all-or-nothing accreditation systems, such as AACSB's, may cause schools that perceive certain standards as impossible to achieve (or misaligned with the school's objectives) to dismiss pursuit of other standards that may result in improvement along other dimensions.

A second and related industry need is a means of ensuring that schools actually deliver on the promises they make to students, employers, faculty members, and partner institutions. This need has become increasingly important due to greater mobility of the participants in management education. According to UNESCO, 23 percent of the three million internationally mobile students study business and management. These students (as well as potential employers, faculty members, and partner schools) must navigate a landscape in which credible and easily understood information about program quality is difficult to find; the signaling role of international accreditation thus is becoming more important.

Third, within the industry is a concern that accreditation can stifle globalization. For example, if schools become less inclined to develop a joint degree with another school out of concern for accreditation standards, the trend would suggest a need to better understand the tradeoffs between quality assurance and other objectives. We suggest that the AACSB accreditation standards (on paper and in practice) be reviewed to determine whether they discourage

innovation in globalization. For example, are accredited schools discouraged from partnering with unaccredited schools?

## **II. Education, Resources, and Networks**

Although AACSB accreditation can provide business schools with valuable peer pressure to globalize, by itself accreditation will do little to help schools find their way. Globalization is a complex and difficult challenge—so much so that a deep strategic discussion cannot possibly be channeled into a one-and-a-half-day peer review team visit that must address many other important objectives. Business schools need other types of support, which can come from educational programs, information resources, and networks.

In the last decade, AACSB has expanded its capacity to support schools beyond accreditation. In 2008-09, AACSB planned and executed 59 conferences and seminars, which involved more than 5,000 participants across 72 countries. In 2010, AACSB introduced the Exchange, an online community exclusive to AACSB members. Although it is still new, the networking tool has the potential to connect more than 25,000 peers and experts within the management education industry around the world. Along with the Exchange, AACSB's *BizEd* magazine and online resource centers can deliver useful and timely resources to members about the issues, challenges, and best practices related to the globalization of management education. Three specific recommendations follow.

First, AACSB has online resource centers to support development in a variety of areas, including research, sustainability, and innovation. Although other organizations maintain centers on global higher education, they tend to be less specialized than the management education focus offered by AACSB. An online "Globalization Resource Center" can be a central place to include a variety of resources, including best practices, relevant data, school announcements, current research, and emerging opportunities. Most important, the resource center could facilitate discussion and networking among AACSB member representatives about issues and challenges related to the globalization of management education. Beyond member-generated discussion and content, however, AACSB should invest more in studying the practices of business schools,

writing case studies (such as those in the report), and synthesizing lessons into best practices reports and white papers.

Second, AACSB should consider development of a seminar or series of seminars to assist business schools in vitally important areas of globalization. A seminar might address some portion of the content and frameworks included in this report. As in business schools, designing the seminar to encourage international diversity among participants can be helpful.

Third, AACSB might consider developing a service to assist business schools in finding suitable partners for globalization initiatives. As we noted within the report, we believe that “what will emerge as a unique characteristic of the next phase in the global development of management education will be a greater emphasis on the emergence of connections, collaborations, and even competition among providers in different regions of the world.” Given the breadth of the AACSB network, the association might be well-positioned to provide members with a mechanism within DATADIRECT, Exchange, or elsewhere to solicit proposals for collaborative initiatives. Such a mechanism could be especially useful to develop management education capacity and quality in lower-income countries.

A service such as this one might be modeled on the process implemented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Higher Education for Development (HED) program, which facilitates the posting of one school’s formal “request for assistance” and the submission of proposals by interested potential partners. The options are many but would need careful analysis in order to determine whether and how such a service could be most valuable, feasible, and aligned with AACSB’s mission to advance quality management education.

### **III. Data and Information**

AACSB has created a robust infrastructure to collect data and gather information about business schools and the national and regional environments in which they operate. AACSB’s existing database, capacity to conduct primary and secondary research, and international network has made the unprecedented breadth and depth of this report possible. Only a decade ago this study would have been impossible.

Despite this progress, huge data and information gaps exist in the industry. AACSB's DATADIRECT now houses basic data on nearly 700 business schools but, globally, more than 12,600 institutions offer bachelor's or higher degrees in business and management. Beyond a reasonably high level of confidence that they offer business degrees, little else is known about these institutions. Basic data, such as the business degree program levels offered, how the institutions are organized to deliver these programs, and the number of business students, faculty, and staff, are not available or structured in a way that is useful.

The absence of consistent, comparable, and high-quality data and information remains an impediment to deeper analysis of the globalization of management education and hinders the progress of globalization itself. A lack of transparency about schools and their programs limits the ability of organizations such as AACSB to ensure quality, which has become especially important due to the increased mobility of students and faculty. Incomplete or misleading data limit the ability of schools to form collaborative opportunities that can improve global education and research outcomes.

First, ongoing data collection is necessary to support research and insights on a variety of topics related to globalization. For example, data are needed to support more research on interactions between institutions, student and employment trends, globalization of research, and the “thickness” of the international networks—that is, to what extent schools are connected through less formal relationships (through faculty, for example).

Second, a central database that includes basic data on institutions that award business degrees would be extremely useful for understanding the global management education landscape. One approach, which is already under consideration by the Global Foundation for Management Education (GFME) is to develop a global registry for institutions that award business degree programs. At a minimum, a “registry” would contain names of business-degree-granting institutions by country. At the other end of the spectrum, a registry would be a central database with comprehensive profiles of all institutions that grant business degrees, including any and all quality reviews to which they are subject as well as a variety of data related to the institution's activities.

Third, a repository of information about management education structures in each country is necessary. In 2005-06, GFME released the *Global Guide to Management Education*, which is a reference book that includes profiles of management education in 43 countries, complete with information on degree structures, student characteristics, faculty, governance, and financial models. Contributors also describe the most important issues that face business schools in their country.

According to user comments, the publication has been a useful resource for individuals who are interested in understanding differences in management education structures worldwide. AACSB might explore ways to build on this resource to expand the number of countries and ensure currency.

An imperative—and quite feasible—charge is that AACSB work closely with other organizations around the globe to develop appropriate data definitions and naming conventions for institutions and degree programs. Already AACSB has a joint venture with EFMD, called GFME, which is mentioned several times in the report. But other organizations in the management education industry and higher education sector exist (e.g., USAID HED, UNESCO), and research partnerships across these organizations can yield new insights. Among other opportunities, we suggest bringing back, with substantial updating of course, the curriculum survey that was once used by the Academy of International Business.

### **III. Conclusion**

The management education industry is in the midst of a transformational wave of globalization. Thus, not only is the timing right to address these recommendations, but AACSB International is also well-positioned to provide leadership for the industry and positively influence the pace and direction of continued globalization. We recommend that AACSB—in concert with its leaders and globally diverse membership—prioritize and pursue these recommendations in a way that best aligns with the mission of the association and maximizes the resulting value to its constituents.

## **Globalization of Management Education Task Force Summary of Recommendations and Opportunities for AACSB**

### **Accreditation**

1. Current accreditation standards address globalization frequently and along various dimensions, but do not require schools to have a cohesive approach and demonstrate how the various pieces complement and support one another. The Task Force recommends a set of standards-linked questions for schools to address in accreditation documents and discuss with peer review teams during visits. Discussions would focus on standards alignment for initial accreditation reviews and on consultative advice for maintenance reviews.
2. The Task Force is concerned about the vast number of institutions that award business degrees and that do not have access to relevant international quality improvement frameworks, such as accreditation. There is a need for quality improvement and assurance frameworks that are relevant to a wider range of schools internationally.
3. In an increasingly dynamic environment, accreditation standards (on paper and in practice) should be examined regularly to determine whether they discourage or encourage innovation in globalization.

### **Education, Resources, and Networks**

4. Business schools could benefit from an online “Globalization Resource Center” that includes best practices, relevant data, school announcements, current research, and emerging opportunities. A resource center should facilitate networking as well as discussion about challenges related to the globalization of management education.
5. A seminar or series of seminars is needed to assist business schools in vitally important areas of globalization.
6. A new service, modeled on the USAID Higher Education for Development Program, could assist business schools to find suitable partners for globalization initiatives. The service would facilitate the posting of one school’s formal “request for assistance” and the submission of proposals by interested potential partners.

## **Data and Information**

7. AACSB could facilitate ongoing data collection to support research and insights on a variety of topics related to globalization.
8. The Task Force believes a central global database that includes basic data on institutions that award business degrees would be valuable. A global registry, for example, could contain basic information about business degree granting institutions by country, including their claimed source of legitimacy.
9. A repository of information about management education structures in each country would serve useful for many industry-wide and individual school initiatives.

## **Globalization of Management Education Task Force**

### **Robert F. Bruner (Chair)**

Dean and Charles C. Abbott Professor of Business Administration  
Darden Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Virginia

### **Arnoud De Meyer**

President  
Singapore Management University

### **Pankaj Ghemawat**

Anselmo Rubiralta Professor of Global Strategy  
IESE Business School

### **Jaime Alonso Gomez**

Distinguished Professor, International Strategy and Management  
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey - Campus Monterrey

### **Stefanie Lenway**

Eli and Edythe L. Broad Dean  
Eli Broad College of Business, Michigan State University

### **M. Rammohan Rao**

Professor and Dean Emeritus  
Indian School of Business

### **Edward A. Snyder**

George Shultz Professor of Economics  
Booth School of Business, The University of Chicago

### **Pierre Tapie**

Groupe ESSEC President  
ESSEC Business School Paris - Singapore

### **Hildy Teegen**

Dean  
Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina

### **Peter W. Wolnizer**

Dean  
The University of Sydney Business School

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### **Daniel R. LeClair**

Senior Vice President and Chief Knowledge Officer  
AACSB International

### **Juliane Iannarelli**

Director, Global Research  
AACSB International