

Book Review

Global Demand for Borderless Online Degrees

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Dr. Hogan has pinpointed a much-needed discussion about the nature of online degrees. The idea of borderless degrees is interesting and in need of exploration. Currently most degrees are location specific, and international students, while able to access these degrees, often find the curriculum is not designed in a way as to be applicable to an international audience. The book examines the historical roots of higher education and traces the development of institutions of higher education as they have evolved.

The discussion of how higher education is currently funded, and how some nations struggle to provide all the levels of higher education needed, is timely. With the decrease of social and economic borders, educational borders have also begun to dissolve. The book weaves together salient points that those who innovate in, and work within the postsecondary education space should carefully consider. The economics of education is an under-discussed area, and a focus of how countries fund postsecondary education and job training.

While I am not certain I concur with all of Dr. Hogan's assertions about the winners and losers in the coming postsecondary changes, I believe more discussion is needed around these issues. Any university wanting to secure its future will need to be responsive to the needs of a more global student population. I found the most useful discussion in the book to be that centered on the asynchronous model of learning developed and championed by larger universities who have occupied this space since the early days of e-learning. Language and cultural barriers are a genuine concern in the borderless online learning space. The discussion bears scrutiny and more research to determine the effect of the learning environment on students enrolling in an online degree program in a language other than their primary language.

The chapter on the blending of synchronous and asynchronous learning is of note. Though this book was written before the events of the pandemic, the closure of primary and secondary schools has forced the conversation into very public spaces. As scholars rush to determine the effect and affect of virtual schooling on students of all ages, those same conversations have been quietly rumbling through postsecondary halls for some time. A wider and deeper examination of the issue is needed to determine the best approaches for the borderless online degrees Dr. Hogan examines here.

The book is timely, and well organized. Though there is a growing research base on the use of technology in schools, the investigations do not currently lend themselves to understanding the needs of truly global degree offerings. Though the world is flattening, and students are able to connect and learn from postsecondary schooling across the world, it is yet unseen how any single curriculum can be designed to be meaningful enough for study, while flexible enough to support and further the learning of those from a wide set of countries and settings; all studying in the same online degree programs. The biggest strength of this book is likely the thoughtful, data-driven public discussion that it should promote.

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Global Demand for Borderless Online Degrees

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