

Adventist Education at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Fact or Possibility?

In this column, we'd like to stretch your mind a bit with some facts and possibilities. As we look to the future of education, where is God leading us? What is happening in higher education? What *could* be happening in Adventist education? Get a pencil and mark your answers to these scenarios. Are they **Fact** or **Possibility**, or **Both**?

□ F □ P 1. Following a meeting of academic leaders from Romania and the U.S., several large public American universities plan to foster more academic cooperation with institutions in Romania. The conference, called "The University and the Challenges of the New Millennium," sponsored by Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, discussed the increasing need for "international academic interconnectedness." The assembled officials—the rectors of all but four of Romania's 49 state universities and the heads of 12 U.S. institutions—used the occasion to hold formal and informal discussions about the possible benefits of expanding educational exchanges as well as other forms of academic cooperation.

□ F □ P 2. Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) partners with Canadian University College (College Heights, Alberta) and another private university in Canada to develop materials for a class. The materials are put online and used by all participating institutions. Students enroll in the institution of their choice. Faculty teach students from any of the participating institutions. The collaboration is so popular that other colleges beg to join the project.

□ F □ P 3. The University of Cambridge and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology announce a \$135-million venture that officials of both institutions hope will create a new model for global higher education. The universities will form the Cambridge-M.I.T. Institute, which will involve departments and faculties from both institutions. The institute will not have a physical site.

□ F □ P 4. A teacher working outside the Adventist system develops a graduate-level online course that is offered for credit from an Adventist institution and a public university. She shares the course materials for other professors to use or for other universities to offer as one of their courses.

□ F □ P 5. In 2015, the higher-education landscape will look dramatically different than it did at the turn of the millennium. The industry will suffer a bruising round of consolidations similar to those undergone by the health-care, banking, and oil industries. Most of the 3,500 or so institutions of higher education that existed in the year 2000 will form regional and international consortia in a dozen or so loose networks of international education behemoths.

□ F □ P 6. A seminary professor at Andrews University shares a lecture with students in Germany via video conferencing technology.

□ F □ P 7. Two small colleges in the Philippines and the Ukraine form a partnership with a university in North America. A communication teacher, a history teacher, and an English teacher team-teach a study on the history of cross-cultural communication. Students share experiences and become partners online for their class projects.

□ F □ P 8. To enhance their class offerings and become more cost-effective, the Adventist University Consortium shares classes and professors, both online and face to face. This consortium includes all institutions of higher learning in the Adventist Church.

□ F □ P 9. A new company offers a select group of universities a chance at Wall Street riches in return for the right to use their names and their faculty expertise to develop courses in business, engineering, and writing. The company, called UNEXT.com, courts—and wins—some prestigious educational partners. It provides universities with an "opportunity to

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deliver education to employed people throughout the world," according to UNEXT.com's president, a Chicago entrepreneur. He adds that, worldwide, it's "a huge market." Along with Columbia University, Stanford University, the University of Chicago, and the London School of Economics and Political Science have all signed deals with UNEXT.com, and a contract with Carnegie Mellon University is being negotiated.

□ F □ P 10. Adventist businessmen provide funding to develop online courses needed by institutions around the world. Students enroll, pay tuition to, and receive credit from the originating university. Their home universities adapt residency policies to accommodate the new sharing of classes.

□ F □ P 11. A Harvard University Law School professor provides a series of videotaped lectures to Concord University School of Law, an institution that allows students to earn law degrees online. However, Harvard policy forbids its professors to teach at any other university during the

Continued on page 47

Out on a Lim With Educational Technology *Continued from page 39*

academic year without permission from their dean. The Harvard professor claims in an interview that he wasn't teaching anything. He does not interact with Concord students in person or online—not even via a friendly E-mail message. They simply watch his videotaped lectures online, and Concord arranges a course around that. Since many universities are wrangling over whether professors can make their course material available elsewhere, the Harvard law school dean said he expected other institutions to be interested in how the differences were resolved. “Distance education blurs the line and medium between time and place,” he said. “Harvard, as a university, is going to clarify these long-standing rules.”

□ F □ P 12. The Adventist superintendent of education for Hawaii outlines the need for alternative forms of higher education: “Would young people be better served by having them stay a little closer to home during their first two years of college? For us in Hawaii, the cost of travel to the mainland is expensive and students are limited on the amount of times they can come home. Some develop ‘homesickness’ and want to return home for that reason—as well as having a very limited

‘home support system’ when they are so far from home. The most important reason is that if a student is not successful at one of our colleges during the first two years, for whatever reason, he or she usually returns home and is often lost to the church. With no Christian education opportunities or a way to eventually think about going to one of our colleges, [such students] often lose interest in the church. Therefore, providing courses online with a strong support system in the home and churches, we may be able to save our young people.”

If you are would like to engage in conversation about these possibilities, E-mail Marilyn Eggers at megggers@atie.org. ✉

*This column was a collaboration between **Janine Lim**, Instructional Technology Consultant at Berrien County Intermediate School District in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and **Shirley Freed**, Professor of Education at Andrews University, also in Berrien Springs.*

SCORING/REFERENCES

1. Fact. Quoted from Burton Bollag, “Heads of Romanian and U.S. Universities Explore Ways to Increase Cooperation,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46:13 (November 19, 1999), p. A70.

2. Fact. Shirley Freed, co-author of this column, is involved in this project.

3. Fact. Quoted from Alina Tugend, “MIT and U. of Cambridge Announce \$135-Million Joint Venture,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 46:13 (November 19, 1999), p. A71.

4. Fact. Janine Lim, co-author of this column, regularly collaborates with Andrews University.

5. Possibility. Vision quoted from Burck Smith, “Higher Ed: The Vision,” *Converge Magazine* 2:3 (March 1999), Available online at <http://www.convergemag.com/Publications/CNVGMAR99/possibilities/possibilities.shtm>.

6. Fact. Jon Paulien was the professor and the event took place on October 28, 1999.

7. Possibility. What would it take to make this happen?

8. Possibility. See the article mentioned in No. 5. What would it take to make this happen?

9. Fact. Quoted from Goldie Blumenstyk, “A Company Pays Top Universities to Use Their Names and Their Professors,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 45:41 (June 18, 1999), p. A39.

10. Possibility becoming fact. See Global Learning Collaborative Institute <http://www.globalearnit.org> for current information on it and on <http://www.TAGeducation.org>.

11. Fact. Quoted from Dan Carnevale, “A Professor’s Lectures for an On-Line Law School Become an Issue at Harvard,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 3, 1999), p. A43.

12. Fact showing possibility. E-mail from Deloris Trujillo (74617.1242@compuserve.com) to Shirley Freed, December 5, 1999.

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