



## **THE UNIVERSITIES PROJECT OF THE SALZBURG SEMINAR VISITING ADVISORS' REPORT**

### **BURYAT STATE UNIVERSITY ULAN UDE, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

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#### ***INTRODUCTION***

1. The Buryat State University is located in Ulan Ude, in the Republic of Buryatia in the eastern end of Siberia, 5645 km. from Moscow and 3650 km. from Vladivostok. The region has very ancient cultural and historical traditions, of which the BSU is a major custodian. BSU was founded in 1995, on the basis of the existing Buryat State Teachers Training Institute and the Ulan-Ude Branch of Novosibirsk State University. It is now one of the largest educational, cultural and scientific centers in the region, with 864 academic staff and 8,500+ students (6,500 full time) from the region and neighboring Asian countries and USA. Other main characteristics are
  - 1.1 close co-operation with the Siberian Academy of Science
  - 1.2 fifteen faculties and two branches which cover fifty-three specialties according to Russian federal standards
  - 1.3 a considerable recent increase in the acquisition of doctorates by staff members (now at 11.7%); five doctoral programs with 452 postgraduate students
  - 1.4 two university branches at Ust-Ordyn and Ulan Bator
  - 1.5 a ranking of <sup>23</sup>/<sub>70</sub> of Russian classical universities.

The implications of this recent growth are discussed elsewhere.

2. BSU invited the team of advisors under the auspices of the Visiting Advisors Program of the Salzburg Seminar's Universities Project to review a set of issues relevant to the universities development identified by the University leadership. The issues were
  - 2.1 general strategic development
  - 2.2 university administration and organization
  - 2.3 financing the university
  - 2.4 academic structure and governance
  - 2.5 student needs and the role of students in institutional affairs.

Throughout the visit, team members held a series of discussions with the Rector and a wide cross-section of academic and administrative members of staff, students, representatives of the city and regional governmental authorities and business communities. The agenda is indicated in the Appendix. The goal of the discussions, which were open, frank and very fruitful, was not a formal evaluation of BSU, but to discuss issues of common interest and to present to BSU perspectives drawn from other international and national settings pertinent to those issues. While the time was short and presented limitations to our capacity to understand fully the complexities of the BSU situation, we are confident that we gained sufficiently accurate insights to present relevant and potentially helpful recommendations for future development. The dossier presented to us by BSU provided a wealth of helpful information, which was certainly sufficient to orient us to the task at hand.

3. In our discussions, we were generally very impressed with the considerable progress made by the University over the last decade; with the overall awareness by staff at all levels, of the challenges at hand; and with the understanding of the range of options open to sustain the development of BSU regionally, nationally and internationally. The willingness to be open about various avenues for further institutional development was greatly appreciated. Though the setting of BSU is very specific, many of the issues confronting BSU are generic, and we are thus encouraged to feel that the recommendations offered will be of some relevance to BSU. These are emboldened in the text.
4. At the outset, we wish to thank the Rector and all his colleagues for the exemplary conduct of the visit, the excellent hospitality – social, gastronomic and cultural – their warm friendship, and for the immensely stimulating discussions.

## **BURYAT STATE UNIVERSITY: SOME CONTEXTUAL FACTORS**

5. As has previously been indicated, BSU is situated in a very distinctive region, and derives a substantial part of its mission from the regional dimension. This has led to special attention to
  - 5.1 the provision of specialists for the regional economy and public services, especially education and health. This has led to the recent development of new disciplines, notably law, economics and management, public administration and medicine, and readjustment to existing disciplines
  - 5.2 support for regional cultural, heritage and natural science interests, especially associated with the Buryat culture and Lake Baikal
  - 5.3 scientific development in areas pertinent to the region's economy.
6. This development has been impressive over the last few years. **However, there are some issues the team feels BSU need to consider in the near future. These include the following:**
  - 6.1 **the fact that regional industry has a limited Research and Development base. Here BSU might**
    - **consider how it could contribute more to small and medium enterprise (SME) development**
    - **consider how larger enterprises might be stimulated**
  - 6.2 **the respective proportions of existing students (full time/part time) leads us to suggest that there is huge potential for an expansion of part-time study, especially connected to lifelong learning**
  - 6.3 **BSU has a limited range of disciplines at present, but there are other higher education institutions (HEI's) in the Baikal region, with the likely advent of more multi-discipline study, BSU might seek to examine the extension of this through co-operation within the Association of the Baikal Region**
  - 6.4 **the full potential of Information Technology (IT) has yet to be realized in terms of connections with local enterprises and HEI, and especially in relation to accessing world-wide intellectual resources. We realize the capital and other investment that is needed, but feel sure this is an essential priority.**
7. BSU rightly positions itself as an intellectual gateway between East and West. **However, this as a concept, is worthy of considerable further**

**redefinition in terms of the practical applications and consequences**, i.e. what does it mean in terms of

- 7.1 student mobility
  - 7.2 cultural research and custodianship
  - 7.3 research
  - 7.4 inter-institutional alliances.
8. BSU is well aware of the issues involved in the globalization of higher education, and associated e-learning developments. We refer to the potential of this for
- 8.1 the redefinition of distance learning possibilities
  - 8.2 accessing learning materials worldwide
  - 8.3 supporting research
  - 8.4 international university alliances

but also alert BSU to challenges posed by non-national providers.

9. BSU justifiably takes great pride in its ascendant role in the “league table” of classical universities, and this is a suitable tribute to its rapid development. We can appreciate the importance of this in terms of status and identity. However, one of the major goals of BSU is its service to the region, which, in essence, indicates BSU is actually aiming to be a so-called “modern” university, which has different (though overlapping) characteristics from the classical university.

The prototype “classical” university is academically programmed quite rigidly according to professors’ scholarly specializations and research activities, whereas the prototype “modern” university is academically programmed rather flexibly according to students’ career interests and societal needs; in the former students are groomed to be mini-scholars, whereas in the latter students are prepared to be productive citizens. These distinctions are fundamentally significant because they find expression in numerous forms—organizational structures, theory-practice relationships, instructional approaches, faculty roles, curriculum design, reward systems, etc.—such that the “classical” model is vastly different from the “modern” one.

Across the world (and certainly in our North American and Western European countries) universities are striving mightily—and for good reasons—to transform themselves from the “classical” to the “modern” model. Those that have conformed most closely to the “classical” model are having the greatest difficulty in effecting this transformation and, indeed, some may be unable to manage it and could thus risk going out of business. BSU is in the rare and

fortunate position of being able to avoid this danger since the transformation so well under way there is not FROM the “classical” model. It would be a tragic irony if its promising chances of becoming a distinctively successful “modern” university were squandered by pursuing a transformation TO the “classical” model instead. **We recommend BSU thinks long and hard on this point.**

## **FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

10. In common with other Russian universities, BSU is struggling with national and regional financial difficulties that are affecting its long term and short term operations. This is troublesome particularly in the context of both maintaining its current activities at a reasonable level of resourcing, while at the same time investing in future capacity and developing new activities. Among the characteristics of the present situation may be noted the following

### 10.1 BSU receives its income from a variety of sources

- Federal Ministry of Education: budget income (60 mill. r.) + extra budget funds (11 mill. r.)
- fee paying students (c. 7 mill. r.)
- grants (c. 1 mill. r.)
- various entrepreneurial activities from continuing education, some contract research, (but uncertainty as to the actual amount)
- charities in general (c. 6.5 mill. r.)
- the Charity Fund (c. 1 mill. r.)

The existing variety of sources is very promising: the challenge is recognized as being to add to the number of sources and the buoyancy and durability of each source

- 10.2 the above sources generate c. 100 mill. r., whereas ideally the BSU needs 200 mill. r. per annum to sustain a reasonable level of resourced activity, which implies

- greater cost effectiveness, coupled with
- enhanced income generation

to which we later return

- 10.3 the financial health of the various areas of the university varies widely e.g.
- medicine is a difficult area, owing to the high equipment and capital costs
  - economics and management are heavily dependent on fee-paying students, whose record of fee paying may not be satisfactory
  - foreign students operate only on an exchange basis, and are not fee paying. Given the relative limits on BSU students moving out, this places limits on those coming in. This potential income source is thus untapped at present
  - the Library and Graduate School seem opportunistically successful in attracting paid service funds, charity funds, donations, and fees from different new student populations respectively
- 10.4 attempts to run commercial subdivisions of the university (Business Centre, Educational Centre) have apparently been unsuccessful
- 10.5 there is clearly a willingness by BSU to make rewards and incentives available to assist income generation, which is a promising feature
- 10.6 BSU acknowledges the need for more investment in buildings (dormitories, medicine, law), despite its having shown excellent imagination in acquiring (through rent and purchase) additional stock, and manufactures much of its own equipment and furniture
- 10.7 BSU has invested widely in the setting up of structures, which should assist in subsequent income generation, notably the BSU Board of Trustees (an important instrument for reaching to society and engaging stakeholder contacts) and the Trustee Fund/Public Charity Fund. The visitors warmly commend these initiatives.
11. As indicated above, additional income generation is one vital element in future financial strategy. **In this, we would recommend the University consider the following possibilities:**
- 11.1 **Expert consultancy has already been practiced in the area of law, which apparently could also be expanded to other fields of the BSU's expertise, where there seems to be a market demand. This could include also selling technical services, under the "technology transfer" concept, that is, promoting inventions and innovations created in the various faculties into possible commercial applications. Future contract research may also be one possible avenue for this. Successful technology transfer process of course presupposes proper institutional and judicial**

preparedness in the society/region outside the University, but as a starting point it is useful that the University itself knows and is aware of the range of expertise and knowledge its staff and students currently possess. Clearly this is conditional on the existence of sectors ready to receive and act on initiatives by BSU, together with matching educational strengths at BSU.

- 11.2 The provision of educational services by HEI's is a rapidly expanding market area in many countries, and such services exist or are being planned also in several faculties of BSU. These services may be directed at the adult population as the demand for the so-called life-long learning is only just increasing in the society at large. They also may be directed at special student groups, including paying Russian students or students from abroad who pay the tuition fee. The BSU has certain specific fields or opportunities that are not available anywhere in Russia or in the rest of the world that could be exploited to its advantage: these may include specific studies in Arts or in various cultural/oriental fields. The University's relative proximity to Lake Baikal is clearly an asset that could create interest in national and international research groups but could also be a very potential target for tourism, subject, of course, to necessary ecological safeguards.

The potential activities have included

- short and full cost courses—customized for particular organizations as well as those open to a variety of clients
  - utilization of existing courses for non-traditional students
  - full cost courses for professionals
  - co-operative education
  - management and business courses should specifically be exploited
- 11.3 General fund-raising is becoming a very important part of BSU's outward activities. It could be necessary, for this purpose, to liaise and market the University's services towards the industry and various organizations both in Russia and abroad. A common experience is that it often helps best if the University creates specific 'service packages' that are then 'sold' or offered to specific target groups or organizations.
- 11.4 Various international donors also support various aspects of the Russian HEI's, including support towards better equipment and instruments (including computers and software) and staff

**development. The extension of this would also require building proper contacts and marketing effort.**

- 11.5 **With regard to tuition fees, the University has currently over one thousand paying students. Although this seems to bring in extra funds, many of the students apparently have difficulties in paying, especially after the initial years, and thus the final cost of education at least partially falls on the University itself. It may be useful for the University to carefully analyse the current situation; raising the tuition fee may bring in more funds, at least temporarily, but, on the other hand, lowering the tuition may increase the volume for the University and help the paying students better also in the long term. There seems to exist a common notion that education is a useful personal investment, but its fulfilment is less than optimal in the current situation.**

**As has already been mentioned, the attraction of fee paying foreign students is considered to be a major potential source of income, and should be pursued with vigor.**

- 11.6 **Since BSU has virtually no alumni yet to “re-educate”, it is in an unusually good position to encourage current and future students (i.e. virtually all eventual alumni—while they are still attending the University—to consider “giving back” to the University as graduates. Each graduating class might, for example, be urged to make a “class” gift to the University on the occasion of its graduation (thus “getting into the habit of giving” before they’ve even left campus)—a practice that is common at North American institutions. The current time is very propitious to get a structure for alumni “cultivation” in place.**

12. Improving cost effectiveness is the second important element in financial strategy indicated earlier. The team members are not entirely clear how much flexibility the BSU has within its budget regulations to allow changes in it or to re-direct its various functions, but this is for the rectorate to take into account. In several European countries the budget given to the university is the so-called lump-sum budget, i.e. there is a great amount of flexibility in its use and internal allocation by the rector and faculties. Also, the BSU is performing various social services to its students and staff which may be somewhat outside its core educational duties but which may be necessary in the current situation. The concept of cost-effectiveness may be a little diffuse, but still pursuing it vigorously may bring several advantages and help the University’s leadership to plan and execute its future strategies even better. **We now offer some general ideas or questions as to where possible improvements in cost-effectiveness could be found.**

- 12.1 **avoiding internal overlap in various University activities may bring in savings. For instance several faculties now offer language teaching, but it may be worth analyzing whether putting it under the same ‘umbrella’ or office is feasible. Language teaching also**



**requires certain supplies and infrastructure that may be best taken care of by one (central?) office for the whole university**

- 12.2 there are potentially considerable savings to be derived from carefully examining the factors that influence the productivity and economics of the learning and curriculum process. These include**
- variations across the University in staff-student ratios. These, in general look quite uneconomic as a whole compared to western standards**
  - the volume of the curriculum seems extensive, which means more consumption of teacher resources. Can this be rationalized within the framework of state standards?**
  - teaching resources can also be saved through more independent study and less formal class contact**
  - we suspect some class sizes are well below economic levels, and small operational courses should perhaps not be offered**
  - can relatively unpopular courses be excised from the course portfolio? Are there means to do this?**
- 12.3 it is apparent that there is a lot of teaching per student that partially at least reflects the fact that the University's library has not had the resources to obtain enough textbooks and other materials for self-study by the students. The library is a crucial place, especially for a university that aims to move more towards research orientation. In teaching and also in other activities the shift towards more intensive and extensive use of the Internet and information technology (IT) at large would improve efficiency, though apparent investment money is scarce. Access to various international electronic libraries would help the teachers and students alike; this also costs money but it is much more cost-effective than always buying the same books and journals**
- 12.4 horizontal integration with other HEI's in the region may bring the biggest benefits of all. There are other HE institutions in Buryatia, namely in agriculture, technology, and culture. Co-operation and liaison between them may benefit their curricula, development of the infrastructure (libraries etc.), and many other activities. It may also increase the range of students' choice of courses and thus gives them opportunities to build individual and tailor-made study careers. One HEI may also outsource some its activities to be performed by another HEI, for the sake of cost savings. (It is not uncommon in several countries that different HEI's in the same region even partially share their faculty.)**

**The visitors noted that the BSU is already engaged in collaboration with numerous institutions in the region, including those of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Pooling the laboratories, expensive instruments and expertise (human capital) in the region will certainly add to its strength in the light of BSU's plans to develop its research capacity and graduate/post-graduate student training in the future.**

13. **The visitors have enormous admiration for the way in which BSU has not only survived, but developed in a highly progressive way in the face of severe economic difficulties, and would in no way want to be in any way prescriptive of any solutions to cure what is a very deep-seated structural issue in universities financing. In conclusion on this section we would request the university to consider**
  - 13.1 **close integrated planning of academic and financial strategies to avoid over-commitment with negative consequences for quality**
  - 13.2 **the potential of savings to be derived from inter-faculty and inter-HEI co-operation**
  - 13.3 **a robust system of performance indicators for financial elements.**

We now turn to academic development.

## ***ACADEMIC POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT***

14. This broad area, perhaps predictably, turned out to be the most complex area of discussion, and we were able to meet with a wide variety of colleagues at different levels and across different parts of BSU. They contributed insightful observations of a frank and open nature that made the resulting dialogue mutually productive. The topics covered included, inter-alia, the overall academic profile and the concept of specialization; vertical integration of study from pre-university to post-doctoral; postgraduate work; teaching and learning and the place of practice; the learning-research interface; foreign language teaching; professional development of faculty members; and information technology.
15. The team was impressed by the evident progress made by BSU in these areas in a relatively short period, and would wish particularly to commend the following
  - 15.1 the speed of development towards a comprehensive university—fifty-two specializations are now offered, conforming to state standards, and, as far as we can tell, good use has been made of the potential for local electives and choices in curriculum design

- 15.2 the very imaginative pre-university development, (with the university high school which seems to fulfill a very important social function), provides BSU with good students, and is an important research resource for the pedagogical faculty
- 15.3 the off campus extension centers at Ulan Bator and Ust Ordyn which are useful instruments of the regional role, and, over time could provide
  - a model for other locations
  - a basis for distance learning and lifelong learning experiments.
- 15.4 the various developments in practice, allied to theoretical study, which provide a sound basis for
  - enhanced research skills
  - preparing for employment
  - professional development
  - regional linkages
- 15.5 the growing co-operation with the academics of science in the accessibility of excellent researchers as teachers; of laboratories for research practice and research co-operation
- 15.6 important foundations being laid for languages
  - as a major subject
  - as a teacher training provision
  - as preparation for international student mobility
- 15.7 the development, in the Methodological Centre and 'Club' of the integration of quality assurance, staff development, the exchanges of good practice and experience, and course development and curriculum initiatives. It is unusual to find this integration in one organizational unit.
- 15.8 the evidence of stakeholder support via the Board of Trustees and the use of Trust funds for student support and other start-up investments. Comments on the relevance of course provision were most encouraging.

All these we found very encouraging developments, and while each had its own set of difficulties, the background is of substantial achievement.

- 16. The principal remit of the VAP team is to look to the future and offer observations to BSU on how its strengths might be built on, weaknesses

eradicated, opportunities seized and threats averted. The following recommendations are thus offered

**16.1 while huge credit must be given to BSU for the development of new specializations according to state standards, we have some anxieties, which are really common to all Russian universities, not just Buryat, e.g.**

- **are they too rigid and overspecialized, and thus militate against genuine transdisciplinary connections and study?**
- **does excessive specialization enable students to switch jobs at various points in their career, especially when employment opportunities are not good?**
- **is there evidence of considerable over-teaching, over-full curricula, and therefore of excessive resource consumption, which is not helpful in a period of financial difficulty?**

**16.2 we would thus recommend BSU**

- **investigates the possibilities of lightening the curriculum load, and substituting a measure of independent student learning for formalized classroom teaching**
- **assesses how far multi-specialization/disciplinary courses can be developed i.e. major/minors; a common credit tariff structure across the University**
- **investigates the possibility of transferable skills in all specializations, e.g. communication, leadership, interpersonal, IT etc.**
- **sets up a longitudinal study to evaluate the job destinations of graduates, and the extent to which they use skills acquired on specialist degrees in actual employment**

**16.3 it is evident that more specializations are likely to be added to the BSU range. However, the team feels that**

- **the means of developing “multi-specialisms” related to the region’s needs should be considered—growth areas in the state’s economy and culture. Cultural heritage, tourism broadly defined, and SME development are such examples**
- **in this process, the University may have to consider the health and buoyancy of existing specialisms like history, geography and economics and redefining the underlying paradigms to set them on a further growth trajectory**

- **although the practice philosophy is clearly excellent at developing research skills, it is not clear how the practice develops job related skills, since, after all, most graduates will not pursue an academic career. The team will willingly offer further advice on this point if needed.**

16.4 it is likely that lifelong learning will be a major issue in Russian higher education over the next decade, based on a much higher number of non traditional students:

- those students who have missed out on early studies but who are clearly capable of benefiting
- those who could benefit from a second chance
- those who require advanced professional development and career updating
- those who wish to change career direction and need further education to support this change.

International experience would seem to support this view, and raises the question of whether and how BSU should prepare itself for this development. Flexible course design, entry and exit points, mixed modes of attendance, qualification and non qualification courses are promising avenues of development. The team feels that BSU could well become a pioneer in Russia, given its commitment to quality processes and proven innovation.

16.5 **the team very much concurs with the emerging view at BSU that postgraduate development should be a priority for reasons of enhanced institutional status; service to the region; and contributions to knowledge. The following points should be considered:**

- **there is a case for redefining postgraduateness in terms of Masters and doctoral levels**
- **a good Master's program in internationally attractive areas is a major element in successful international student recruitment**
- **doctorateness could usefully be approached both for those who wish to follow an academic career, and those who are likely to be leaders in industry and the public sector. In this case, the traditional Ph.D. may not be the only vehicle: professional doctorates may be more relevant**

- **the liaison with Academies of Science is clearly crucial and should be developed further**
- **the ease with which transdisciplinary doctorates can be developed should be evaluated by BSU**
- **the role of the Graduate School may need to evolve.**

16.6 while the development of foreign languages has been successful to date, this, of itself, does not constitute an international strategy for BSU. **The team feels that, as an emerging force in the Russian university world, BSU is ready for more international exposure. Elements in an international strategy are indicated in documentation that will be sent to the Rector separately, but they include**

- **definition of focal areas of attention**
- **internationalization of the curriculum**
- **student mobility agreements for outgoing and income students**
- **credit compatibility and recognition**
- **appropriate support mechanisms and facilities for incoming students – learning, counseling and advice, health etc.**
- **language instruction in one or more of the internationally favored languages**
- **functioning research agreements.**

BSU has a number of existing initiatives, but they need to be placed in a firm strategic framework. Also, the effectiveness of the current institutional agreements should be evaluated. If any do not work, they might be quietly dropped, and fresh ones sought.

16.7 the attention to staff development programs is warmly commended, as is the link with BSU's quality processes. The team would therefore say, that, if some of the above ideas were accepted, they would generate a host of additional staff development priorities for the 'Club' and 'Methodological Centre'. Discussions also indicated that further attention probably needs to be given to rewards and incentives of various kinds to support movement in agreed directions—good quality research time, sabbaticals, assistance with housing, overseas attachments etc.

16.8 finally, the team wholeheartedly concurs with the priority BSU wishes to attach to IT development for reasons stated by BSU colleagues and

also with reference to distance education, more independent student learning, and an enhanced research profile.

17. The above constitutes a formidable set of challenges and resource demands—hence the significance of prioritizing in a strategic framework, and good resource acquisition and management discussed earlier.

### ***STUDENT NEEDS AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS IN INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS***

18. Because time did not permit us an opportunity to meet separately with students, about a dozen of them were invited to join our two sessions with various service providers to discuss the above topic. This arrangement turned out to be fortuitous because the former learned about some student services of which they seemed to be unaware and the latter learned about some student needs that apparently were not being met. In addition to the representative students, participants included the heads of university offices, students' associations, trade unions and other non-governmental organizations responsible for addressing a variety of "social" needs experienced by students at Buryat State University.
19. The range of such services is impressive. They include
  - 19.1 an ambitious program of cultural activities through which students are involved in a variety of musical, dance, theatrical and other performances and competition—both serious and frivolous, both traditional (e.g., Buryatian) and contemporary, both on campus and elsewhere
  - 19.2 an annual series of recreational, inter-institutional, national and international contests and other events in some sixteen sports—enabled by the University's stadium, nine gymnasia and two lakeside sport camps, supported in part by a grant from the government of the Republic and by various commercial sponsors, and supplemented by a sports school operated for children in Ulan Ude
  - 19.3 public campaigns to improve physical health, accommodation arrangements for disabled students, social/psychological counseling for coping skills, and an agency to represent student concerns to administrative officials of the university
  - 19.4 a legal clinic to ensure (through information distribution, personal consultations, conferences/roundtables, and telephone counseling) that students (and those in the wider community who may also access these services free of charge) are aware of their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements under the various laws of the land.

20. Underlying this ambitious provision of student support services are some fundamental principles to which the University is obviously committed—such as:
- 20.1 quality higher education should include all forms of human development, not just intellectual
  - 20.2 academic studies are more successful if students' social, health, and other needs are met
  - 20.3 cultural and sports excellence can build strong school spirit that promotes pride in the institution and fosters a positive attitude toward studies pursued there
  - 20.4 the University has an outreach responsibility and can help those in the broader community meet their needs for cultural and recreational development and for help in the areas of health and the law.

We concur entirely with these principles and commend BSU on the devoted determination with which they are being implemented through the provision of student support services.

21. When students were asked to comment on the topic of “student needs and the role of students in institutional affairs” their observations were related more closely to the academic than the “social” domain—although appreciation of the latter was expressed and better publicity about the availability and means of accessing those services was requested. Interests or concerns were expressed by students on several academically-related subjects that included the following:
- 21.1 the North American university approaches to students' evaluation of professors' teaching
  - 21.2 the preponderance of theoretical content (as opposed to practical experience) in many programs
  - 21.3 the inadequacy of library holdings and Internet access on campus (a higher priority should be placed on them in allocating the university's scarce resources)
  - 21.4 the need for more study-abroad opportunities (recognizing the institution's severe financial circumstances, interested students should at least be provided with information on possible sources of support they could pursue for this purpose)
  - 21.5 the desirability of more opportunities to take courses outside of one's discipline of specialization, especially for purposes of career preparedness.



In the last regard, the establishment of an agency to facilitate the career prospects of students was advocated – whereupon it was reported that such an entity already exists, which stimulated the request that its operation be made better known among BSU students.

22. **In addition to the specific proposals mentioned (all of which we would urge be acted upon), several general recommendations may be derived from the above observations, among which are the following:**
  - 22.1 **BSU leaders should take steps to ensure that the impressive range of “social” services that are available, and the easiest ways of accessing them, are well known by students**
  - 22.2 **BSU leaders should schedule periodic meetings (like the one reported here) at which representative students can converse with officials responsible for both academic programming and “social” services, in order to keep students informed about emerging institutional plans and developments and to gain information on students’ current needs and concerns**
  - 22.3 **BSU leaders should consider the possible danger, as the transition from a pedagogical institute to a comprehensive university approaches completion, that the model emulated may be that of a “classical” rather than a “modern” institution.**
23. The last caution arises from remarks elsewhere in this report as well, but it is particularly well justified by several of the student concerns noted previously – especially those related to career preparedness and curricular flexibility.

## **ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

24. This was an area of exploration that was rather curtailed, owing to the intensity and length of discussion in other topics. Nonetheless, various influences regarding appropriate directions of further development may be detected, and these are now discussed.

The panel perceived a number of features about the existing patterns of management at BSU

- 24.1 there is clearly a record of successful steerage over the last five years which must mean that the rectorate has had the means both of developing a vision and realizing it, through coherent development of policy and allocation of resources
- 24.2 central University offices have developed sound policies and means of implementation via the faculties. In general, we see them as being supportive, facilitative, and, in some cases, quite directive in applying institution wide frameworks (e.g. course and staff scheduling)

- 24.3 unlike many Russian state classical universities, there is an apparently well functioning Board of Trustees, with good external representation, overall steerage of institutional resource acquisition, without interfering in operating detail and academic matters, and beginning to secure good relationships with important regional Stakeholders
- 24.4 the vast bulk of work is located in the fifteen faculties headed by deans, which are relatively traditional in character and type of activity
- 24.5 the distinction between faculties, institutes as colleges was not altogether clear to us
- 24.6 there is wide evidence that newer innovative less traditional activities related to the market have not been successfully developed either in faculties or by the failed Business Center
- 24.7 we applaud the decision to set up two branch campuses as a means of providing access to the University of distant parts of the region, and also the bridges built with the Academy of Science. Less apparent are the bridges with other higher education institutions in Buryat.
- 25. In the light of the above, several assumptions were made by the team, which could guide further development
  - 25.1 it is highly likely that the University will continue to expand, and diversify its teaching and research scope and profile, especially in the postgraduate domain. The existing structure may not be able to cope with much further expansion
  - 25.2 there is likely to be the need for more services that are market related— research and knowledge transfer, consultancy, lifelong learning in its various forms etc.
  - 25.3 the conventional classical model may not contain sufficient flexibility for future organizational needs i.e. the tight discipline specialism based faculty structure, the inward looking culture
  - 25.4 the steering core of the University may need more of a strategic and external orientation
  - 25.5 given the above, there may be a case as time goes by, for greater decentralization of authority to faculties, assuming there is adequate management capacity at that level.
- 26. **Consequently, if we relate these assumptions to the earlier analysis of the organizational structure, the team recommends that the University give attention to the following possibilities:**

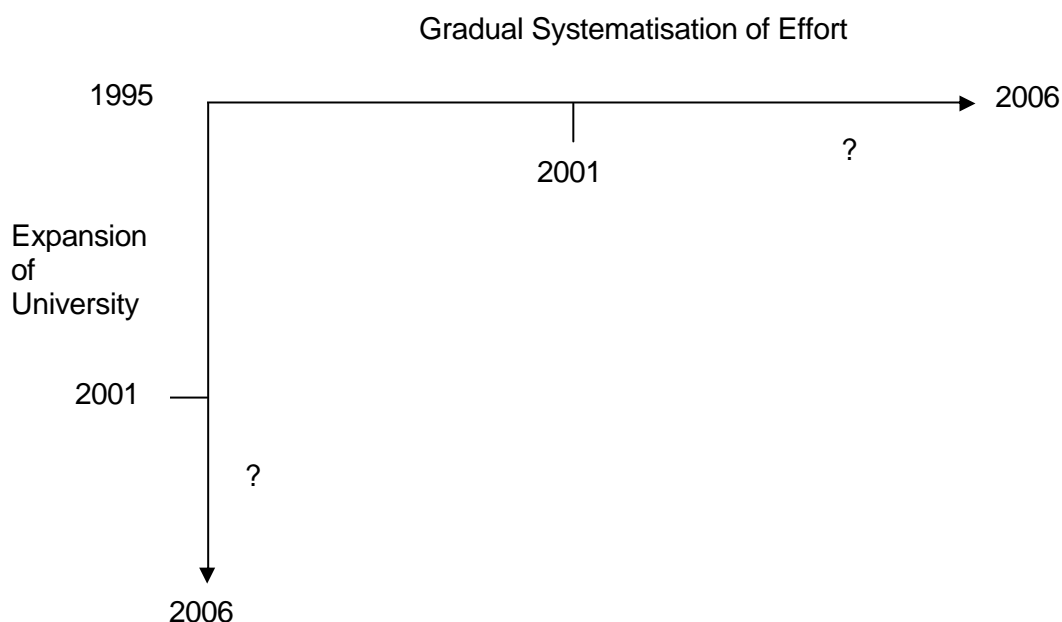
- 26.1 the configuration of the rectorate in the portfolios of the vice rectors be assessed. At present, we perceive some overlap in the academic area and a marked concentration on internal management rather than external service. The external focus is apparently missing, and the University might therefore consider refinements from among the following
- giving an explicit external market focus to all members in their respective domains
  - creating some vice-rector portfolios which are specifically external e.g. lifelong learning and continuing education; research and development/ research-technology transfer/industrial research; business development, international affairs
  - appointing specialist officers to manage executively such activities under a vice rector—possibly from outside the university sector
  - ensuring that vice-rectors focus more on policy and enable others across the University, rather than just control of their office
- 26.2 the strategic role of the rectorate is likely to become more important. Thus, consideration should be given to a systematic strategic planning process that is itself an instrument of change and involves deans, redistributed resources, and integrated academic and resource planning. The team would be happy to advise in more detail
- 26.3 there is likely to be an increasing case for well founded 'development periphery/near market units'. These are likely to be outside the faculties, will be outwardly focused, flexible, quick moving, opportunist and entrepreneurial, giving the University a competitive edge in areas like technology transfer and continuing education
- 26.4 as the University expands, it is likely to add to its number of specializations and transdisciplinary activities. What would probably not be helpful would be simply to add new faculties and ad infinitum. We see the case at some point for a consolidation of existing and new faculties into perhaps five/six larger units, which would
- encourage interdisciplinarity
  - enable more decentralization of authority to take place in professional faculty management

- **refocus the work of Cultural Office to more facilitation over time.**
- 26.5 **as the postgraduate area expands, so will the significance of the Graduate School. In this case, the University may wish to consider**
- **setting up a small number of transdisciplinary graduate schools in key areas of the University's research effort (e.g. the environment and its protection); to focus effort, and actively international funds**
  - **re-focusing the crucial Graduate School's activities on research policy, research investment, research marketing, quality assurance and control, staff development**
  - **joint Graduate Schools with other universities both regionally and nationally to achieve economies of scale and enriched provision and co-operation**
- 26.6 **enhanced stakeholder/external input at levels or additions to the Board of Trustees, i.e. at faculty level, which will enhance co-operation with regional interest at a more operational level**
- 26.7 **as far as the relationship with other universities and higher education institutions are concerned, BSU might actively consider**
- **joint Graduate Schools and research projects**
  - **an integrated capacity for lifelong learning**
  - **taking under its wing specialist academics e.g. for arts, drama, music, seminars, to broaden its discipline base, and strengthen its position regionally**
  - **being the "home" in Buryat for any Moscow institutions which may wish to set up extension centers e.g. in economics. This would preclude unhelpful competition**
  - **long term, a merger/takeover of the East Siberian University of Technology on favorable terms, thus creating a very significant large University.**

All the above are essentially evolutionary steps, but which the advisors feel are important in the long-term growth and presence of BSU.

## **CONCLUSION: BROAD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

27. The VAP team has observed the evolution of BSU over two dimensions



and this has clearly been successfully achieved.

28. Over the period, 2002 – 2006, we could envisage expansion that probably includes

28.1 a possible increase to 12,000 + students

- the addition of new disciplines/specializations

28.2 considerable research development

28.3 new near market activities

28.4 enhanced international effort

28.5 more extension centers

28.6 a general enhancement of regionally related services.

It is important however that the systematization of effort that the University has well demonstrated over the past five years keeps pace with expansion, and is sensitive to the particular character of the expansion. This is a difficult balance to sustain. If systematization does not keep pace with expansion, the

University will become exceedingly messy, untidy, and too many ad hoc solutions will be devised in different parts of BSU to cope with the problems of growth. Over-systematization is likely to lead to excessive bureaucratization that will hinder adaptiveness, academic autonomy, creativity, and the flexibility of responses to opportunities.

29. Thus, as far as systematization is concerned, the team sees the following as being important:

- 29.1 a good strategic planning framework
- 29.2 sensitive reward and incentives systems for staff
- 29.3 a proactive staff development policy and instruments
- 29.4 a flexible academic, credit based structure will facilitate expansion without under fragmentation
- 29.5 careful organizational renewal
- 29.6 effective international collaborations that deliver good quality staff enrichment experiences, student mobility and research collaborations
- 29.7 robust processes of quality audit, assurance and enhancement
- 29.8 funds for investment in key growth areas, and venture capital.

Much of the foundations of the above has already been laid. The University should not fall into the trap of assuming that high quality academic work and a strong external service provision are incompatible: they are not, but to avoid this trap, attention to the priorities previously advised is urged. This reinforces our caveat on the “classical university” concept expressed earlier (see para. 9).

30. Finally, we record once more our very sincere thanks to Rector Kalmykov and all his colleagues—academic, administrative, interpreters—for all their kindness to us. For western visitors, this has been a most enriching experience professionally, socially and culturally, and we look forward to the possibilities of a return visit at some point to discuss progress. We hope these comments will be helpful and will be happy to elaborate further. We are fully confident that the future trajectory of BSU will be impressive.
31. We warmly thank the Salzburg Seminar for inviting us and the two foundations for their wisdom and vision in sponsoring the Universities Project and the Visiting Advisors Program. It is clearly apparent to us that the benefits of participation to BSU are considerable and long-lasting and we strongly recommend a continuation of support.

### ***Team members***

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John Davis Dean of the Graduate School and former Pro Vice Chancellor for Research, Enterprise and Innovation at Anglia Polytechnic University in the United Kingdom and Pro Vice Chancellor for Quality Assurance and Organizational Development at La Trobe University, Australia. He is also Academic Director of both the European and the Latin American Rectors Management Program and has been a consultant in higher education management with the European Rectors' Conference and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 1977. The founding Dean of the Anglia Business School and chair of its Higher Education Management Program, Professor Davies has undertaken numerous strategic consultancy projects in higher education in several countries and directed research and development projects for OECD, UNESCO, and the European Union. Professor Davies is a member of the Universities Project Advisory Committee, and also is Chair of the Faculty of the Russian Symposia at Salzburg. He is also Professor of Higher Education Management at the University of Bath, UK.

#### **Robin Farquhar                      Canada**

Robin Farquhar is professor of public policy and administration and former president (1989 to 1996) of Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. From 1981 to 1989 he served as vice chancellor and president of the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and has chaired the Canadian Bureau for International Education. Dr. Farquhar is former president of both the Canadian Society for the Study of Education and the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration. He received a B.A. and an M.A. in English from the University of British Columbia and a Ph.D. in education administration from the University of Chicago, Illinois, USA. Dr. Farquhar is a member of the Universities Project Advisory Committee.

#### **Ossi V. Lindqvist                      Finland**

Ossi Lindqvist was elected chairman of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council from 2000 to 2003 and is director and professor at the Institute of Applied Biotechnology at the University of Kuopio, Finland. From 1990 to 1998, he served as the Institute's rector and has also served as chairman of the Finnish University Rectors (1993 to 1997), member of the National Council for Science and Technology (1996 to 1999), and invited foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry from 1997. He was professor at the University of Dayton, Ohio, USA from 1970 to 1972. Dr. Lindqvist earned a Ph.D. from the University of Turku, Finland.

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## **THE UNIVERSITIES PROJECT OF THE SALZBURG SEMINAR**

Universities throughout the world are undergoing systemic changes in their governance, academic design, structure, and mission. The Salzburg Seminar's Universities Project focuses on higher education reform in Central and East Europe, Russia, and the Newly Independent States as universities in these regions redefine their relationships with governments and try to become more integrated into the global intellectual community.

The Universities Project is a multi-year series of conferences and symposia convening senior representatives of higher education from the designated regions with their counterparts from North America and West Europe. Discussion in the Project's programs focuses on the following themes:

- University Administration and Finance
- Academic Structure and Governance within the University
- Meeting Students' Needs, and the Role of Students in Institutional Affairs
- Technology in Higher Education
- The University and Civil Society

## **OBJECTIVES**

Universities and other institutions of higher learning are seeking to reshape themselves in ways that will prepare them more fully for the twenty-first century. Even as these institutions are considering extensive systemic changes in their academic design, structure, and mission, all desire autonomy in governance and in their intellectual life. Accordingly, the Universities Project aims to promote the higher education reform process by inviting senior administrators to participate in conferences and symposia concerning issues of university management, administration, finance, and governance.

## **THE VISITING ADVISORS PROGRAM (VAP)**

The Salzburg Seminar launched this enhanced aspect of the Universities Project in the autumn of 1998. Under this program, teams of university presidents and higher education experts visit universities in Central and East Europe and Russia at the host institutions' request to assist in the process of institutional self-assessment and change. By mid 2001, twenty-eight VAP visits will have taken place to universities in East and Central Europe and Russia. A full schedule of visits is planned for 2001 and beyond. The addition of the Visiting Advisors Program brings to the Universities Project an applied aspect and serves to enhance institutional and personal relationships begun in Salzburg.

The Salzburg Seminar acknowledges with gratitude the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which are funding the Universities Project and the Visiting Advisors Program respectively.



## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information regarding the Salzburg Seminar's Visiting Advisors program, the Universities Project, and Salzburg Seminar programs, please contact one of the Seminar's offices below.

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