

North American Collaboration in Higher Education: Public Policy Context and Strategies

Policymakers should examine imbalances when considering North American cooperation in higher education, research and training. They should consider the manner in which that cooperation contributes to innovation and human resource development. All recognized the importance of public policies that emphasize the need to think beyond national borders to enhance competitiveness.

The crucial role of governments in developing policies and standards to equip students with competitive skills was recognized. It raises the issues of the autonomy of both universities and professional licensing bodies. A presentation on the educational policies for centres of higher education in Mexico served to illustrate the Mexican government's perspective on higher education. These policies reflect a total commitment to the objectives defined at the Wingspread Conference.

All participants acknowledged the fiscal reality. Scant new money is available for programs. The financing issue, therefore, concerns reallocation and the establishment of international education priorities, particularly as they relate to government support for students and programs. However, such investments in international education would yield great benefits in terms of cost-effectiveness and the development of human resources, a nation's most important asset.