

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH



Higher Education Hub

Institute for Education, Community and Society

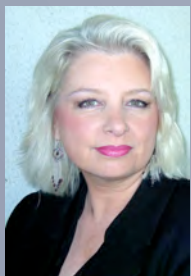
‘Where are universities heading in the 21st century: Current challenges and possible futures’

Tuesday 19th April
2.00 – 5.00pm

Godfrey Thomson Hall,
Moray House School of Education



Professor Ronald Barnett – Institute of Education,
The University of London *‘The future of the university’*



Dr. Mary Darden – Concordia University, Texas, USA
‘The future of higher education: Ways for universities to prepare for long-term success in the midst of rapid and continuing change’

Participant fee: £25 (UoE Staff/Students: Free)

It is crucial that you register for this event early. If you are interested in attending, please contact Fiona Lennox no later than **13th April**:
Fiona.Lennox@ed.ac.uk (0131 651 6120)

‘Where are universities heading in the 21st century: Current challenges and possible futures’

This symposium, organised by the Higher Education Hub of the Institute for Education, Community and Society is to be held on **Tuesday 19th April 2011** from **2.00-5.00pm** in the **Godfrey Thomson Hall** at **Moray House School of Education**. The biographies of the two speakers and summaries of their presentations appear below.

Professor Ronald Barnett

Emeritus Professor of Higher Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. He is a recognised authority on the conceptual and theoretical understanding of the university and higher education. His books, several of which have won prizes and have been translated into other languages, include *The Idea of Higher Education*, *Higher Education: A Critical Business*, *Realizing the University in an age of supercomplexity*, *Beyond All Reason: Living with Ideology in the University*, and *A Will to Learn: Being a Student in an Age of Uncertainty* (all published by McGraw-Hill). His latest book is *Being a University* (Routledge – January 2011). Ronald Barnett has held senior positions at the Institute of Education, including that of Pro-Director for Longer Term Strategy and was also, for seven years, a Dean. He is a past Chair of the Society for Research into Higher Education, and has recently served as a Special Adviser to the House of Commons Select Committee Inquiry into Universities and Students. He is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and the Society for Research into Higher Education and is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford and Visiting Professor at universities in China and Australia. He is also acts as a consultant, and has worked with most of the national organizations in the UK and many individual universities, including the University of the West Indies and the TATA University Institute of Social Sciences in India. He has been awarded a higher doctorate of the University of London, is an Academician of Social Sciences and was the recipient of the inaugural ‘Distinguished Researcher’ prize of the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR). He has been a keynote speaker in over 30 countries.

Title of talk: ‘The Future of the University’

The question mark in the title of our symposium is crucial. For it puts into question the very matter of talking about its challenges and futures. How could this be? For surely the university has both ‘current challenges’ *and* ‘possible futures’? But *that* implies that there is an entity termed ‘university’ that we can readily identify and that we have a sense as to what it is to speak of its ‘possible’ futures. I want to examine both of these assumptions.

On the first matter, can we any longer rest easily with the very term ‘university’? The term has two referents. It refers to (a) institutions that actually bear the name ‘university’. Here we speak of ‘universities’ and ‘university systems’ and the ‘University of X’ or the ‘Y University Institute’ (or even, in India) ‘deemed universities’. And the term ‘university’ also refers to (b) the complex set of ideas that have accrued over at least the last two centuries in developing thoughts as to what a university might be; as to what the very idea of the university might include. This latter conception of the university is inherently critical, for actual institutions (a) can be examined in the light of ideas of the university (b). This would amount to a process of critique in establishing the extent that any such institution or group of institutions (a) fulfils the hopes and values reflected in the ideas of the university (b) and actually warrants the appellation ‘university’.

As we move into the twenty-first century, both (a) and (b) have become complexes. Institutions that carry the name ‘university’ (a) are now incredibly diverse across the globe, and include virtual universities, distributed universities and universities that offer only postgraduate and that also specialise in technical training, possibly linked especially to the world of work. But ideas about the university (b) are also multiplying, reflecting a multitude of ideologies that seek to shape the institution in their own images.

So the very ideas of challenge and futures are problematic, for universities are heterogeneous *and* our representations of ‘university’ are in confusion if not downright mutually antipathetic. But there is another problem here. For the idea of ‘futures’ implies that there could be some continuity with past ideas of the university; that what we take the idea of the university to be has a future. This supposition, too, deserves to be questioned.

Such enquiries, however, cannot constitute the fullness of the matters before us. For the ‘university’, both as idea and as institution, embodies – or has embodied – extraordinary hopes and profound values. So questions as to challenges and possibilities invite consideration as to the spaces for the realization of the university in the modern era.

Dr. Mary Landon Darden

Editor of *Beyond 2020: Envisioning the Future of Universities in America*, published by the American Council on Education and Rowman and Littlefield (for more information please see www.marydarden.com). She is Dean of the Concordia University Texas San Antonio Centre. Darden earned her doctorate in higher education administration from the *Scholars of Practice Program* at Baylor University in 2006. Her dissertation is titled *Women Presidents of Four-Year Colleges and Universities: An Analysis of Changeable Attributes Contributing to Their Success*. She is the recipient of state and national higher education administration awards, including the *2001 National Exemplary Program Award* for Community Services from the National Council of Continuing Education and Training (NCCET).

Before coming to San Antonio, Darden served as an administrator, consultant and adjunct instructor at higher education for nearly two decades at institutions including Baylor University and McLennan Community College.

Darden has an extensive background in media communications as a freelance television and radio producer, feature writer/photographer, and communications consultant. She wrote, directed and hosted her own television show for four years and served as Executive Producer and Host of the 2009-2010 weekly radio show for KWBU-FM/National Public Radio, *Treasures of the Texas Collection*.

Title of talk: ‘The Future of Higher Education: Ways for Universities to Prepare for Long-Term Success in the Midst of Rapid and Continuing Change’

For centuries, higher education was one of the most slowly changing institutions in any society. Any possible change was deliberated and debated over long periods of time. Today, universities can often – and may even be forced – to make rapid, immediate and profound changes to ensure their future in the higher education market place. With change, there are often risks – some of them substantial. Some institutions may not survive the journey. As University of Michigan President Emeritus James Duderstadt said:

Leading a university during a time of great social change is a bit like navigating the Titanic through an iceberg floe in the dead of night. Simply reacting to challenges and opportunities as they arise can eventually sink the ship. (Duderstadt, 2007)

Tools for navigating the challenging waters of the future will become increasingly necessary. It was for this reason that Mary Landon Darden, in partnership with nearly two dozen top experts in specialties of higher education administration, prepared a handbook for higher education leaders of the future to help chart the channels to success.

Change for the university is unlikely to slow; in fact, the past two decades indicate that we are likely to see increasingly rapid change on a continuing basis. This presentation will explore some of the biggest changes expected for higher education in the next decade and how the leaders of universities and colleges may begin to prepare for success in the future.

Beyond 2020: Envisioning the future of Universities in America *provides valuable guidance for university leaders working to address challenges and seize the opportunities that will position their institutions for success in the 21st century.*

— Lou Anna K. Simon, Ph.D., President, Michigan State University

Programme

2.00	Coffee
2.15	Introductory remarks and introductions (Rowena Arshad, Charles Anderson and Carolin Kreber, ECS)
2.30	Professor Ron Barnett, London Institute of Education
3.10	Brief discussion/questions for clarification
3.20	Coffee break
3.35	Dr. Mary Darden, Concordia University Texas
4.15	Brief discussion/questions for clarification
4.25	Plenary

The School of Education Higher Education Hub

What is the Higher Education Hub?

The Higher Education Hub is a group of staff, principally but not exclusively from the *Institute for Education, Community and Society*, who share an academic interest in issues pertaining to Higher Education. The administration for the Hub is within the Institute of Education, Community and Society. There always have been colleagues within the School who have explored Higher Education issues from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. The idea behind the hub is to continue such work but also to strengthen dialogue across already existing research teams, possibly form new ones based on common interests and to develop a clearer sense of the strengths and areas of investigation as relating to Higher Education already present within the Institute, School and possibly also other parts of the university.

How can I become involved?

The Hub is open to anyone with an interest in Higher Education regardless of theoretical, disciplinary or topical (pedagogy, policy, e-learning, etc) orientation. To become a member or be placed on our mailing list, contact Fiona Lennox, Administrator, Institute for Education, Community and Society on 0131 651 6120 or by e-mailing Fiona.Lennox@ed.ac.uk

What can I expect to happen in the future?

The *Higher Education seminar/colloquium series*, began with a seminar by David Raffe and Jim Gallacher on '*HE policy in post-devolution UK: more convergence than divergence?*' on 12 January. The symposium on 19 April on '*Where are universities heading in the 21st century: Current challenges and possible futures*' is the *official launch* and several further seminars are planned to take place throughout the year. You can provide ideas for seminars, assist with the organising of one and help us spread the work of the Hub. Colleagues, including established and new researchers as well as postgraduate students from other universities in Scotland and elsewhere, interested in seeking research collaborations, are welcome to join the Hub.

A Hub website with links to present local research activity in relation to Higher Education will be appearing shortly. The website will be frequently updated to reflect the developments of the envisaged evolving network.