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(ARTES LIBERALES)

# *Artes Liberales*

***An Association for the Furtherance of Liberal Education and Democratic Values in Post-communist Societies***

**Artes Liberales** was founded in Prague in January 1997 as a cooperative endeavour of educational leaders from Central Europe, the Baltic States, and Ukraine. As a regional educational association, **Artes Liberales** sponsors regular professional exchanges and other collaborative programs to promote liberal education and democratic leadership among scholars and institutions of higher learning in post-communist countries. **Artes Liberales** encourages colleges and universities to adopt innovative liberal arts curricula as a counter-weight to the premature and often excessive specialization typical of communist and post-communist pedagogy. **Artes Liberales** is actively engaged in expanding cooperative ties with other liberal arts institutions, both in the region and in the United States.

Members of the **Artes Liberales** steering committee: Samuel Abrahám, Director, Society for Higher Learning, Bratislava; Jerzy Axer, Director, Centre for Studies in the Classical Tradition, Warsaw; Cesar Birzea (chairman), Director, Institute of Educational Sciences, Bucharest; Agnes Erdelyi, Director, Invisible College, Budapest; Serhiv Ivaniouk, Rector, University of Kiev-Mohyla Academy, Kiev; Peteris Lakis, Rector, Latvian Academy of Culture, Riga; Rein Raud, Rector, Estonian Humanities Institute, Tallinn; Jan Sokol, Deputy Director, Institute of Fundamental Learning, Prague; and Julia Stefanova, Executive Director, Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange, Sofia; Stasys Vaitekunas, Rector, Klaipeda University, Lithuania.

US Representative: Nicholas Farnham, Director of Educational Programs at **The Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation**, will act as the Foundation's program liason with **Artes Liberales**. His New York office will serve temporarily as the organization's secretariat.

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## RENEWING LIBERAL EDUCATION IN EASTERN EUROPE: WHAT DOES IT OFFER HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES?

The Educational Leadership Program of the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation invited three members of Artes Liberales Committee to serve as panelists at a luncheon ELP sponsors periodically for U.S. educators in New York. The topic for this luncheon was "Renewing Liberal Education in Eastern Europe: What Does it Offer Higher Education in the United States? The following report is by ELP's director, Nicholas Farnham:

In the musty rooms of the Yale Club in New York City the talk too often sounds complacent as businessmen and other leaders regale each other with how well their institutions are performing and which friend has just been appointed to head which organization. So when forty-five U.S. college presidents and deans from the north eastern part of the United States gathered there last October to discuss liberal education reforms with Artes Liberales panellists from Bulgaria, Slovakia and Poland, no one could have been blamed for thinking that they were to hear yet again of the glories of U.S. higher education and its ability to serve as a model for the rest of the world. It was, as it turned out, the reverse, for it was Eastern Europeans who expounded models to the Americans.

Many participants clearly felt that it was as though a refreshing breeze had blown in off the steppes of Central and Eastern Europe to clear the mind. From the very beginning the discussion did not center on the material and other advantages of U.S. institutions, but rather on what is absent in many U.S. liberal arts experiences that reformers in Eastern and Central Europe hope to provide. While lacking money, Eastern European leaders, as evidenced by these panellists, have convictions burnished in the pain of their recent past, connections to national memories that go back to medieval times, and a grace derived from rich cultural influences that they can bring to the challenges of individualizing their educational systems. These qualities captured the attention of the audience. "I realized," said one U.S. college president after the meeting, "that renewal of liberal education in Eastern Europe carried with it the possibility of promoting a renewal of the vitality of our own enterprise." Participating as panellists were Prof. Samuel Abrahám, Director of the Society For Higher Learning in Bratislava, Slovak Republic; Professor Jerzy Axer, Director of the Centre For Studies on The Classical Tradition in Warsaw, Poland; and Dr. Julia Stefanova, Executive Director of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange and Professor of Literature at the University of Sofia, Bulgaria.

Among the U.S. participants were presidents and deans from prestigious liberal arts institutions such as Bennington College, Columbia University, Franklin and Marshall College, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Radcliffe College, University of Rochester as well as officers of various state and national educational associations.

The Eastern European panellists spoke simply and eloquently of their need to make degree structures in their institutions more flexible as well as to make the curricula interdisciplinary and less rigid. At the same time they emphasized their determination to reassert standards, resist "grade inflation", resist "political correctness" and in still a passion for truth into students.

Dr. Stefanova spoke on "Who should Liberal Education be for?", a topic of great concern in the United States at a time when a growing number of students seeking higher education are older than the traditional age of 18 to 24, and charges of consumerism are being levelled at the efforts of some institutions to tailor closely their college courses to the needs of the work place. At one point the meeting debated with some heat whether there is a "consumerist mentality" to which U. S. institutions have fallen prey.

Dr. Abraham's speech, "How Can the Pursuit of Truth be Reconciled with the Need to Respect Differences of Opinion?", was a solidly argued presentation of the need to take, and be prepared to defend, an intellectual position on difficult subjects, even as one is aware that it cannot be absolutely verified. He cited his own experience as a liberal democrat opposing communist doctrine as evidence that liberal democracies cannot survive without convictions. His presentation sparked a discussion of the prevalence of relativistic values in students in the U.S. as well as a debate on the recent bete noire among U.S. colleges, "political correctness". Finally, Dr. Axer rose to make a provocative presentation citing many obstacles to the implementation of liberal education reform in Eastern and Central Europe, but arguing that there is a common condition in the region conducive to its success. Many of the obstacles would be familiar to American educators – e.g. the short-sighted utilitarianism of parents, and the passivity of politicians – others new, such as the be wilderment of members of social groups unused to having a voice in affairs. The foundation on which liberal education can be built, Dr. Axer suggested, is the heritage of a classical tradition, newly freed from ties to anti-democratic and elitist tendencies. A "sovereign recreation" of that tradition is possible, Dr. Axer maintained, through classical studies, that "could awaken in [our] students naive astonishment and delight – feeling which should be our fundamental goal, and which are so difficult to arouse today." Furthermore this recreation is urgently needed in order to build civic responsibility. "In the language of the classical tradition, words,

which seem to be very commonplace when heard and spoken in the squabbles and hubbub of daily life, regain their sense and authority" as well as their capacity to "prepare society for becoming truly civic". A powerful recreation of the classical tradition could be a liberal education model for the U.S. to consider, Dr. Axer now proposed, turning the tables on his by now most attentive audience. "I would like to ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, whether the classical tradition in the United states could be an ally of liberal education. Is it reasonable to put classical masks upon the faces of the master and the pupil – partners in the educational theatre – in a country which has no historical experiences that call for a reconstruction of the national and cultural identity, a land where social ties and civic structures have not ever been destroyed? Does the fate of Trojans seeking their new-old native land [as in the tale of Aeneas] pertain to you in any degree at all?" His challenging conclusion sparked rich debate on the recent decline of both classics programs and foreign language requirements in American universities. This meeting was organized on the assumption that ideas helping to shape the transition to democracy in Eastern and Central Europe can hold significant meaning for dealing with realities in the United States. The meeting bore this assumption out well. There ought to be little doubt among those who attended that approaches being employed to introduce liberal education in Eastern and Central Europe have much to offer educators in the United States.

## HOW THE CLASSICAL TRADITION CAN SERVE TO PROMOTE LIBERAL EDUCATION IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY: THE EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE CASE EXAMPLE

PROFESSOR JERZY AXER
(Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe, OBTA, Warsaw

*Speech to the Educational Leadership Program, New York Forum, October 20, 1997*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When Nick Farnham made his way to the land of the forests and steppes of Central and Eastern Europe, he apparently had the impression that in this region the message of Artes liberales could produce a rich yield.

In Budapest in the autumn of 1996 he made his listeners aware of the fact that each one of us is *anima naturaliter liberalis*, to paraphrase a formula about the spiritual readiness of certain pagans to accept Christianity even before Christ was born.

Apparently, while aiming at a change of the education system inherited from totalitarianism, we, instinctively (and, to a considerable degree unconsciously) are following paths that lead to liberal education, along roads that trace back to the development of this idea.

In my case, the outcome of such endeavours was the creation of several experimental educational laboratories conducted in the spirit of liberal education, of which the most important are the tutorial Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities at Warsaw University and the East-Central European School in the Humanities. The latter is a regional, international structure, intent on an interdisciplinary postgraduate education of young scholars dealing with pure humanities in the post-Soviet region, particularly in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and of course, Poland. You will find information about those initiatives in the material provided, describing the legal-organisational situation in which we are compelled to carry out our experiments. Should you be further interested, this information could be expanded in the course of a discussion. It is not, however, to speak about chances for educational reforms in East-Central Europe and the strategy of creating my liberal education laboratories that Nick invited me here.

The structures, which I have built, contain a sui generis classical experience. This is why we attach the utmost importance to the Socratic poetics of dialogue, discourage premature specialisation, and base the didactic process upon direct conversation in the course of interdisciplinary seminars. Furthermore, not only is my fundamental training classical, but the institution involved - the very origin and organiser of all our work - is the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA), which to a certain extent resembles the London-based Warburg Institute. Nick requested therefore, that I should explain to you whether this situation is accidental or, whether we are dealing with some sort of a regularity and deeper logic in turning the classical tradition into a foremost carrier of the liberal education ideology. Such a combination may appear paradoxical. After all, for a long time, classical education has been a synonym for conservatism and specific conformity. I shall attempt to explain this paradox, confining myself to a very rough sketch, whose various parts, should you find it useful, can be further expanded in a more detailed way in the discussion.

My point of departure is the different role of the classical tradition in our present day conditions from the one it played in the past. The conservative, anti-egalitarian and anti-democratic impact of this tradition was possible in the past because of a deep-rooted cultural canon and an educational system that protected the latter. In contemporary East-Central Europe - on the contrary - the last thing our elites are ready to defend is a classical - however conceived - canon in culture and education. The opponents of reformers of the system are not members of elites defending their privileged position, and

vociferously putting forward a model of traditional education (as was the case in the West, especially before 1968). Rather our adversaries today are, apart from special interest groups in officialdom who fail to safeguard any values, the passivity and helplessness of members of society, who for over half a century have become unaccustomed to forming any self-governing structures. Other obstacles are the short-sighted utilitarianism and conformist tendencies of the parents, in whose minds communist slogans, proclaiming the superiority of productive labour over intellectual work and calling for rendering education practical, have grotesquely been transformed into a willingness to try to ensure at almost any cost their children's instant success within the conditions of the market economy.

In this situation, liberal education laboratories must operate apart from the dominant mentality and, for the time being, outside the laws of the market, or at least apart from considerations for the immediate financial success of a University or School. The paths leading toward the establishment of such laboratories are many. In those laboratories which I have brought into being, the classical tradition, freed from the obligation to defend a conservative order, has become a catalyst for the consolidation of a reform-oriented atmosphere. Thus, in our situation, what once served to render the system stable, today can be the basis of change and much-desired innovation. We believe that we have discovered the proper road toward success in the twenty-first century.

I shall now attempt to outline in a few paragraphs why I regard the classical tradition to be particularly useful in reaching an understanding between the teacher and the student, within the convention of the old master-pupil model of the past. I am interested exclusively in the kind of contact which assumes a joint striving towards a liberal and successful model of pedagogy.

1. First, the use of the language of the classical tradition can be seen in our East European situation as a therapeutic operation. Just as a psychoanalyst wishing to a help a patient whose problems are due to difficult and relatively recent experiences, seeks in his life some earlier period, free from such experiences, and embarks upon a dialogue only after such a preparatory stage, we, too, believe that our societies, so cruelly mistreated by history, should undergo a similar cure. This could be provided by a journey back in time, a return to a sin-free childhood, in which democracy, liberty, and justice regain their forgotten brilliance and dignity.

2. Going back even beyond a temporal boundary delineated by common experience and biological memory is insufficient. One must go further back, beyond historical memory, which during the period of totalitarianism was rendered ideological and manipulated. This denotes the necessity of transcending the limits of the existing curriculum of school education. Today, the classical tradition can become such a *terra incognita*, awaiting rediscovery.

3. The purpose of such a procedure is the "suspension" of the pressure of historical experiences and the reduction of the pressure of mass culture stereotypes. The forgotten language of tradition takes us back to the common roots of Mediterranean civilisation, and thereby counteracts the habits stemming from our bad and only too recent experiences. Perhaps the next generation will find such "blocking of the present" unnecessary, but today this procedure creates an excellent opportunity for entering into a dialogue free from prejudice for hampering aggression, and helps to form independent opinions and thoughts which cannot be developed by means of any of the earlier defensive reactions, stifled by ideological prejudices and deprived of meaning by resorting to a stereotype.

4. Having thus cleared the arena and by way of initiating the Socratic educational dialogue, one could attempt jointly to reconstruct the world by resorting to universal signs. This sovereign recreation anew of our civilisation could awaken in the students naive astonishment and delight - feelings which should be our fundamental goal, and which are so difficult to arouse today. After all, they form a necessary condition for artistic creativity and creative thought in general. At this point, you may protest, indicating the fact that graduates of the classical studies do not fully confirm my thesis about the salutary impact of the classical tradition upon the enlivening of imagination and the development of a creative personality. At times, they resemble helpless castaways in the contemporary world, and not sovereign rulers of their own worlds. My reply is that the classical studies are one of those disciplines which most require a cure in the spirit of liberal education. Just like any remedy, the classical tradition is helpful only if used in proper doses and ways. Galvanising a moribund canon would be catastrophic, unless one were to employ forgotten signs, gestures and words to return speech to the dumb and hearing to the deaf.

5. What is the use of Plato? - that you might recall the word "wisdom"; Of Cicero? - that you might appreciate the importance of the word as such; Aristotle? - to restore meaning to cognitive procedures; Virgil? - to return the root sound to "suffering" and "obligation"; Homer? - to experience the wrath of God; Aeschylus? - to rebel; St. Thomas? - not to lose hope; St. Augustine? - not to lose faith.

6. Great importance is attached to the employment of the "distant mirror" trick, to paraphrase the title of Barbara Tuchman's book. Particles of the classical tradition become mediators between the past and the present, an Ariadne thread leading us through the labyrinth of time. This assistan-

ce is invaluable in educational undertakings. It is thanks to the classical tradition that we obtain at the very least a substitute for a language which reintegrates sequences of events that, deprived of meaning and order, change so easily into chaos before our very eyes.

7. Thus, past worlds can, at least to a certain degree, become accepted and tamed by the imagination of a young person. At the same time, they foster the atmosphere of natural interdisciplinary studies. What at school fell under different headings, and at the university became fragmented into a multitude of specialisations, regains its meaning as part of the common human heritage - the natural subject of reflection in the humanities.

8. Such an application of the classical tradition is, obviously, a *sui generis* trick, an artificial aid, so to speak. Appa-rently, however, a considerable number of young people, especially those among the most talented and ready to take risks, are willing to admit they need this form of assistance. If the basic purpose of liberal education is to enable a young person to find himself/herself within the stream of time, undoubtedly the classical tradition, so envisaged, is a ship which will allow the exile to reach the shores of his native land, however understood.

9. Our task brings to mind the labours of the Founding Fathers, who were compelled to construct the state of their dreams, conceived as the common home of exiles, from its very foundations. The basic building materials were particles of the classical tradition, brought from the Old World. The idea of organising on this shore a plebeian republic, which would combine into a single organism the essence of Athenian democracy and republican Rome, could appear to be a strange utopia, but one which, after all, proved to be extraordinarily successful.

Today, Eastern Europe witnesses the rebirth of states seeking their identity and is in urgent need of both a true and an illusory tradition of republican self-government and civic responsibility. In those conditions, one must act in such a manner as if the world were young again. We have left the smouldering ruins of Troy behind us, and our task resembles the mission of Aeneas, who was to revive it in another form and time. The meaning of such a mission can be formulated in the language of the classical tradition and words, which seem to be very commonplace when heard and spoken in the squabbles and hubbub of daily life, regain their sense and authority thanks to the recollection of their original contexts. If we wish to prepare society for becoming truly civic, and make citizens ready for participation in community instead of being outside observers, we must restore the conceptual apparatus, which endows meaning to the notion of Res Publica.

I have tried to present the reasons why in my opinion the classical tradition in East Central Europe is a good way for reforms conducted in the spirit of liberal education. I put the above list to an initial test by having it assessed by various groups of students in Poland and abroad. Their declarations confirmed the majority of the observations, although we must keep in mind the fact that all those students took part in experiments carried out in the spirit of liberal education.

Finally, I would like to ask you, Ladies and Gentlemen, whether the classical tradition in the United States could be an ally of liberal education. Is it reasonable to put classical masks upon the faces of the master and the pupil - partners in the educational theatre - in a country which has no historical experiences that call for a reconstruction of the national and cultural identity, a land where social ties and civic structures have not ever been destroyed? Does the fate of Trojans seeking their new-old native land pertain to you to any degree at all? Formulating those doubts, I do not know whether I am touching upon motifs essential for present-day disputes concerning the merits and faults of liberal education in your country. An outsider, however, finds its plausible that the classical tradition can prove to be attractive as a vehicle of liberal education for those Americans who are engaged in a quest for an antidote against uprootedness within history, the relativism of post-modern intellectual culture, and the spur-of-the moment non-continuum of mass culture.

The Greek-Roman tradition is no longer the voice of the white man or part of his imperial mission. Free from such encumbrances, it remains one of the most original languages of civilisation, used for describing the human experience of almost three millennia. It is also an inexhaustible storehouse of precedents, encompassing both man's disputes with God, his problems with himself, and an infinite variety of relations between the individual and the group.

In the virtual world, which we are indubitably entering, the authenticity of such testimony could become a source of satisfaction and a sign of hope. Resort to the above mentioned language could also prove to be highly useful for shaping the intellect and character. The classical tradition could become for reasons different than in our case, but just as efficiently, the desired means of preventing a facile and thoughtless acceptance of the present and of protecting us against the destiny of a slave of the fleeting moment, in which we are bound to live. After all, liberal education should also teach us humility, and unlearn the *hubris*, which is always the result of our making an absolute of the moment in which we act. Finally, it should provide the helpless with armour - models of a non-technical subjection of the surrounding reality.

If a teacher is to be truly the agent of civilisation, his basic task is to depart,together with his pupil viewed as a partner, from the domain of pragmatic activity, and to keep a proper distance. The classical mirror, which I mentioned earlier, puts into focus and renders distinct what usually remains invisible; it also blurs the contours of what we excessively concentrate on in our everyday life. The achievement of untypical reactions and encouragement to pursue intellectual behaviour for which contemporary society supplies little stimulation, should prove redeeming for the educational dialogue. Our partner in the didactic process could then become better aware of his own spiritual physiology. He will understand himself better if he manages to establish contact with the distant realm of the childhood of our world, one in which people had a different perception of time and cherished a different hierarchy of values. Perhaps, however, the most important rule would be: take your time! After all, the classical tradition is an extremely effective antidote against cursory reading, indifference to form, and all we are becoming accustomed to by the computer and Internet culture. Entering the classical world, a world of such a different rhythm, and based on a culture of time divided between *otium* and *negotium*, the pupil and teacher must, whether they like it or not, slow down. They must do so in order to regain peace generated by the awareness that our experiences had, in a sense, been those of others, elsewhere, and in another time. Finally, they must do so to become capable of mastering fear, which is always born of the feeling of being, lost and lonely.

If the master and the student "give themselves time", a chance for authentic contact will emerge - the prime condition of all liberal education and dialogue. Putting on the classical mask is one of the ways of achieving this contact.

## INNOVATION IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION. THE RELEVANCE OF LIBERAL ARTS TRADITIONS.

*Professor Adam Yarmolinsky's summarization of the day's discussion at the Conference organized by Open Society Institute's* ***Higher Education Support Program*** *in Budapest on February 28, 1998.*

We began with questions of definition: Is liberal education, or liberal arts education, like jazz - if we have to explain it we don't understand it - or can we be more specific? Are we better off working from what we think of as its fundamental elements: breadth, depth, originality, openness, development of critical thinking sense of history, commitment to the idea of a learning community? Or should we define it through the problems that surround it, i.e. the external pressures? This is to say, should we begin by asking, "if liberal education is the solution, what is the problem?" The worldwide problems we have noted include: enormous expansion of numbers of students; acceleration of social change including the vast growth of organizations; the complexities growing out of the information age, including the likelihood that the job a graduate will be doing five or ten years out hasn't been invented yet; the demand by employers for both specialized and generalized skills that are transferable, such as problem-solving and team-working. (As one participant described the social context, it is an era when specialists are not specialized enough and generalists not general enough.) Beyond these problems, there are problems specific to the Central and Eastern European region resulting from its change to a market economy. These include the decline of social values and state requirements that were once a part of the planned economy of the previous era.

We considered whether liberal education was a matter of content or of method; since we accepted that breadth is an essential element in liberal education (although "coverage" is a distraction and a delusion in any field), we seemed to agree that method is a necessary but not a sufficient element. We noted the innovations in method being brought about through distance learning, which opens new vistas for education, while placing additional, but perhaps unavoidable burdens on the student-teacher relationship.

We asked whether liberal education is an American import, or more a recovered European tradition, and whether the answer to this question goes more to perception than to reality? Whatever the origins, we noted that what is needed today in Eastern Europe is a "managerial" liberal education in place of the old "heroic" model of classical times.

We asked whose definition we should rely on? Students', parents', employers', faculties', administrators'? And we noted a serious disjunction between the views of high school students and their parents on the one hand, and recent alumni, their employers and faculty on the other hand, about the usefulness and relevance of liberal education.

Turning to the practical issues confronting the HESP Advisory Committee, as it seeks to prioritize its resources, we discussed the relative merits of helping to create new institutions for liberal teaming, or fostering liberal learning within existing institutions; and we seemed to agree that the answer depends on the specific circumstances. These include: the strength of local leadership on the ground, the depth of leadership within the faculty, where governance must necessarily be shared, the congruence between ambitions and resources, and the degree of institutional autonomy in the light of the supportive/regulatory role of government, and of

accrediting agencies, both public and private, indigenous and transnational.

We explored several dimensions of these questions, including: the potential for cross-fertilization across faculty lines within an institution, and with, other institutions; the value of exchange programs, the degree to which the core curriculum, going back to the communist era, can be shifted to reflect new social priorities; the ability of faculty members to interact with students; the desirability of requiring greater variety of method to grade students as well as requiring more writing by students, and the training and recruitment of faculty members in ways that engender responsiveness to the quality of teaching and learning. While discussing these resource inputs, we noted that the ultimate test of an educational program is in the output, the value added to the student's education, and the consequent benefit to society.

The discussion of resource priorities raised the issue of elitism, and the danger that if liberal education is not made widely available, it may perpetuate class divisions. We recognized that to make it widely available we must respond to pressures to prepare graduates for immediate employment, without, however, sacrificing liberal education's fundamental goals. We also noted that in the United States there is increasing competition from corporate programs and distance learning programs calling themselves "universities", which, while offering valuable opportunities for career advancement, do not offer the knowledge and skills of a liberal education, however understood.

We also considered how liberal education in Eastern Europe is dependent on the creation of a number of ancillary resources both internal and external to educational institutions, such as non-flexible accreditation bodies, career placement centers, strong alumni groups, publication centers dedicated to academic freedom and quality as well as national and transnational textbook industries committed to responding fully to the challenges of innovation.

In sum, the discussion suggested that there is a cluster of ideas about learning and teaching, under the general rubric of liberal education, however defined, that offers significant hope for improving the quality of higher education in Eastern Europe, as well as the quality of life generally in that region.

## NICHOLAS FARNHAM **RESULTS OF THE ARTES LIBERALES SURVEY**

***February 18, 1998***

In October of 1997 Artes Liberales, a network actively encouraging discussion of new ideas among university educators in Central and Eastern Europe, sent out a survey to try to find out from the region's educators their opinions as to what concepts and reforms might be both desirable and feasible in preparation for a regional meeting of Artes Liberales next October.

The survey was sent out to 132 academic and political leaders as well as some journalists in 10 countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. The 61 who responded, represented a 46% return. They were asked to rank – on a scale of "1" to "5", from negative to positive – 21 conceptual changes as to (A.) desirability from an educational point of view and (B.) feasibility given social, economic and political expectations over the next 10 years. The average responses as to both desirability and feasibility for each change are shown in the list below. One may assume that the changes with the highest combined total of desirability and feasibility would be the ones perceived to be easiest to adopt. Using this assumption, the list below organizes the changes in ascending order of perceived difficulty of adoption. This is not, of course, the order in which the questions were asked, which is indicated by the number to the left (Q#).

The high response rate for this survey suggests that there is great interest in these changes. Of course the survey went out to a limited group of leaders. The results cannot be said to have broad statistical significance. However they do clearly suggest what some prominent and highly knowledgeable officials feel about directions for changing the way education is offered in the area. ☞

| Q.# | CHANGE (ASCENDING ORDER OF DIFFICULTY OF ADOPTION) | A Desirable | B Feasible | Total A&B |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | Use a greater variety of methods to grade students: essays, exams, participation in class discussions. | 4.3 | 3.7 | 8 |
| 14 | Concentrate learning based more on critical thinking than memorization | 4.5 | 3.2 | 7.7 |
| 11 | Introduce interdisciplinary programs, e.g. a course in international relations which includes courses from history, political science, economics and other disciplines | 4.4 | 3.3 | 7.7 |
| 15 | Expand student participation by means of class discussions and discussion sections for lectures | 4.3 | 3.4 | 7.7 |
| 19 | Integrate research and teaching more closely | 4.4 | 3.3 | 7.7 |
| 2 | Make the curriculum more flexible | 4.1 | 3.4 | 7.5 |
| 17 | Require more writing by students as a teaching and learning device | 4.1 | 3.3 | 7.4 |
| 7 | Implement "core courses", i.e. courses that provide a common basis of knowledge for all students | 3.9 | 3.5 | 7.4 |
| 4 | Increase the number of business and professional programs | 3.8 | 3.5 | 7.3 |
| 1 | Increase the level of autonomy over curriculum at the department and faculty level | 3.5 | 3.6 | 7.1 |
| 8 | Expand opportunities for students to take courses outside of their faculty/department to broaden their perspective | 4.3 | 2.8 | 7.1 |
| 13 | Increase the number of seminars and discussion classes | 4.0 | 3.1 | 7.1 |
| 12 | Implement courses that cut across disciplines, e.g. "Classical Civilization" or "Ways of Knowing" | 4.1 | 3.0 | 7.1 |
| 5 | Increase the number of programs in the sciences and humanities | 3.7 | 3.3 | 7 |
| 6 | Institute a credit system which will be the basis for degrees instead of comprehensive examinations | 3.8 | 3.2 | 7 |
| 10 | Increase the number of elective courses within a students program | 3.7 | 3.3 | 7 |
| 20 | Increase the number of programs explicitly designed to help professors and lecturers improve their teaching style. | 4.1 | 2.9 | 7 |
| 9 | Require students to take courses outside of their faculty/department to broaden their perspective | 4.1 | 2.8 | 6.9 |
| 3 | Expand higher education and increase enrollment | 3.8 | 2.8 | 6.6 |
| 21 | Institute a program of community service opportunities for students as part of the curriculum | 3.8 | 2.8 | 6.6 |
| 16 | Increase student involvement in curriculum development | 3.3 | 3.1 | 6.4 |

As is apparent, the survey was not about pre-vocational or specialized educational objectives, but rather general education objectives that lead to fostering in a responsible citizenry qualities such as intellectual curiosity, critical intelligence, judgment, imagination and sympathy for the varieties of the human condition.

Based on the outcome of this survey, one would expect that the easiest reform to implement in the Central and Eastern European context would be to require the use of a greater variety of methods to grade students. The most difficult reform would be to develop a process ensuring the increase of student involvement in curriculum development. Teaching reforms, such as increasing the number of seminars, encouraging critical thinking, expanding student participation in class, requiring students to do more writing, integrating research with teaching, are seen as somewhat easy, but establishing a formal program to help teachers with their teaching style more difficult. Offering interdisciplinary courses and programs are seen as relatively easy, increasing the number of sciences and humanities programs relatively hard. Expanding higher education and instituting community service are seen as very hard. One way of analyzing these results is by their probable costs, which has undoubtedly influenced their rankings. With a few notable exceptions it would appear that most of the changes at the top of the list would require comparatively fewer resources than those at the bottom. This suggests that priorities will likely change as economic circumstances become less harsh.