



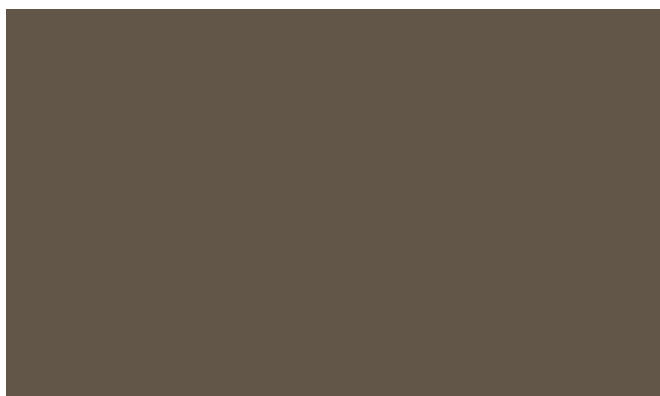
Université 
de Montréal

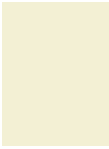


UNIVERSITIES AND KNOWLEDGE DIPLOMACY

ADDRESS BY RECTOR LUC VINET TO
THE MONTREAL COUNCIL ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS (MCFR)
SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

The text actually read is the official version





Mr. Mayor,

Fellow Rectors and Principals,

Mr. President and Chief Executive Officer of the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations,

Dear partners and Université de Montréal colleagues,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by saying that I am very honoured to have been invited by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations to address this important forum for discussion and reflection between the business and the Québec academic communities.

I am here to today to speak to you about internationalization of universities, and particularly of the Université de Montréal.

A first observation: internationalization is an essential strategy for the fruitful and responsible pursuit of any university's mission.

Why?

Because universities have the duty to train citizens of the world who have frequented other cultures and mastered other languages, citizens sensitized to global challenges and ready to meet them today and tomorrow.

Why?

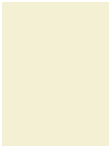
Because universities must stand for quality and excellence, because our teaching must be of the highest caliber, because our research must make a difference and because this is achieved by measuring ourselves against and collaborating with the best minds from the four corners of the world.

Why?

Because our institutions must be ready to respond to the enormous growth of international needs in higher education.

Why?

Because it is important share our best with the world. In fact, through learning exchanges and research, universities have always been international in nature.



In the 13th century, Italian theologian Thomas Aquinas taught Aristotle at the Universities of Cologne and Paris – Greek works that had been translated into Arabic and Latin a century earlier!

Over the past 20 years, however, technological developments have broken down borders, multiplied communication platforms and democratized information and knowledge. This is a very different context of internationalization.

In the OECD countries, one in every two young people will enroll in a university program in his or her lifetime. Overall, the number of university enrollments is increasing by 10 to 15 percent annually.

There are currently unprecedented needs in higher education that it will be difficult to satisfy, especially in the emerging countries like China, whose government has decided to build no less than 100 new universities within the next 10 years.

What's more, the Chinese government has identified its 49 best universities, at which the China Scholarship Council grants 6000 scholarships each year, to enable its best doctoral students from these 49 universities to continue their studies abroad.

Aware of these developments, the Université de Montréal has negotiated agreements with 10 of these universities to host nearly a 100 Chinese students on our campus.

This is an example of strategic positioning on the global playing field that all Quebec universities should endeavor to multiply so that they can send more students abroad and welcome more foreign students here.

Today's remarks

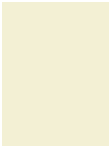
Over the next few minutes, I will go into more detail about the strategy that the Université de Montréal is deploying in its internationalization.

I will then talk to you about an issue that particularly captivates me. It's a proposal that, in my opinion, would very profitably associate our research efforts with those of the European community.

Mobility of students and programs

In Canada, even though internationalization is part of the grand strategies of Canadian universities, there is still much work to be done.

In 2007, there were more than 70,000 international students in Canada – just 7 percent of the total student population. This is double the figure of the early 2000s, but less than other countries of comparable sizes, such as Australia, where the university network boasts 17 percent international students.



As it happens, the UdeM and its affiliated business and engineering schools – HEC Montréal and the École Polytechnique – account for nearly one quarter of all the foreign nationals studying in Québec. Most international students are based in Montreal, which rivals Boston in per capita student enrollment.

On the other side of the spectrum, as of 2006, only 2.2 percent of Canada's full-time students had enrolled in exchange programs abroad.

Providing an international experience through such exchange programs is pivotal in the development of UdeM students. I could spend hours talking about dozens, even hundreds of projects, each more fascinating than the other that our students are pursuing.

Instead I will leave it to one of our students to present her African experience at Forum en clips (accessible at <http://nouvelles.umontreal.ca/content/view/1605/336>). Allow me to congratulate Mélanie Vachon and her colleagues for their outstanding contribution.

Such a personal account shows that we must endeavor to favour these internship opportunities more, especially since the international environment is burgeoning in this regard, particularly in Europe.

Indeed, since the implementation of the Bologna Process a decade ago, 46 countries, from Azerbaijan to Ireland, have agreed to harmonize their cursus and adopt a common degree system to align themselves with the North America degree structure.

By 2010, all European universities will have setup an LMD system (Licentiate, Master's, Doctorate).

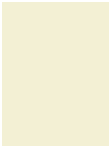
One of the central factors of this approach, of course, is the recognition of equivalences in Greater Europe and even beyond.

The fact that the Bologna Master's degrees require a six-month internship abroad poses a challenge to Quebec universities, and invites them to increase their host capacity to benefit from the possibilities induced by this major reform.

An equally interesting development at the doctoral level is the introduction of co-tutorships. This is a double degree system, including mutual recognition of doctoral programs, where thesis supervision is assured by a Quebec professor and by a colleague from a foreign university.

We were the first in North America to establish the double diploma, also called the co-tutorship system, and we are the leaders in this field in Canada.

You can certainly understand, in our global society, the interest for doctoral students to develop dual transatlantic connections in their field of study.



Solidarity and international cooperation

Democratic knowledge cannot be transmitted only between affluent countries.

As the great Francophone university of the Americas, the Université de Montréal has the responsibility to support its fellow universities in the southern hemisphere.

Thus, in particular, we have entered into solidarity contracts with two southern universities: one in Burkina Faso and the other in Haiti.

A project carried out under this framework in sub-Saharan Africa is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and seeks to train health professionals in an environment of humanitarian camps.

Our International Health Unit is heavily involved in these projects.

The Université de Montréal has also set up delocalized training, particularly in Morocco, where it offers a doctorate in nursing.

Internationalization of research

Regarding the development of knowledge, the UdeM participates in research efforts on major international issues. It does this, for example, with prestigious centres, or by creating research hubs of international stature right here in Montreal.

Here are a few examples: first of all, there is the Montreal INSERM research unit in human immunology, where researchers from the UdeM and the Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal collaborate.

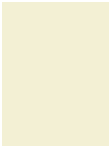
This is the very first North American branch of the prestigious Institut national de santé et de recherche médicale, INSERM, which is THE great national medical research institute in France.

Teams on both sides of the Atlantic are studying HIV-AIDS, cancer, hepatitis C and the development of vaccines by pooling cutting-edge technological platforms and researcher exchange programs.

This INSERM unit today positions Montreal in the forefront of the search for an AIDS vaccine with the projected implementation of multisite clinics in Quebec and France.

A second example: creating true research engines here in Quebec such as IRIC (www.irik.ca) – the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer established by the UdeM in 2002.

The IRIC brings together a critical mass of the best international researchers under the same roof to elucidate the secrets of the immune system and the causes of cancer. The IRIC is at the heart of international collaborations for cancer treatment by stem cells, one of the most promising avenues in the fight against this plague.



Recently, the IRIC took a major step for in Montréal by creating its subsidiary, IRICOR – an excellence centre in commercial development and valorization of research – another first in North America. In partnership with the pharmaceutical industry, this subsidiary will bring together 800 researchers, divided into 75 teams, to accelerate the marketing of discoveries emerging from the academic community.

One last example, the Institute for European Studies, created jointly in 2000 by the UdeM and McGill as a result of a European Commission competition. This Institute subsidizes North American researchers who take an outside look at Europe and has built a solid reputation not only on our continent but on the other side of the Atlantic.

The diplomacy of knowledge

Universities are increasingly playing a role as ambassadors. Our institutions are instruments in the flow of people, knowledge and rapports between nations.

By developing networks, new partnerships with sister institutions, ties with the business community and alliances with international players, modern universities are conducting their own diplomacy – a diplomacy that's complementary to that of states particularly on the cultural and scientific fronts.

Universities are at the heart of what I would call the new knowledge diplomacy.

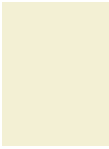
Interuniversity network: IFPU

This is the spirit in which the International Forum of Public Universities, the IFPU (www.fiup.umontreal.ca/en), was created last year, under the leadership of the UdeM, which also houses the IFPU Secretariat.

The IFPU is based on diversity and provides a counterweight to the majority English-speaking university networks that were previously established. The IFPU brings together about 20 public universities on four continents, operating in various languages and coming from both developing and industrialized countries.

The International Forum of Public Universities also stands out by its objectives and actions. In general, the Forum intends to encourage the expression of the underlying values of the public universities' mission in the age of globalization.

More concretely, the Forum aims to create new and original collaborations in teaching, training and research. This international catalyst marks a new chapter in the development of a true community of public universities.



Networks with NGOs: ICOMOS

Apart from building new university alliances, the diplomacy of knowledge also depends on rapprochement with the major international NGOs to find solutions to global challenges. Protection of the cultural heritage is currently one of these challenges.

The importance of protecting the architectural and landscape heritage is now part of the priorities of Quebecers, and particularly Montrealers.

The UdeM, through its programs, chairs, research groups and ties with UNESCO, already covers all of the activities related to cultural heritage preservation. We are also the managers of a major institutional heritage in the heart of Greater Montréal.

Thanks to the UNESCO Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design, UdeM researchers have worked, in particular, to find solutions to the decline of the Marrakech Palm Grove, an environmental gem of Morocco.

And this fall, another group of students and researchers will be in Shanghai for a workshop aimed at rethinking Jinze Town, a suburb of the Chinese megalopolis.

In its latest initiative, we agreed with the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS, on a memorandum of understanding for the development of teaching and research programs under the theme of “Heritage and Sustainable Development.”

ICOMOS, a world association of experts and professionals, is a privileged advisor of UNESCO in the methodology and technology of cultural heritage preservation and restoration.

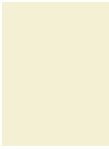
Among the research with which the UdeM Faculty of Environmental Planning and Design will be associated are:

- » the impact of climate change on heritage;
- » management of university and scientific heritage complexes and institutions;
- » the development of international conventions and interventions frameworks on heritage matters.

This is a highly motivating project in a field of planetary importance, a project that will contribute to the extension of the UdeM's influence.

CÉRIUM

Creating university networks and developing closer ties with major institutions are two responsibilities of the new knowledge diplomacy. I would say that a third responsibility is the popularization and dissemination of knowledge.



To deal with the challenges of globalization, it is essential to have a better understanding of its dynamics and the issues that arise from it: peace and security, governance, diversity.

This is the mission adopted by the Centre d'études et de recherches internationales de l'Université de Montréal, CÉRIUM (www.cerium.ca). With its 150 researchers grouped in 21 research units, CÉRIUM has developed high-level specialized training in partnership with universities, NGOs, governments and institutions.

By its publications, lectures and seminars, and its French-language research network on peace operations, CÉRIUM contributes to the advancement of knowledge of major international issues and meets the growing needs for skilled professionals in the field of international studies.

One of the qualities of CÉRIUM is that it shares this knowledge with the general public. Many of you are likely familiar with its experts, since they are regularly quoted in media.

In line with the strategic priorities of governments

The projects implemented by the universities in a context of globalization lead them to play a major role of influencing and participating in the foreign and economic policies of governments.

In Ottawa, as you know, the Chinese and Indian markets are priorities under the Science and Technology Strategy adopted by the federal government.

It happens that the UdeM has been present in China for 20 years via many programs. The Faculty of Law, in particular, maintains privileged ties with China, ever since it introduced an internship program, jointly with McGill, which allows young Chinese to study civil law and common law in Montréal.

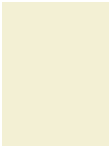
The Faculty of Law also organizes a summer school in China to enable its students to become familiar with the Chinese legal system. Here again, the Université de Montréal acts as an ambassador in knowledge diplomacy.

The Government of Quebec has made the development of transatlantic economic areas a priority. One of the issues of this approach is the recognition of professional equivalences.

The Université de Montréal is actively involved in this challenge and I have already shared with Quebec Premier Jean Charest that our institution wishes to actively collaborate on this initiative.

In fact, we are setting up an evaluation and training unit for foreign professionals. Already, with the support of the Government of Quebec and the Ordre des pharmaciens, we have developed auxiliary training that will triple access by foreign pharmacists to the profession in Quebec.

This is only a beginning, because we intend to pursue this initiative with other professions and contribute to the arrival and integration of a skilled workforce in Quebec.



This type of program is particularly well suited to UdeM, since it is the only Quebec university to offer medical training in all healthcare disciplines. Indeed, we are proud that UdeM trains one out of four health professionals in Quebec.

When we understand the role of science and innovation in economic and social development, international collaboration, mobility of training and partnerships between the public and private sectors, we realize the new economic area championed by the Government of Quebec stands to greatly benefit from strengthening its pillars of research.

This leads me to propose that Quebec establish a formal relationship with the European community on research and development. Considering the vitality and strength of Quebec's research base such a relationship is possible.

The European Union has consolidated all research initiatives of its member countries in the form of a Framework Programme endowed with a budget of 54 billion Euros for the period from 2007 to 2013.

Called the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, it is open to all countries (five countries currently have Associated Country status, including Switzerland and Israel). The signing of a specific bilateral agreement between Canada, Quebec and the European Union would allow our researchers to participate on the same footing as those of this program's member countries and to solicit European funding directly.

As an Associated Country, Canada would obtain a certain right to monitor the implementation and orientation of the research programs.

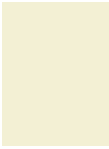
Its contribution would depend on its GDP. For example, Switzerland became an Associated Country with a contribution of \$200 million a year for seven years.

Swiss businesses, like those of the other Associated Countries, also have access to a European program of nearly \$1 billion to fund international R&D projects.

Beyond the benefits for researchers and businesses, this association would have major spinoffs for our cities and regions, which would benefit from an increased flow of brainpower.

I therefore encourage the Government of Quebec to continue exercising its leadership in the implementation of the new economic area, by favouring Quebec's participation at the international level in this European Research Area.

The omens seem favourable and the benefits would be considerable in several regards. I invite the federal government to be helpful in this matter as I reiterate UdeM's commitment to offer its fullest collaboration in this matter.



Conclusion

Today, I have illustrated the paths to internationalization at UdeM. You will have understood that this strategy is essential to the full accomplishment of our mission of educating, teaching and research. You also will have understood that knowledge diplomacy carried on by UdeM is invaluable.

With its affiliated schools, the Université de Montréal is Canada's second biggest university in terms of student enrollment. It's also the leading French-speaking research university in the world, according to the Times Higher Education Supplement ranking, which means UdeM advances the ambitions of Montreal, Quebec and Canada.

Universities reflect our society's highest aspirations and serve as engines that propel our goals. However, in the pursuit of this mission, universities need help and support from all stakeholders: alumni, corporations, institutions and governments.

A city's international influence sometimes takes unexpected paths. Indeed, Montreal recently received the most prestigious property in the World Edition Monopoly. This was possible thanks to a very great mobilization campaign.

Do the same with your universities. Support your institutions of higher education and Montreal will shine even more both in Monopoly and on the global playing field.

Thank you.