



## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 2, 2013

### **University Leaders Issue Statement on the Role of Technology in Graduate Education and Research**

**Consensus Points Address Student Recruitment, Career Tracking and MOOCs**

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Budapest, Hungary (October 2, 2013) – Leaders of graduate institutions from 14 countries today agreed on a set of principles regarding the uses of technology in graduate education and research.

The statement was released at the conclusion of the Seventh Annual Global Summit on Graduate Education, “Graduate Education and the Promises of Technology,” co-hosted by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), Central European University (CEU) and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA). The Global Summit is an annual event designed to promote international best practices in master’s and doctoral education.

Universities around the world face a growing landscape of technological tools that promise to enhance graduate education and research, and many view such tools as both opportunities and risks. Forms of learning technology that are sparking debate in the international graduate community include online degree programs and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), both central topics of discussion at the summit.

Participants agreed that graduate institutions must provide more input on the development of these technologies in the context of graduate education in order to ensure the quality of student experiences and their appropriateness to graduate-level curricula.

Session topics addressed a number of other areas of graduate education and research where technology-enabled tools are continuing to shape the practices of graduate institutions, including admissions and recruitment; student progress and completion;

collaboration among students and faculty; and expanding access to research, among others.

Dr. Liviu Matei, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at CEU, commented that, “It is for the first time that a Strategic Leaders Global Summit on Graduate Education is held in a country of Central and Eastern Europe. Graduate (post graduate) education is very much a work in progress in this part of the world. It faces both high expectations and significant challenges. This year's Summit topic is a timely one for this region, and indeed globally, as students, faculty members, administrators and policy makers are feverishly trying to come to grips with the promises of technology in graduate education, and to figure out how to take advantage of remarkable technological progress to date (or anticipated) in order to meet traditional and emerging new challenges and expectations.”

In addition to addressing online education, the consensus statement, “Principles for Supporting Productive Uses of Technology in (Post) Graduate Education and Research,” offers guidance to graduate institutions on using technology to engage with prospective students, collaborate with technology companies serving higher education, and communicate with students and faculty using social media.

CGS President Debra W. Stewart noted, “The rapid developments of new technologies for graduate education and research often make it difficult for institutions to decide immediately on their value and use. This is partly because we don’t yet know the long-term outcomes of learning platforms like MOOCs, and how practices surrounding them will evolve.” She added, “What we do know is that graduate education leaders must have a voice in how new tools are being shaped and used, as the principles agreed upon today make clear.”

Participants in the summit included deans and other leaders of graduate schools and representatives of national and international associations devoted to graduate education. Along with Hungary and the United States, the countries represented were Australia, Brazil, Canada, China (PRC, Hong Kong), Germany, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa and South Korea.

The consensus statement is attached.

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## Principles for Supporting Productive Uses of Technology in (Post)Graduate<sup>1</sup> Education and Research

### **Preamble:**

The participants in the 2013 Global Summit recognize that information and communication technologies affect nearly every aspect of (post)graduate institutions and the lives of their students. We must capture the promises of this rapidly changing technology in delivering (post)graduate education.

(Post)graduate institutions have sought to enhance the quality of (post)graduate education and research with technology-enabled tools in many areas, including student recruitment, career tracking, research, and online education. Yet while such tools promise more effective and efficient practices in graduate education, they can also present potential risks for students, faculty and institutions, and do not necessarily lead to reduced costs. It is the responsibility of university leaders and institutions to carefully assess opportunities and risks and other potential outcomes. Given the global nature of technological developments and their impacts, members of the international (post)graduate community have a role to play in identifying common principles for supporting productive uses of technology in (post)graduate education and research. It is important to consider varied international perspectives on strategies for using new technologies in (post)graduate education, as well as areas of common agreement.

Representing 14 countries, the participants in the 2013 Strategic Leaders Global Summit recommend that (post)graduate institutions consider the following principles when making decisions about technology-enabled tools in (post)graduate education and research:

It is important for (post)graduate institutions to:

1. **Employ** technology to advance specific academic or administrative goals. Technology should not be the driver of goals, but it does create new opportunities and offers tools for universities to achieve particular outcomes.
2. **Identify and enhance** strategies for using social media, webcasting and other technologies to attract, recruit and engage students and to engage the university community in all dimensions of (post)graduate education. Actively use such technologies to disseminate information and knowledge beyond the university.
3. **Influence** the development of technologies for tracking student progress, completion, career outcomes and research outputs. It is especially important that these mechanisms allow (post)graduate institutions to track students, alumni and research productivity so that it is possible to use resulting data to improve their programs.

4. **Design and implement** effective ways to expand access to research and scholarship to the various communities served by (post)graduate institutions. In weighing options for expanded access, it is important also for universities and graduate schools to respect the rights of authors and publishers.

*The following principles apply specifically to the use of new technologies for learning and online education platforms:*

5. **Create** national and global fora for discussing the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) to improve offerings in light of the distinctive characteristics of (post)graduate education.
6. **Regularly assess** the use of technologies designed to enhance (post)graduate education. Assessment of technologies for learning should focus on the extent to which student learning outcomes are achieved. Assessment of online learning should be linked to clear objectives and the development of appropriate tools to deliver online education.
7. **Collaborate** with providers of online education resources to further enable (post)graduate educational offerings and the online learning experiences of (post)graduate students.
8. **Create** opportunities for current and future faculty to enhance learning using educational technologies such as flipped classrooms, blended programs, Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs), and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).
9. **Promote** the development within universities of policies and agreements regarding the evaluation of credentials earned online from other institutions.
10. **Recognize** the importance of different ways of engaging and supporting communities of learning online. When implementing technologies in online education, provide a means for meaningful student-to-student and student-faculty interactions.
11. **Engage** with policy makers and other relevant stakeholders to promote discussions about how best to achieve shared educational objectives through the use of technology.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “(post)graduate” designates here both master’s and doctoral education. The term has been created to reflect the fact that both “graduate” and “postgraduate” are accepted terms for referring to master’s and doctoral education and that the dominant use varies by country.