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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ix

Abbreviations xi

1 Introduction: Start-Up U 1

Your Guides to the Future of the University 5

Thorny Questions 8

A Pluralist View of Impact 10

Who This Book Is for and How It Unfolds 12

2 The Liberal Arts Go Global 16

Waves of Change 19

The Liberal Arts Go Global 22

Innovation and Tradition 26

3 The World's Honors College: NYU Abu Dhabi 30

A Provost without a University 32

Creating the World's Honors College 35

Abu Dhabi as the Middle East Ideas Capital 37

Building the Faculty and Curriculum 41

Controversies on the Home Front and Academic Freedom 42

Evolution and Revision 45

Entering Young Adulthood 49

4 In Asia for the World: Yale-NUS College 53

Singapore as an Education Hub 54

Yale Appoints a Dean 55

Global Ambitions for NUS and Yale 57

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Controversies in New Haven 61

The First Yale-NUS President 64

Building a Common Curriculum for the World 66

The Approach to Steady State 70

The Fate and Impact of Yale-NUS 73

5 A Culture of Continuous Innovation: Olin College of Engineering 76

Creating the Ideal University 78

The Partner Year 80

The Emergence of Olin College Culture 83

Olin's Second President 87

Expanding Creativity and Diversity at Olin 89

Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Engineering 90

Preserving Innovation after the Start-Up 92

6 The Intangibles of Excellence: Fulbright University Vietnam 96

The Intangibles of Excellence 98

Controversy and Control 101

"It Felt like a Tech Launch" 102

Codesign Year 105

Teaching the American War in Ho Chi Minh City 107

From Blank Slate to First Draft 109

The Meaning of Innovation 111

Impact and Trajectory 114

7 Archimedes's Lever: Ashoka University 118

Overcoming the Colonial Legacy 119

Creating the Rhodes Scholarship of India 121

Built by the Elite, for the Elite? 123

The Kama Sutra and the Mahabharata 126

From Consumer to Producer 130

Between Academic and Entrepreneurial Cultures 132

Academic Autonomy and Institution Building 134

Archimedes's Lever 137

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8 Building an African Renaissance: Ashesi University 141
The Return to Africa 142
The Business Plan for the New University 144
Building Social Capital for Ashesi 146
Finding the Market for Liberal Arts in Africa 148
Launching Ashesi's Campus and Curriculum 151
Training Ethical Entrepreneurial Leaders for Africa 154
The Ashesi University Culture 157
The Future of Africa and Ashesi University 159

9 A Global Solution, African Born: African Leadership University 162
From Academy to University 164
Turning a University on Its Head 167
Making It Safe to Innovate 172
Discontent and the Emergence of the African Leadership Experience 175
Excellence at Scale—ALU 2.0 and The Room 177
Audacity and Risk-Taking 180

10 Critical Wisdom for the Sake of the World: Minerva University 183
Brand and Specs 184
Financing and Accreditation 186
Critical Wisdom and Curricular Structure 189
Building a Fully Active Pedagogy 192
Cities and Students 196
Faculty Culture 201
Sustaining the Vision 204

11 Essential Categories for Success in a Start-Up University 208
Generating Prestige 209
Creating a Sustainable Business Model 213
Build and Launch 217
Recruiting the Faculty 222
Curriculum and Accreditation 226
Campus and Virtual Environment 234

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12 Shared Governance and Global Aspirations 241

Shared Governance in a Start-Up World 242

Managing Conflict and Navigating Ambiguity 248

Rooting Global Aspirations in the Local Context 253

Rediscovered Heritages and Global Residents 260

Evolutionary Phases and Underlying Assumptions 263

13 Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Parting Thoughts 265

Adaptation and Succession 268

Cultivating Flexibility 270

Balancing Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces 273

Parting Thoughts 275

Notes 287

Bibliography 301

Index 323

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1

Introduction

START-UP U

As the last century wound to an end, Patrick Awuah, a former software engineer and program manager at Microsoft, and Nina Marini, his fellow MBA student at the University of California, Berkeley, created a business plan for a new kind of liberal arts college in Awuah's native Ghana. Twenty years later, their vision became Ashesi University, designed to educate the next generation of African leaders. Around the same time, the F. W. Olin Foundation asked Richard Miller, an engineering dean based in Iowa, to bring its vision for an innovative engineering school to be based in Massachusetts to reality. That germ of an idea became Olin College of Engineering, which today rivals MIT in the rankings of engineering education.

Just over a decade later, in 2010, John Sexton, the president of New York University, met in Abu Dhabi with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, and the two agreed to launch a new campus for NYU in the Middle East that would come to be known as NYU Abu Dhabi. Soon after Sexton and Sheik Mohamed shook hands, Dam Bich Thuy, the chief executive officer of ANZ Bank in Vietnam, sat in her office with Thomas Vallely, a former marine who had served in Vietnam and was then the head of Harvard's Vietnam Program; together, they imagined building a kind of university unknown in the region—one that would combine public policy, business and management, engineering, and the liberal arts. This vision became a reality in the form of Fulbright University Vietnam.

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Meanwhile, in India, four first-generation entrepreneurs—Pramath Sinha, Ashish Dhawan, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, and Vineet Gupta—began meeting in the Oberoi Hotel in New Delhi. By 2010, they had decided to pool their resources to launch a liberal arts school to compete with the most prestigious institutions in the world and attract the best students from across India and beyond, which became Ashoka University. At the same time, Tan Chorh Chuan, the president of the National University of Singapore, and Richard Levin, the president of Yale University, began negotiating a partnership to build a new global liberal arts college in Singapore, which became Yale-NUS College.

During these same years, in California, the Silicon Valley entrepreneur Ben Nelson secured a $25 million dollar investment from Benchmark Capital to create a university that would be named Minerva, which promised to revolutionize the teaching enterprise while radically cutting costs. And in a 2014 TED talk, Fred Swaniker, a former McKinsey consultant, would articulate a vision for building twenty-five university campuses across Africa that would educate three million new leaders by 2035. This network, now known as African Leadership University, is part of a larger ecosystem of institutions that has raised almost a billion dollars, built two campuses, created a set of cost-efficient regional hubs, and launched a virtual career accelerator and a global talent matching system.

All this activity might strike many as odd, given the ways in which higher education observers routinely predict the demise of the university and question the value of a liberal arts education. Critics in the United States point to a series of interlocking problems facing contemporary higher education: increasing costs and a perceived lack of return on investment, a monochrome political culture that stifles wide-ranging debate on controversial topics, and a growing perception of the liberal arts as outmoded and irrelevant to the challenges of the twenty-first century. Yet even as these storm clouds hover over traditional forms of higher education in the United States, the sun is shining brightly on new institutions that are redefining and reinventing liberal arts in every corner of the world.

Since the turn of the century, new schools devoted to liberal education have sprung up in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as in North and South America. Student demand for entry to these schools is unprecedented, and some of them are more selective than the far more established schools in the Ivy League. After the excitement of launching the new schools, the high-quality results of this type of education have kept observers interested—and made parents, governments, and employers

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enthusiastic supporters. Despite the global pandemic and fraying international relations, we are witnessing ever-greater interest across the world in new global liberal arts universities, as nations seek to build their own incubators for creativity and innovation.

This book tells the inside story of the who, what, why, when, and especially the how behind the launch and development of eight of these new colleges and universities. We provide a detailed assessment of these schools, and the lessons learned from the dramatic history of their founding can guide anyone aspiring to start up a new college or university. We also aim to spur the imagination of those seeking to reinvent established institutions. Two of the schools in this book are global ventures of established universities: Yale-NUS College in Singapore and NYU Abu Dhabi in the UAE (United Arab Emirates). The other six schools—the Olin College of Engineering and Minerva University in the United States, Ashoka University in India, Fulbright University Vietnam, the African Leadership University in Mauritius and Rwanda, and Ashesi University in Ghana—are entrepreneurial ventures built from the ground up.

Some of these new colleges and universities seek to recover and reimagine ancient traditions of learning in countries that previously offered only more colonial forms of education. Others concentrate on creating modular and integrated curricula that draw on advances in our understanding of how students learn. Still others focus on the complexity and richness of education that can arise from a truly global student population. All of these schools offer new learning environments focused on achieving the highest quality of undergraduate education, advancing the most cross-cutting forms of inquiry and experiential education, and cultivating the dispositions and skills needed to navigate a turbulent world. They exemplify practices that have a high impact on student learning, including a strong emphasis on writing and research, first year and capstone seminars, common intellectual experiences and collaborative assignments, and internships and civic engagement.[1]

We follow each of these schools through its history to date, with a special focus on the founding era, when the complexities and difficulties of the enterprise rise to their greatest levels. By studying this wave of new institutions, we preview the future possibilities for an educational enterprise unhindered by preexisting structures and legacy curricula: these are laboratories for innovation. The schools we examine aspire both to curate the knowledge and accomplishments of a wide range of global cultures and to transform their own societies to meet the profound challenges of the twenty-first century. Their formation, evolution, and setbacks tell dramatic

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stories of how academic entrepreneurs have overcome the constraints on innovation that pervade much of higher education. How the founders of these universities have navigated these constraints offers important lessons in leadership and intellectual courage.

We have visited most of these institutions in person, though the COVID-19 pandemic meant that we conducted our formal interviews online. And while you will hear the voices of students and faculty in each chapter, our attention in this book primarily falls on the founders and other leading architects of these schools. Building from interviews with nearly thirty university founders and current leaders, we offer vivid portraits of individuals who have taken the risk of starting up an entirely new institution, often forgoing the safety and security of successful careers in industry and academia. Pramath Sinha, for instance, trained in metallurgical engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania, built a successful consulting career in North America and India, and then cofounded Ashoka University. Ben Nelson pivoted from the private sector, where he had spent ten years building Snapfish, a technology company, to found Minerva University.

Other leading innovators came from inside higher education. Sidee Dlamini, born in South Africa and educated at Texas Christian University and the University of California at Berkeley, left her home to help build the new African Leadership University in Mauritius. Canadian Pericles Lewis, an expert in modernism and digital humanities and professor in Yale's English Department, gave up his life in New Haven to begin a new chapter as the founding president of Singapore's first liberal arts college. And as Olin College entered its twentieth year—it is the oldest of the start-ups we studied—Gilda Barabino left the City College of New York to take Olin's helm and complete the transfer of leadership from its founding president, Richard Miller.

We hope our interviews with university founders and leaders capture the drama and heroism of their quest to create new institutions and entirely new academic cultures. We trace what they sought to preserve, what they wanted to change, and how they pursued strategies to foster innovation. Diving deeper, we explore the transition of each new university from its inception to the emergence of distinctive characteristics influenced by location, local culture, and institutional partners—as well as by fiscal, political, and academic considerations. The stories of these universities are multifaceted, and offer lessons on multiple dimensions, while eluding simple categories and storylines. We found them continuously inspiring.

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Your Guides to the Future of the University

We came to this study after thirty years of teaching, research, and academic leadership in American colleges and universities. We approach this book primarily as practitioners in higher education. Both of us have been deeply involved in launching new ventures similar to the start-ups we analyze in this book, having played key roles in the founding of Yale-NUS College in Singapore and Duke Kunshan University in China. (Noah also became so intrigued by one of our case studies, Minerva, that he ended up doing a stint as part of it.) Both of us have studied and taught at liberal arts colleges and research universities. We come from the fields of astrophysics and politics, and together our perspectives help bridge the cultures of science and the humanities. With decades of experience in academic research and administration, we know all too well the barriers to change in academic life, yet we recognize the necessity of new academic programs for renewing and sustaining higher education.

How did our collaboration come about? We met in 2012 when we were going in different directions. After a long career at Pomona College, Bryan left for a fellowship at Yale University, where he would help design the curriculum and work with the inaugural faculty and leaders of the nascent Yale-NUS College. Noah, who had been teaching ethics and public policy at Duke University for fifteen years, was spending his fellowship year working with the president of Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania, as that school adapted to significant demographic, financial, and educational pressures. We made common cause, and, jointly and individually, we visited over fifty schools in the United States and abroad. At every stop, we sought to understand how university leaders were dealing with the waves of change washing over their institutions.

Despite our disparate academic backgrounds and trajectories, we share two core beliefs. First, we are both devoted to the transformative value of high-quality, meaningful liberal arts and sciences education. As students and as teachers, we know firsthand how a college community can cultivate deep learning that goes beyond narrow areas of specialization. We appreciate the ways in which a liberal arts college is optimized for undergraduate learning and how faculty are incentivized both for their prowess as scholars and for their effectiveness as educators and contributors to the commonweal. This teacher-scholar model provides opportunities for frequent interaction and deep mentoring between faculty and students and is combined with a more open-ended pathway through the curriculum, enabling students to explore

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unexpected interests and engage in a process of self-discovery. By receiving opportunities to discover new talents and interests before specializing, students can maximize their learning engagement and also make connections between different forms of knowledge that equip them to better analyze and address complex problems in their own communities.

At the same time, we also share a deep frustration with the inability of both liberal arts colleges and liberal-arts-oriented research universities to embrace change. Narrow, specialized forms of expertise are still the primary form of knowledge recognized and rewarded in most of higher education, and especially among the top-ranked schools. Majors still largely reflect traditional, disciplinary-based knowledge, as if ten courses in English or political science are the only or best ways to prepare students for a world in which deep habits of writing and reading and crucial skills as leaders will be required. While we value students gaining some measure of depth and expertise in a field of study, we see siloed and increasingly narrow forms of research and teaching as barriers to cultivating adaptable, creative, and truly wise students.

This narrowness is exacerbated by the demise of any commitment to ensuring that students share enough knowledge and experience in common, so that, as Columbia University's Andrew Delbanco puts it, "no one student is a complete stranger to any other."[2] Instead, faculty offer students vague distribution requirements, as if a course in chemistry here and literature there amounts to any kind of coherent exposure to core ideas or ways of knowing. The highest quality of teaching is also insufficiently prioritized, even at some of our best schools. When tenure largely rewards scholarship, great teachers remain the exception rather than the rule. And even when a school does prioritize the highest-quality teaching in thoughtfully designed curriculums, the cost of attendance is beyond the means of many. Those few schools that can afford to provide significant financial aid move mountains to meet the needs of as many students as they can. But the very cost of the education and the unwillingness of most institutions to think differently about ways to offer more flexible and affordable ways of learning mean that most elite schools remain overwhelmingly populated by students who come from the wealthiest backgrounds. As we began to talk about these issues, we realized how frustrated we both felt by these seemingly intractable barriers to a genuinely outstanding education.

The reasons for these constraints are not hard to find. Too often, colleges and universities are driven to conformity by their desire to maintain or to achieve prestige. Indeed, far more than creativity, cost control, or innova-

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tion, the world of higher education is defined by rankings based on research productivity and by popularity based on how difficult it is for students to be admitted. These twin metrics—research productivity and student exclusivity—cause colleges and universities to emulate one another, replicating practices that maximize research scholarship and curriculums that imitate highly ranked peer institutions. In the most prominent institutions, the historic accretion of wealth and prestige has paralyzed the academic culture into a state of stasis, leaving leaders unable to muster the energy to fix something that many faculty do not think is broken. While serving as founts of creative thinking inside the laboratory or by the solitary thinker, universities paradoxically lack all but the most superficial forms of differentiation.[3] Richard Brodhead, former president of Duke University, calls this "the inertia of excellence."[4] This lack of differentiation also reflects the cultures and structures of higher education, which were designed internally to support institutional longevity and to encourage mimicry owing to external regulation; over time, these forces converge to reduce dynamism in the market. This risk aversion is further supported by a system of shared governance that fragments decision-making authority and often requires a high degree of consensus to try something new or even just to stop doing something old.

As Bryan was working to launch what became Yale-NUS College in Singapore, Noah was invited to help create a new university in China, today known as Duke Kunshan University. As we pursued our respective work, we met many others around the world who were also founding new institutions, and we became inspired by the possibilities to push at the boundaries of the constraints on innovation in higher education. Both of us began our explorations by leaving our own institutional culture to learn about other cultures; and, to our happy surprise, we were indeed discovering fresh perspectives about the value of the liberal arts. Traveling in India to visit new universities and living and working in Singapore and China gave us the chance to see the exhilarating new ways in which Asian countries were embracing the liberal arts as a way to invigorate and accelerate economic growth. They saw a direct linkage between higher education and their national success, an understanding that seems notably absent today in the United States.

It was bracing and refreshing to see how important the educational enterprise was for the future of these countries. Our travels also gave us insights into what a start-up in education looks like on the ground. Start-up universities embody the youthful energy, the utopian spirit, and the open-ended possibilities that match the mind-set and energies of their students. While

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traditions and culture strongly shape what's possible at well-established schools, start-ups create their own cultures and new ways of thinking, often cocreated by faculty, students, and staff in real time. This process of cocreation was another wonderful surprise from our journey across the higher-education landscape and is shared in the pages of this book. Across all these institutions, we found a truly compelling level of engagement in the creation of the institutional fabric—and a sense of shared ownership of the school's vital importance. We came away wanting to share those institutional stories with readers who might also find them inspiring.

Thorny Questions

Our journey also made plain the many thorny questions that founders of new universities must confront. Higher education is a complex environment in which simple solutions often end up dashed on the rocks. Some of the problems arise in the planning process, such as how to communicate the vision behind a new venture to attract supporters, faculty, and students. Essential to this quest is the elusive quality of prestige and the accompanying question: *How do you start a new university and create an appealing brand when nobody knows who you are?*

Another problem, much lamented by the popular press and by parents paying for tuition in the United States, involves higher education's astronomical cost. Paradoxically, the best weapon for reducing these costs is a massive institutional endowment, which allows for expenses to be reduced through financial aid. At most of the wealthiest private universities, these endowments are built over centuries and amount to billions of dollars. They are supplemented by gifts from generations of alumni and well-wishers, allowing the established university to bank on the accumulated social capital of many generations. A new university enjoys none of these benefits. Yet it somehow must build a new campus, pay faculty, and provide financial aid and a reasonable price point for students. This raises the question: *Where in the world do you get the money needed to build a top-ranked university from scratch and keep it financially viable?*

Even if the university founder has somehow navigated past these daunting obstacles, the new institution needs to attract high-quality faculty, who in coming to the new university are taking giant risks for their career, and almost certainly will be saddled with Herculean challenges in designing the curriculum, starting new research programs, and establishing the institution, sometimes in an unfamiliar country thousands of miles from their home.

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This raises another difficult question: *How do you attract faculty to commit their careers to an institution that does not yet exist, and then convince students and families to invest in the unproven institution?*

Once the initial capital, campus, and founding faculty are in place, the next steps involve building the new curriculum and earning accreditation from agencies that often favor familiar and time-tested approaches to teaching and learning. While faculty and supporters are often motivated by the challenge to innovate and provide something entirely new, their energy and enthusiasm can collide head on with the harsh reality of creating classes that work and that accreditors are willing to validate, while finding faculty who understand how to teach in new ways. Hence another thorny question: *How does one design a new curriculum that is innovative and distinctive, that is responsive to the demands of the new century, and yet is recognizable to accreditors and employers?*

As a new university begins to mature and rapidly outgrows its initial location, its physical and virtual infrastructure simultaneously needs to grow with it to support the many new programs, classes, and research projects underway. The process is a bit like building a railroad track right in front of the locomotive as it moves ahead at full steam. Somehow the campus needs to be built out even as the programs are being initiated. *How does one acquire land, build a new campus, and expand the physical and virtual presence of the new university, even while the institution is being launched?*

As daunting as these questions are, they are only the most tangible challenges in building a new institution. Still knottier challenges arise in creating a workable system of governance and forging an academic ethos that can help the new institution's leaders collectively make intelligent decisions and respond to the needs of the country and region where their college or university is located. These challenges can be summarized as follows: *How does a founding team build an effective governance structure and an authentic shared culture in a brand new institution, without any of the shared assumptions or traditions that most universities enjoy?*

Another set of especially difficult questions arises from the tensions between an explicit or implicit commitment to preparing students to function in a democratic society within a world in which they might live under radically different forms of governance. The nature of both the questions and the answers here varies, but they are shaped by the location, the local culture and community, legacy practices imported by faculty, and the energetic influence of the student body. All these forces shape an institution and its emerging cultures and values. Yet this process raises additional thorny

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questions. *To what degree are these new start-ups reflections of a distinctly American approach to the liberal arts, and to what degree do they reflect local traditions and aspirations? What are the different and sometimes hidden meanings embedded in aspirations to offer a globalized form of education and to create "global citizens"?*

Some of the schools we survey in this book have had to navigate explicit and implicit challenges to their commitment to *ars liberalis*, or the "art of freedom," when operating in different cultural and political contexts. *How, then, can one create a university that protects academic inquiry and free expression in societies that don't share democratic values?* The chapters that follow offer observations and lessons learned—sometimes lessons still in process—from the institutions we examined.

A Pluralist View of Impact

Higher education has paid much attention in recent days to the tasks of increasing access and lowering costs. The primary strategies for addressing these vital concerns have involved building larger institutions and deploying technology to reach even more students. These strategies have begun to have a significant impact. Schools such as Arizona State University (which in 2022 enrolled over 70,000 students on campus and more than 60,000 students online, with 13,000 international students on campus and 29,000 graduate students) and Southern New Hampshire University (with 3,000 students on campus and 175,000 online as of 2022) have led the way in inventing new and improved ways to deliver higher education to more students.

By way of contrast, the institutions we profile in this book have all started small, usually with well under a thousand students, and even the ones that imagine scaling their size aspire to reach no more than a few thousand students, though a couple aspire to reach ten to twenty thousand students. We focus on these smaller schools for several reasons. As important as it is to lower costs and increase access, some of the larger institutions are simply scaling up existing models of higher education. While these larger institutions are indeed refining efficiency and improving delivery mechanisms to reach larger and larger audiences of students, their Achilles' heel can be the quality of the education they offer. In too many cases wider access, whether in person or online, offers poorly defined curricula and outdated modes of teaching often delivered either by faculty focused primarily on research or by adjunct instructors cobbling together classes at different colleges or universities. These larger-scale institutions, with only a few notable excep-

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tions, do very little to ensure that their students actually receive a meaningful education. For this reason, we concentrate on smaller institutions with a more innovative bent that have set their sights on reimagining ways to offer the highest-quality education. These schools also face the challenge of increasing access and reducing cost, and so we spotlight several that have taken on this challenge in exciting new ways. Even for those institutions that intend to remain relatively small—and some of them are also expensive—we see enormous value in examining what innovations are possible when the quality of education constitutes the highest priority.

Not all these innovations will be adaptable by larger institutions, of course. But we think much can still be learned from the opportunity to loosen the constraints on the imagination and by the process of design. As with any sort of monoculture, a lack of diversity and experimentation poses a long-term threat to higher education. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic gave us all a shared personal experience of how our human species is threatened, and it reminds us of how ecosystems are at risk without the ability to learn from differentiation. For this among other reasons, we see our start-up universities as vibrant green shoots of change, of innovation and experimentation, traits that can be notably lacking in the larger or older institutions, including many well-established liberal arts colleges. Ultimately, we are pluralists in the educational arena: we think that having more schools worldwide in which participants and planners get under the hood and tinker with the engine, or even reimagine the chassis, drives impact. A thousand smaller to medium schools that offer high-quality education should complement the current preoccupation with a few schools gaining increasing market share.

Our start-up universities have employed a spectrum of strategies for developing greater impact beyond their walls. Ashesi University in Ghana is an example of a school that seeks to stay small, form partnerships with others, and to accomplish its mission of nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurial and ethical leaders for Africa. By seeking to educate a new vanguard, Ashesi aims no less than to foster a new African renaissance and allow African countries to fully enter the global stage. By contrast, another of the institutions we study, African Leadership University (ALU), aspires to operate on a completely different scale of student enrollment and refuses to limit itself to one country or even one continent. Some of the institutions we study, such as ALU and Minerva University, are pushing the boundaries to find more efficient ways to develop the highest-quality learning environments, while others, such as Yale-NUS College and NYU Abu Dhabi, instead prioritize maximizing quality, with few cost constraints.

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Still other institutions, such as Ashoka University and Fulbright University Vietnam, have had a direct impact on higher-education law in their regions—here India and Vietnam, respectively. Fulbright leaders successfully pushed to revise regulations in their country so that the measure of independence they gained from government oversight could be claimed by other universities as well. Ashoka's imprint can be seen in the National Education Policy issued by the government in 2020 and in subsequent government promulgations. The 2020 policy document validated the liberal arts approach within Indian education and urged its broader implementation across the country.

The influence of these start-up institutions doesn't end there. We can also observe their demonstration effect—that is, the ways in which their new organizational forms and pedagogical cultures have become a reference point for broader transformations in higher education. For Ashoka, these transformations are apparent in the spread of similar kinds of ventures across India, as hundreds of new privately funded universities have opened their doors since 2015, including prominent entrants that offer Ashoka-like interdisciplinary and liberal arts forms of education. Olin College of Engineering sits at the top of the rankings for engineering education, a remarkable level of recognition that has enabled it to achieve a worldwide impact: leaders of engineering schools around the world regularly visit and establish connections to emulate the unique ingredients of success that Olin has found. Minerva University, too, is regularly recognized within the top ranks of innovative universities; and the for-profit Minerva Project now partners with a growing number of new and established universities across four continents, which seek to adopt Minerva's approach to curricular design, teaching pedagogy, and systematic assessment for their own regions.

Who This Book Is for and How It Unfolds

There are three different audiences for this book. First, our colleagues in higher education will find value in the courage and intellectual chutzpah that it takes to start a new college or university from scratch. Leaders of future start-up institutions as well as established universities can learn valuable lessons about fostering innovation and change. Second, the growing legion of entrepreneurs who come from outside the academic tradition can also gain from reading this book: we hope it will help them see more clearly how academic culture and priorities within a start-up university share certain characteristics with industrial start-ups but also have substantive

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differences—and why these differences matter. Finally, we would like to help the general public, both in the United States and globally, better understand the value of a liberal education for unleashing creative capacities and building collective understanding both in the humanities and social sciences and in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and entrepreneurial fields.

As participants in start-up ventures ourselves, we are painfully aware of how hard it is to create something truly new and valuable in academic life. As such, our inquiry has been driven by an appreciation of the intellectual challenges and practical trade-offs involved in founding new colleges and universities. We haven't looked for scandals, written an exposé, or sought to discredit what the various founders have aspired to achieve. Where warranted, however, we have brought an appropriate measure of skepticism, because we wanted to test claims and dig deeper than a public relations exercise. One of the greatest ills in academia occurs when critics shift from skepticism to cynicism, and we've worked to avoid that in these pages. Instead, we've sought to question superficial claims made by both supporters and detractors, and we want in our inquiry to understand deeply and fully how these institutions have come to life. As a result, our narrative offers few easy solutions; instead, it seeks to inspire others by showing how our founders have, for the most part, successfully completed inordinately difficult journeys, while also revealing tensions that they have navigated along the way.

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to us as authors and our journey through the landscape of higher education. The following chapter provides an overview of the global landscape of higher education and some of the emerging trends that affect universities around the world, and that have set the scene for a wave of exciting new start-up universities. The subsequent eight chapters provide deep dives into the founding stories of eight of the most exciting twenty-first-century global start-up universities. Our stories focus on the founders, their vision, and the struggles and achievements that arose within the first years of starting their new university. These stories constitute chapters 2 through 9, the main body of this book. In each chapter-length case study, we create a portrait of the founding team members, their environment, and the unique factors that shaped the design solutions they developed.

Our first two case-study chapters follow the founding of two new institutions built in Asia by well-established parent institutions: NYU Abu Dhabi in the UAE (chapter 3), and Yale-NUS College in Singapore, built by Yale University and the National University of Singapore (chapter 4). The next

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two chapters follow the development of new institutions that made use of a codesign process where students and faculty worked together to build the curriculum: Olin College of Engineering in the United States (chapter 5) and Fulbright University Vietnam (chapter 6). The subsequent chapters consider the adoption of a largely American-style liberal arts model to new contexts, founded by leaders who were making a return to their home countries after experiencing the US liberal arts model in their own education: Ashoka University in India (chapter 7) and Ashesi University in Ghana (chapter 8). The final two case-study chapters explore the founding of two unique models for a new kind of university that offers holistic reform and promises to lower costs and leverage new technologies as a central design feature. These institutions also are both heavily influenced by corporate entrepreneurial culture and arise from founders with extensive experience within the Silicon Valley start-up environment: African Leadership University in Mauritius and Rwanda (chapter 9) and Minerva University in the United States (chapter 10).

After our journey through the stories of each of these schools, we conclude with three chapters that synthesize and analyze what we have observed. While the geography and personalities are indeed distinct, all the new universities share common properties shaped by similar forces and constraints within higher education. In chapter 11 we explore the visible dimensions of building a new university, which can be thought of as the artifacts and espoused values of the emerging culture, to use the terminology of organizational theorist Edgar Schein. These artifacts and values include the development of institutional prestige and a sustainable business model, the mechanics of the build and launch (including hiring faculty and recruiting students), developing a new curriculum, and achieving accreditation. The development of both a physical and a virtual presence is also explored in this chapter, and the ways in which the resulting community and campus foster a new institutional culture and the interactions needed for a vibrant intellectual learning environment. Chapter 12 dives into the complexities that arise within the newly established academic community, including the thorny issues of governance, the conflicts that can arise from competing interests in the new university, and strategies for resolving these tensions. Among these complexities are the ways in which the new university interacts with multiple stakeholders, especially local governments, and manages competing political interests within its country and region.

In chapter 13 we reflect on several underlying patterns. We include in this final chapter a set of takeaway lessons for the diverse audiences for this

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book and for higher education as a larger shared enterprise within human civilization. This chapter includes lessons for future founders of new universities and participants in established colleges and universities (current faculty, students, academic leaders, and boards), as well as all who care about preserving what's special about a liberal arts education, while creating new ways for this type of learning to flourish in the world. Lastly, we conclude with a set of personal reflections on our journey together, on what most inspired us, what we found most surprising, and what questions continue to consume us. We thank all the founders, faculty, critics, and supporters who have made a high-quality liberal education accessible to their students and to future generations. We hope you enjoy this journey as much as we did in taking it.

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INDEX

academic freedom: Ashoka, 134–36, 140, 249; Claremont faculty, 59; Fulbright University Vietnam, 96, 98, 102, 108, 115, 218, 250; new universities, 250–53, 256, 281; NYU Abu Dhabi, 32, 34, 42–45, 48–51, 248, 251, 252; US colleges and universities, 242, 245, 282; Yale-NUS, 61–63, 72–74, 251
accreditation: African Leadership University, 176; Ashesi, 141, 149–51, 161; Ashoka, 233; curriculum and, in start-up university, 226–34; external review, 297n34; Fulbright, 115–16; Minerva, 184, 186, 188, 204–5, 232; regional team report, 297n20; standardization of content, 287n3; start-up universities, 9, 14, 226–34; Yale-NUS, 54
Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, 78, 233
Africa: finding market for liberal arts in, 148–51; future of, and Ashesi University, 159–61; training ethical entrepreneurial leaders for, 154–57. *See also* African Leadership University (ALU); Ashesi University
African Leadership Academy (ALA), 164–65, 211
African Leadership Experience (ALX), discontent and emergence of, 175–77. *See also* African Leadership University (ALU)
African Leadership Group (ALG), 296n30
African Leadership International, 296n30
African Leadership Network, 295n2, 296n30
African Leadership University (ALU), 2, 3, 4; ALU 2.0 and The Room, 177–80; audacity and risk-taking, 180–82; campuses of, 238–39; codesign year, 219; curriculum, 168–70, 229, 231, 233; discontent and emergence of African Leadership Experience (ALX), 175–77; excellence at scale, 177–80; faculty without tenure, 244; from academy to university, 164–67; impact of, 11; interdisciplinary education, 275; lacking inherited prestige, 211; making it safe to innovate, 172–74; Mauritius, 14, 166, 167, 173, 174, 175, 178, 180, 215, 238–39; phased launch of, 220; recruiting faculty, 223, 225, 226; Rwanda, 14, 173, 174, 175, 178, 179, 180, 238–39; Rwanda campus, 166–67; School of Wildlife Conservation, 167; student experiences, 169–72; sustainable business model, 215; transition phase of, 241; turning university on its head, 167–72
African Renaissance, 148, 161
Alexander, Bryan, forecasting the future of higher education, 28
al Mawrid Arab Center for the Study of Art, 52
Almond, Ian, on global issues, 255
ALU. *See* African Leadership University (ALU)
Amazon Web Services, Swaniker and, 182
ambiguity, new universities and, 252–53
American Association for the Advancement of Science, 266
American Association of University Professors, Yale community, 62
American College of Greece, 288n23
American Society for Engineering Education, 78
American University: Beirut, 288n23; Cairo, 257, 288n23
Amherst, 72, 124, 173
Andersson, Bertil, Nanyang Technological University, 187
Andrew Mellon Foundation, 248
Ansah, Angela Owusa, education of Ashesi provost, 158
ANZ Bank, 97; Vietnam, 1
Aoun, Joseph, on intelligent machines, 28
Appiah, Kwame Anthony, *Cosmopolitanism*, 40
Apple, 147, 164, 177
Archimedes' lever, Ashoka University as, 137–40

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Aristotle, 69
Arizona State University, 10, 159, 266
Ark, Tom Vander, meeting with Nelson, 184
ars liberalis, commitment to, 10, 257
Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, 97, 98; paper on Fulbright education, 102; study by, 99–100
Ashesi Foundation, 146, 150, 215
Ashesi University, 1, 3; Awuah, Marini and Taggart, 146–47; Awuah and Marini, 141–42; building social capital for, 146–48; campus for, 151–54, 238; codesign year, 219; culture of, 157–59; curriculum, 151–54, 229, 233; faculty without tenure, 244; finding the market for liberal arts in Africa, 148–51; future of Africa and, 159–61; Ghana, 11, 14; inflection points for, 268; interdisciplinary education, 153, 158, 232; prestige of, 211–12; recruiting faculty, 223, 225; successful operation of, 241; sustainable business model, 215; training ethical entrepreneurial leaders for Africa, 154–57
Ashoka (Emperor), 123
Ashoka Quest, 127
Ashoka University, 2, 3, 4, 14; academic autonomy and institution building, 134–37; Archimedes' lever, 137–40; between academic and entrepreneurial cultures, 132–34; branding as "Yale of India", 261–62; business model of, 221; campuses for, 237–38; codesign year, 219; creating Rhodes Scholarship of India, 121–23; curriculum, 231, 232, 233, 234; elite and, 123–26; financial model, 124–26; founder's group, 119–21; from consumer to producer, 130–31; higher-education law, 12; industry placements for students, 294n35; institutional independence, 265–66; interdisciplinary education, 12, 128, 138, 231–32, 234, 274; *Kama Sutra* and the *Mahabharata*, 126–29; lacking inherited prestige, 211; managing conflict, 249–50; overcoming the colonial legacy, 119–21; promotion as Ivy League, 126; success to date, 139–40; sustainable business model, 213–14, 216–17; traditional forms of tenure, 244–45; transition phase of, 241
Ashwill, Mark, educational consulting firm in Vietnam, 108
Aspen Institute, 296n30
Atlantic Monthly (magazine), 186
attitudinal endowment, mirroring, of New York City, 31
Australian National University, 59
Awuah, Patrick: on African futurism, 155, 261; Ashesi's, 246; Ashesi's sustainable business model, 215; business mentality of universities, 156; business plan for new university, 144–46; conducting surveys, 148–49; culture of Ashesi University, 157–58; on faculty of Ashesi, 223; Marini and, 141–42; Microsoft, 1, 141, 142–43; president and visionary, 161; prestige of Ashesi, 211–12; on ranking of key metrics, 160; return to Africa, 142–43; succession, 156, 246–47

Babson College, Olin and, 91, 94
Bailyn, Charles: advice for academic setup, 225; credentials of, 56; curriculum and, 67–68; first Yale-NUS president, 53, 55–57; Levin and, 56; Quinlan and, 57; Yale-NUS dean, 220
Bain, 173
Baker, Aryn, Pure Learning Library of ALU, 171
Ballon, Hillary: Deputy Vice-Chancellor on course conversion, 46; on planning of campus, 236, 237; on recruiting for NYU Abu Dhabi, 222
Barabino, Gilda: contrast with Miller, 77; on diversity of community, 262; focus of third year in presidency, 93; journey to Olin, 76–77; National Academy of Medicine, 247; Olin College, 4, 95, 247; second president at Olin, 76, 87–88, 266
Bard College, 111
Basu, Kaushik, academic council, 126
Bates College, 105
Bazzi, Mohamad, on religious discrimination, 48
Bell Labs, 79
Benchmark Capital, Minerva University and, 2, 186, 215
Benhabib, Jess, on recruiting for NYU Abu Dhabi, 223
Benson, Lee, history of higher education, 189
Beteille, Andre: academic council, 126; Ashoka University, 126
Beyond the Lecture (McAllister), 297–98n35
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 135, 233
Bickford, Ian, Fulbright provost, 111, 116
Bikhchandani, Sanjeev: Dhawan and, 138; entrepreneur, 2, 119, 121
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 184
Bitexco Tower, 103, 238
Blair, Tony, Yale faculty and, 58
Blanks, David, on liberal education, 257

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Bloom, Alfred: on academic freedom, 43; on NYU Abu Dhabi curriculum, 42; NYU Abu Dhabi vice-chancellor, 30, 34–35; on residential community, 36–37; on sustaining a global perspective, 48
Boston Consulting Group (BCG), Minerva and, 200
Boston Museum of Science, 94
Boston University, 46
Botstein, Leon, Bard College, 111
Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, as leading African, 166
Bowen, William, on shared governance, 242
Bowling Green State University, 190
Boyle, Mary-Ellen: on organizing phases, 263; tangible factors, 288n39
Bradford, Chris, cofounder of ALA, 295n2, 295n29
Brandt, Carol: NYU Abu Dhabi director, 30; student recruitment and orientation, 35
Brigham Young University, 46
Brodhead, Richard, on inertia of excellence, 7
Buddhism, 33
BUILD (believe, understand, invent, listen, deliver) model, 169
"Build Day," Olin, 92
Building the Intentional University (Kosslyn and Nelson), 212, 297–98n35
Burns, Ken, 107
business plan, for new university, 144–46
Bytedance, 187

Cambridge University, 31, 59, 64, 200
Campaign for NYU, Sexton and, 32
Cannon, Teri: on faculty culture, 202–3; Minerva University, 212, 246, 266; on partnership with KGI, 189; on students of Minerva, 197; on teamwork, 203; on WASC, 188
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 180
Carnegie Mellon University, 37
Carnegie Mellon University Africa, 167
Center for African Popular Culture, Oduro-Frimpong of, 261
Center for Behavioural Institutional Design, 52
Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship, Red House, 270
Centre for Policy Research, 126
Chan, Kinho, module on rhetoric, 106
Chandler, Vicki: Minerva curriculum, 193–94; Minerva faculty, 232; on research and teaching, 201–3; on voting rights of Minerva faculty, 201
Chan-Zuckerburg Biohub, 94
Chardin, Pierre Teilhard de, sequence of social evolution, 33
Childress, Stacy, ed tech thinkers and doers, 187
China, influence on Vietnam, 100
Chirot, Laura, Vietnam Program and, 98
citizens: education of, 16, 24, 26, 189, 253, 257, 284; global citizens, 10, 42, 254, 283–84; uber-citizens, 49
Choudhury, Sonya, on Sinha, 118
Christianity, 33
Chronicle of Higher Education (journal), 43, 68
Cisco, 164
Cisse, Wassa, ALU student, 170
Citizens of the World, 94
City College of New York, 77, 87, 248
Civitas, Minerva and, 198
Claremont Colleges, 35, 59–60, 69, 82, 188
Claremont McKenna College, 190
Clark, Marcia, on faculty of Ashesi, 158, 223
Clinton, Bill: NYU Abu Dhabi commencement, 44–45; Sexton and Sheikh Mohamed, 30
Cohen, Michael, describing universities, 267
Cole, Jonathan, "steeples of excellence," 20
College of Alice and Peter Tan, 63–64
College of Wooster, 153, 160
colonialism: FUV, 101; in Middle East and US, 255; NYU-Abu Dhabi, 26; yoke of, 253. *See also* cultural imperialism
Color of Change, 200
Columbia University, 6
Communist Party of Vietnam, 98
Confucianism, 259
Confucius, 69
Consequent, Minerva and, 198
Cook, Tim, Jobs and, 276
Cosmopolitanism (Appiah), 40
Coursera, 179
COVID-19 pandemic, 4, 116; Ashesi University and Africa, 159; Barabino as Olin president during, 88; shared personal experience during, 11
critical wisdom, 189–90
Crow, Michael, change in US higher education, 288n17, forms of innovation, 27
cultural immersions, study-abroad programs as, 35
cultural imperialism, NYU Abu Dhabi, 31; risk of, 251, 257. *See also* colonialism

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culture: Ashesi University, 157–59; Minerva University, 201–4; Olin College, 83–86
curriculum: accreditation and, for start-up university, 226–34; African Leadership University (ALU), 168–70; Ashesi University campus and, 151–54; Minerva University, 189–92; NYU Abu Dhabi, 41–42; Olin College, 77–78; Yale-NUS College, 66–70
Cyst, 160

Dabars, William, change in US higher education, 288n17, forms of innovation, 27
Dalberg, 173
Dam Bich Thuy, 1; on academic freedom, 108; culture of educational philanthropy, 276; FUV's founding president, 266; impact of Fulbright, 114–17; Olin's goal and Fulbright, 110; Vallely and, 97–100; Wilkinson, and founding team, 102
Daniel and Frances Berg Professor, City College of New York, 87
Dartmouth College, 38
Davidson, Cathy, on evolutionary strategies, 28
Davidson College, North Carolina, 207
de Beauvoir, Simone, 259
Delbanco, Andrew: collaborative learning, 287n14; on students sharing knowledge and experience, 6
Derby-Talbot, Ryan: on academic building, 238; on codesign year, 106; on creating curriculum, 109–11; Fulbright as benefit to Vietnam, 112–13; on FUV's approval, 100; on interviewing for Fulbright, 104–5; joining Fulbright team, 103
Detweiler, Richard A., liberal arts outcome, 18, role of US Christian missionaries, 288n23
Dewey, John, writings of, 189
Dhawan, Ashish: Ashoka as sort of Archimedes' lever, 138; Bikhchandani and, 138; on business leaders and academic autonomy, 133; entrepreneur, 2; founder's group, 119–21, 130, 219; impact of Ashoka, 139–40; managing conflict for Ashoka, 249; NextGen Leader in Philanthropy, 293n8; on political challenges to academic autonomy, 136; on sustainable financial model, 124–26; Young India Fellowship, 122–23, 276
Dinh Vu Trang Ngan: on codesign year, 112; first Fulbright dean, 218; Fulbright academic team, 103, 106, 107; FUV's launch, 277; on student mix, 105; on teaching about "American War," 107–8
diplomat plenipotentiary, Westermann as role of, 33, 277
Dlamini, Sidee: on being African, 175, 260; building African Leadership University (ALU), 4, 174; founding member of ALU, 165–66, 171; on global solution, 273
doi moi, 96
Duke Kunshan University (DKU), 7; China, 5, 276, 283, 284; insider's view of, 299n15
Duke-NUS Medical School, 58
Duke University, 5, 7, 79
Durham University, 48

eBay, 186
Economic Times (newspaper), 124
ecumenical university, NYU Abu Dhabi as, 33
Education Collaborative, Ashesi University, 159
edX, 179
Eikelman, Dale, on critical thinking, 38
Emirates Airlines, 177
Emory University, 77
Empires of Ideas (Kirby), 277, 281
Esade Business School, 207
Ethiopian Educational Foundation, 36
ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), 159
experiential learning module (ELM), 122

Family Health International, 152
Fast Company, 164
Ferdman, Yoel: debating pedagogical practice, 192; Minerva student, 199
Ferguson, Niall, on campus-based start-up university, 235
financial aid: Fulbright, 104; Minerva University, 199–200
financial model, Ashoka University, 124–26
Financial Times (newspaper), 121, 131
Floyd, George: impact of killing on education, 263; impact of murder on NYU Abu Dhabi, 51–52
Fost, Joshua: on general education curriculum, 191; Minerva faculty, 232
founder syndrome: Ashesi, 247; common problem of start-ups, 156
Franklin, Benjamin, writings of, 189
Franklin and Marshall College, 5
Freedom House, 42
Friendsgiving, Minerva and, 198
Frimpong, Joseph Oduro: Center for African Popular Culture, 261; highlighting African knowledge, 155–56
Fulbright Economics Teaching Program (FETP), 97, 99–100, 109; reputation, 211

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Fulbright School of Public Policy Management, 115
Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV), 1, 3, 14, 87: codesign year of, 105–7, 110, 112, 217–19; controversy and control, 101–2; curriculum, 229, 231; educating on Vietnamese art and culture, 111; faculty without tenure, 244; feeling like a tech launch, 102–5; financial aid, 104; from blank slate to first draft, 109–11; higher-education law, 12; impact and trajectory, 114–17; intangibles of excellence, 98–101; interdisciplinary education, 104, 229; internal governance challenges of, 243; Kerrey and, 186; lacking inherited prestige, 211; launch of partnership, 96–97, 102–3; launch phase facility of, 238; managing conflict, 250; meaning of innovation, 111–13; recruiting faculty, 223–24, 225; sustainable business model, 214; teaching the American War in Ho Chi Minh City, 107–9; transition phase of, 241
F. W. Olin Foundation, 1, 77, 216

Gale, Allison, Minerva faculty, 232
Gandhi, Mahatma, Hind Swaraf (Indian Home Rule), 128
Gangavalli, Varnika, on Great Books course, 134–35
Gardener in the Wasteland, A (graphic novel), 134
Gardner, Kara, Minerva faculty, 232
gays and lesbians, Singapore's judicial system, 62
Gazelle (newspaper), 254–55
Gebrselassie, Haile, as leading African, 166
Genetti, Carol, NYU Abu Dhabi vice-provost, 50
Georgetown University, 255; campus in Qatar, 258; Red House, 270
George Washington University, 185
Georgia Institute of Technology, 77
Ghana: education system, 145; Ministry of Education, 149; National Accreditation Board (NAB), 141; training ethical entrepreneurial leaders, 154–57. *See also* Ashesi University
Ghana Statistical Service, 149
Glasgow Caledonian University, 166
global aspirations, new universities, 253–60. *See also* rooted globalism
globalism, 48
Global Liberal Arts Alliance, 160
Global State of the Art in Engineering Education, The (NEET), 213
Godwin, Kara, on liberal education, 16, 22, 257
Goldberg, Robin, Minerva University, 212
Goldman Sachs, 121, 153
Google, 164, 173, 174, 177, 200
Gordon Prize, National Academy of Engineering (NAE), 84
Goyal, Malini, on education offerings, 124
governance: academic, 61, 132; autonomy and, 98; collective, 138; competing levels of, 284; controversies over, 14, 163, 170, 251, 275; democratic, 257; faculty, 67, 72, 74, 219, 245, 248–49; financing and, 60; shared, 7, 133, 241, 242–48; university, 102; workable system of, 9
Grand Challenges Scholars Program, Olin College, 84
Grant, Marcia, Ashesi's first provost, 219
Great Lakes Colleges Association, 160
Greentown Labs, 94
Greiner, Larry, on phases of organizational change, 241, 268
Grove School of Engineering, 87
Guardian (newspaper), 195
Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum, 32
Guha, Ramachandra, academic council, 126
Gupta, Vineet, entrepreneur, 2, 119, 121

Habits and Concepts (HCs), Minerva University, 190–91, 198
Habits of Mind and Foundational Concepts, Minerva, 218
"Hack the Curriculum," Waterman on, 46–47
Hakel, Milton, science of learning, 190
Halpern, Diane, science of learning, 190
Hamilton, Andrew, apologizing to campus community, 48
Hanyang University, 194
Harkavy, Ira, history of higher education, 189
Harvard, 173, 185, 200; Kennedy School of Government, 105, 116, 211; Vietnam Program, 1, 97
Harvard Business School, Nelson and Summers, 185
Harvard Law School, Sexton and, 31
Harvard of Vietnam, Fulbright as, 112
Harvard Vietnam Program, reputation, 211
Harvey, Kevin, Nelson's pitch and, 186–87
Harvey Mudd College, 82–83, 212
Haryana Private Universities Act of 2006, 124
Head, Bessie, as leading African, 166
Hedges, Matthew, arrest of, 48

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Henry, P. J., faculty for NYU Abu Dhabi, 224–25
Hewlett Packard, 147
higher education, 2; landscape of, 13; pluralist view of impact, 10–12; process of cocreation, 8. *See also* new universities
Hills, Rick, intellectual debate in Shanghai, 255–56
Hinduism, 33
Hindutva (Hindu-ness), 135
HIV/AIDS pandemic, Ashesi's health center, 152
Ho Chi Minh City: Bitexco Tower, 103, 238; Fulbright Economics Teaching Program in, 97; Fulbright School in, 98; teaching the American War in, 107–9. *See also* Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV)
Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics, 211
Ho Chi Minh thought, 262
Homer's *Odyssey*, 259
Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, 207
Horn, Michael, ed tech thinkers and doers, 187
Hunger Games, 272

Ibn Khaldun, 259
Ides of March, Minerva and, 198
IEEE Spectrum (journal), 80
illiberal democracy, political rights in Singapore, 61–62
Inclusion and Equity Accountability Framework, 40
India: creating Rhodes Scholarship of, 121–23. *See also* Ashoka University
Indian Constitution, 262
Indian Institute of Management, 211
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), 4, 118, 120, 211
Indian National Congress, 135
Indian School of Business (ISB), 130; Sinha and, 118–19
Indian University Grant Commission, 233
innovation, 3–4; concept of, 27; constraints on, 7, 126, 127, 139, 242, 245, 247, 278; continuous, 83, 89, 93, 204, 232; convention and, 233; creativity and, 254; curricular, 85, 86–87; defined, 111–12; differentiation and, 210; disruptive, 27, 289n47; as an economic strategy, 26; education inhibiting, 185; liberal arts, 109; pedagogical, 204; people and, 91–92, 271; phases of, 21; preserving, after start-up, 92–95; prestige and, 210, 213; spirit of, 164; start-up universities for, 11–12; tradition and, 26–29; waves of, 22–23, 25, 288n17
Innovations for Poverty Action, 200
Institute for Development Studies (IDS), 98
Institute of International Education (IIE), 36
intellectual indifferentism, Sexton on, 33
interdisciplinary, in 1950s and 1960s, 21; curriculum, 17, 21; in engineering, 90–91; as fundamental principle, 227–34; as global examples, 22–23, 25; as innovation driver, 25–26; as organizational structure, 22, 245, 274–75; in science education, 69, 220
International Alliance of Research Universities, 59
Ivy League, 2

Jaffrelot, Christophe, academic council, 126
Jefferson, Thomas, writings of, 189
JNU (Jawaharlal Nehru University), 136
Jobs, Steve: Cook and, 276; on liberal arts education, 252
Johns Hopkins University Peabody Conservatory, 58
Joriami, Faris, on common curriculum of Yale-NUS College, 71

Kafkaesque legalism, 62
Kagame, Paul, "Smart Rwanda" strategy, 167
kalangu, Ashesi event, 158
Kama Sutra, 128
Kapur, Devesh, academic council, 126
Kariuki, Melissa, education of, 173
Kazmin, Amy, on Bikhchandani and Dhawan, 138
Keck Graduate Institute (KGI), 188, 189, 204
Kellogg, 130
Kennedy School of Government, Harvard, 105, 116, 211
Kennedy School of Public Policy, 97
Kerns, David: NAE award for founding Olin, 88; Olin's first provost, 79
Kerns, Sherra: NAE award for founding Olin, 88; Olin's founding vice-president for innovation and research, 79–80
Kerr, Clark, on longevity of higher education institutions, 27
Kerrey, Bob: on change, 188; Minerva University, 212; New School, 186; on parking for faculty, 201; role in Vietnam War, 101–2; on Vietnamese, 97; on Vietnam needing independent college, 113
Kerry, John, Vietnam and, 97
Khang A Tua, FUV student, 104

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Kigali's Innovation City (KIC), ALU Rwanda and, 166–67
Kim, Joshua, Dartmouth, 271
Kipling, Rudyard, formulation of "Asia", 259
Kirby, William, *Empires of Ideas*, 277, 281
Kong, Lily, lead administrator of Yale-NUS, 5353
Kosslyn, Stephen: on learning, 190, 192; Minerva curriculum, 186, 228; Minerva University, 212
KPMG, 173
KREA University, 138
Kronman, Anthony: curriculum at Yale-NUS College, 69; Yale Law School, 63
Kwame Kumasi University, 149
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), 145
Kwong-loi, Shun, Confucian model and liberal education model, 258–59

Lao Tzu, 69
leadership: academic, 116, 130, 132, 187; challenges and changes, 85, 116, 241, 246–48, 264, 267–69, 280, 285, 288; developing potential, 58; diverse styles, 280; entrepreneurial, 165, 169, 173, 229, 233; founding, 156, 210, 246, 269; future, 163; as key trait, 169, 268, 276; learning by doing, 239; model for Africa, 179, 181, 182; next level down, 276–77; skill to be inculcated, 16; student, 150, 152, 160–61; teaching, 35, 58, 122, 129, 143, 154, 213; women leaders, 23, 33, 94, 158, 280
Le Blanc, Paul, on online students, 235
Lee Hsien Loong, rise of Singapore, 62
Lee Kuan Yew, rise of Singapore, 62
Lehman, Jeffrey, NYU Shanghai, 282
Leke, Acha, cofounder of ALA, 295n2, 295n29
Levin, Richard: Bailyn and, 56; Lorimer and, 68; managing conflict, 251; vision for Yale, 59, 60; Yale and Singapore, 258, 259; on Yale-NUS and Yale, 210; Yale University, 2
Levine, Emily, examples of higher education innovation, 21
Lewis, Pericles: on common curriculum, 69; first Yale-NUS president, 64–66; founding Singapore's first liberal arts college, 4; global strategy for Yale, 265; on liberal arts education, 252; Tan Chorh Chuan and, 65–66
LGBTQ+ rights, 46
liberal arts (and sciences), 5–7; African Leadership University, 211–12; American model, 14, 250, 262; approach to, 10, 12, 17, 19, 39, 102, 122, 138, 261; "arts" in, 39; Ashesi, 142–44, 146, 152–54, 156, 160–61, 261; Ashoka, 120, 126–29, 137–38, 140, 261; *beau ideal* by, 201; business and, 95; cultural context of, 254; experience, 49; finding market for, in Africa, 148–51; Fulbright and, 109, 112, 114–17, 224, 250, 262; global, 22–26, 253, 258–59, 283; India, 120, 126; institutional monopoly of, 213; interdisciplinary engineering and, 84, 90–92; label, 252; meaning of, 17, 269; Minerva, 201, 228; nature of, 74; new schools espousing 288n39; NYU Abu Dhabi, 248; Olin education, 90–91; reinventing, 2–3, 56, 67, 93, 230, 234, 248; term, 17, 38; thoughts of students and parents, 57; Westermann on, 38–39, 251; Yale-NUS, 235, 245; Young India Fellowship (YIF), 121–23
Littlejohn, Allison, on learning technology, 195
Lokur, Madam, Indian Supreme Court judge, 265
Lombardi, John, competition among universities, 287n3
London Business School, 173
Lord's University, The (Waterman), 46
Lorimer, Linda: Levin and, 68; on support for Yale-NUS, 61
Louvre Abu Dhabi, 32
Ly Minh Tu, Fulbright applicant, 103–4

Macalester College, 163, 179, 211, 242, 272
McAllister, Katie: *Beyond the Lecture*, 297–98n35; on classroom dynamics, 196, 204; College of Social Sciences at Minerva, 297n35; on preparation for entrepreneurial and professional roles, 200
McCain, John, Vietnam and, 97
McGill University, 64
McKinsey and Company, 164; Sinha and, 118; Swaniker at, 246
McMurtie, Beth, on revamping training, 271
Magee, Mike, Minerva second president, 266
Maguire, Andrew, on Fulbright's special projects, 113
Mahabharata, culture-defining text, 128, 262
Mahmood, Saba, 259
Maloney, Edward, Georgetown, 271
Mandela, Nelson, apartheid and, 163
Manifest, Minerva and, 198
Manno, Vincent, dean on Olin's culture, 85
March, James, describing universities, 267

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Marini, Nina: Ashesi cofounder, 246–47; Ashesi's sustainable business model, 215; Awuah and, 141–42; business mentality of universities, 156; business plan for new university, 1, 144–46; conducting surveys, 148–49; culture of Ashesi University, 157; Microsoft, 141
Marxism, 107, 262
massive open online courses (MOOCs), 171–72
Mastercard Foundation, 181, 215
Mauritius: ease of business in, 166. *See also* African Leadership University (ALU)
Mayo Clinic, 132
Mehta, Pratap Bhanu: academic council, 126; on criticism of government and resignation, 136–37; on economics, 129; on faculty recruitment, 130; on goal of curriculum, 127–28; on India as consumer of knowledge, 131; on National Knowledge Commission, 135
Meta (Facebook), 174
Meyer, John, on world culture, 255
Microsoft, 1, 141, 142–43, 146, 246
Microsoft Imagine Cup Award in Education, 200
Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, 38, 50–51
Middle East Studies Association, 38
Milas, Lawrence W., Olin Foundation, 79
Miller, Richard: on challenges for Olin students, 90; contrast with Barabino, 77; on farmhouses at Olin, 237; innovation engineering school, 1; NAE award for founding Olin, 88; Olin president, 4, 76, 102; on Partner Year, 80, 82–83, 217; on synergies of Wellesley, Babson, and Olin, 91–92
Minerva Project, 12; collaborations, 207; for-profit, 205; Minerva University and, 187; Nelson led, 246; shaping higher education, 206–7
Minerva University, 2, 3; brand and specs, 184–86; campus model, 238, 239; cities, 196–200; codesign year, 217; critical wisdom and curricular structure, 189–92; cultural issues, 262; curriculum, 183, 199, 228, 229, 232, 234; development of global rotation, 296n1; faculty culture, 201–4; faculty without tenure, 244; financial aid, 199–200; financing and accreditation, 186–89; geographic footprint, 263; impact of, 11; interdisciplinary education, 203, 206–7, 274; lacking inherited prestige, 211; location, 183–84; Nelson founding, 4; pedagogy, 183, 192–96; prestige of, 212; recognition of, 12; research incorporating students, 297n30; students of, 196–200; sustainable business model, 215–16; sustaining the vision, 204–7; transition phase of, 241; United States, 14
Mintz, Steven, change in higher education in the 19th century, 20
MIT, 212, 266
Mnasoor, Ahmed, imprisonment of, 48
Modernism Lab, 64
Modi, Narendra, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 135, 136, 233
Mombaur, Peter, cofounder of ALA, 295n2, 295–96n29
Moody, Mike, recruiting and hiring Olin faculty, 83
Morgan Stanley, 200
Morse Academic Plan, NYU core, 46
Mubarak, Khaldoon Al, Sexton and, 34
Mugabe, Robert, corrupt rule of, 163
Muhire, Frank, ALU student, 170–71
Mukherjee, Rudrangshu, vice-chancellor for academic affairs, 126, 134, 135
Mutoni, Mimi, ALU student, 170

Nanyang Technological University, 187
Nardello, Daniel, on labor conditions, 44, 45
National Academy of Engineering (NAE), Gordon Prize of, 84
National Academy of Medicine, 87, 247
National Academy of Sciences, 193
National Accreditation Board (NAB), Ghana, 141
National Education Policy, 12, 138
nationalism, 48
National Knowledge Commission, India, 135
National Science Foundation, 78, 193
National University of Singapore (NUS), 2, 13, 53, 265; global ambitions for, 57–61; Yale-NUS College and, 267. *See also* Yale-NUS College
Natural History Museum, 32
Ndirangu, Bilha, African Leadership Academy (ALA), 295n29
Nelson, Ben: accreditation, 232; active learning, 194; brands in higher education, 185; on business model for Minerva, 205–6; as chancellor, 246; criticism of traditional curriculums, 203; curricular overreach, 192; for-profit and non-profit relationship, 187; Harvard Business School, 183; Minerva's curriculum, 228; Minerva University, 212, 246; "practical knowledge," 189; sales

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pitch, 186; Silicon Valley entrepreneur, 2; Snapfish and Minerva University, 4; vision for new university, 183–84
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration, 115
New Century College, 207
New Engineering Education Transformation (NEET), 212–13
New England Commission of Higher Education, 116
New School, Kerrey and, 97, 186
new universities: adaptation and succession, 268–70; ambiguity and, 252–53; balancing centrifugal and centripetal forces, 273–75; business plan for, 144–46; common properties of, 14; cultivating flexibility, 270–72; curriculum and earning accreditation, 9; further questions, 281–86; global aspirations in local context, 253–60; governance and academic ethos, 9; inspirations of, 275–78; managing conflict, 248–52; phases of building, 241; physical and virtual presence of, 9; preparing students to function in world, 9–10; question for acquiring faculty, 8–9; rediscovered heritages and global residents, 260–63; starting, 266–68; surprises of, 278–81; tuition and expenses for, 8. *See also* start-up university success
New York City, mirroring "attitudinal endowment" of, 31
New Yorker (magazine), 42
New York Institute of Technology, 38
New York Magazine, 40
New York Times (newspaper), 37, 44
New York University (NYU), 1, 30; Institute of Fine Arts, 32; statement of shared values with Abu Dhabi government, 44. *See also* NYU Abu Dhabi
Ngo Bao Chau, mathematics, 96
Nguyen Du, poetry of, 96
Nguyen Minh Thuyet, Vietnam's National Assembly, 102
Nguyen Minh Triet, idea of founding American-style university in Vietnam, 97
Nguyen Nam, on Fulbright's faculty, 105
Nguyen, Viet Thanh: Pulitzer Prize for *The Sympathizer*, 101
Nguyen Thien Nhan, idea of founding American-style university in Vietnam, 97
Nguyen Xuan Phus, Vietnam president, 100
Nguyen Xuan Tranh, founding member of Fulbright University, 99
Nnandi, Jeremah, ALU student, 171
Northeastern University, 77
Nubian VR, 160
NYU Abu Dhabi, 1, 3; Abu Dhabi as Middle East ideas capital, 37–41; building faculty and curriculum for, 41–42; campus for, 236; campus opening celebration, 30, 31; controversies on home front and academic freedom, 42–45; core courses, 41; creating world's honors college, 35–37; curriculum, 228, 230–31, 233, 234; downtown campus of, 237; entering young adulthood, 49–52; evolution and revision of, 45–49; global sensibility of, 254; interdisciplinary education, 41, 47, 52, 230–31; living options in dorms, 40; managing conflict, 251–52; *Marhaba* (welcome) week at, 39–40; navigating to stable institution, 247–48; prioritizing quality, 11; recruiting faculty, 222–23, 225; status and prestige, 210; student responses to, 40–41; successful operation of, 241; sustainable business model, 214, 216; traditional forms of tenure, 244–45; UAE, 13; Westermann as first provost, 32–35
NYU Abu Dhabi Institute, 33, 34, 221
NYU Abu Dhabi Water Research Center, 52
NYU Global Network, 41–42

Obama, Barack, announcement at Fulbright University Vietnam, 96, 102
Obiezue, Arinze, education of, 173–74
Odyssey (Homer), 259
Office of Inclusion and Equity, 40
Olin, Franklin W., namesake of Olin College, 79
Olin College of Engineering, 1, 3, 4, 69; Barabino as second president of, 76–78, 87–88; campus for, 236; codesign year, 217–19; collaborations with partner schools, 91, 94; creating the ideal university, 78–80; cultural issues, 262; curriculum, 77–78, 227–28, 233, 234; emergence of culture, 83–87; expanding creativity and diversity at, 89–90; faculty without tenure, 244; Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV) and, 105; Fulbright using approach of, 112; governance challenges, 243–44; inflection points for, 268; interdisciplinary education, 79, 84, 227–28, 245; liberal arts and interdisciplinary engineering, 90–92; Miller as president, 4, 76–78, 102; navigating to stable institution, 247–48; ongoing start-up, 95; Partner Year and, 80–83; preserving innovation after the start-up, 92–95; prestige of, 212–13; ranking of, 12, 95; recruiting faculty, 224, 226;

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Olin College of Engineering (*continued*) student body at, 93–94; successful operation of, 241; sustainable business model, 216; teaching and research at, 245; United States, 14
Olin Foundation, 79, 216, 217
Olin Public Interest Technology Clinic, 86
Omidyar Network, 166
organizational: change, 279; culture, 89–90, 137, 175, 209; form, 12, 137; management, 268; processes and practices, 208, 241, 242; skills, 170; structure, 246; theater, 271; theories, 279; theorist, 14, 208
Oxford University, 31, 59
Oxtoby, David, Pomona College, 60

Panikkar, Raimon, forms of intercultural education, 33
Patell, Cyrus, on "Global Shakespeare", 259
Paul Quinn College, 94; Texas, 207
Peking University, 59
Pelli Clarke Pelli, 63, 235
Penprase, Bryan: further questions of, 284–86; guide to future of university, 5–8; inspirations of, 277–78; surprises to, 279–81
People's Action Party, Singapore, 62
Pernon Ricard, 173
Peterson, Chris, on Ben Nelson, 184
Phan Chu Trinh, philosophy, 96
Phan Vu Xuan Hung, on teaching politics in Vietnam, 108
Pickus, Noah: further questions of, 281–84; guide to future of university, 5–8; inspirations of, 275–77; students at Duke Kunshan University, 299n15; surprises to, 278–79
Pitzer College, 35
planetization, 33
Plato, 69
Platt, Joe, Harvey Mudd College, 82–83
Pliego, Ricardo Salinas, Universidad de la Libertad, 207
Politico, 100, 102
Pomona College, 5, 60, 72, 188
prestige: Ashesi University, 211–12; Ashoka, 139; colleges and universities striving for, 6–7, 234, 240, 267; demand for, 278; generating, 209–13, 217; Harvard, 185; institutional, 14, 70, 188, 212; lacking inherited, 211; limits on innovation, 7, 139, 210, 213, 278, 284; Minerva, 184, 186–88, 206, 209, 210; Olin College, 82, 86; as performative aspect, 285; quality and, 186, 284; start-up university generating, 209–13; status and, 211; Yale-NUS, 55–57, 222
Pritchett, Wendell, University of Pennsylvania, 187
Pure Learning Library, ALU, 171
PWC, 173

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), rankings, 57, 137
Quest University, 103
Quinlan, Jeremiah: Bailyn and, 57; Yale-NUS admissions dean, 53
Quinquatria, Minerva and, 198

Rafael Vinoly Architects, 236
Rajeev Gandhi Educational City, 237
Rajiv Gandhi Education City, 123–24
Ramayana (Sanskrit epic), 259
Rascoff, Matthew, examples of innovation in higher education, 21
Red House, Georgetown's, 270
Rhodes Scholarship of India, 121–23; Young India Fellowship as, 211
Rishihood University, 138, 294n36
Roberts, Joanne: on culture of Yale-NUS College, 70–71; on entrepreneurship, 71–72
Room, The, African Leadership University (ALU) and, 180, 181
rooted globalism, concept of, 283
Rosenberg, Brian: on ALU's reimagining, 171; on shared governance, 242–43
Ross, Andrew, on tipping point, 49
Roth, Michael, Wesleyan University, 282
Rousmaniere, Izzy, on Minerva's approach, 197
Rusagara, Tesi, on digital solutions for Africa, 167
Rutgers University-Camden, 187
Rwanda. *See* African Leadership University (ALU)
Rwandan genocide, 143

Sa'at, Alifan, short course Dialogue and Dissent in Singapore, 72
St. Stephen's College, 119
Salih, Tayeb, global university focus, 260
Salim, Firdaus, African Leadership Experience (ALX), 295n21
Sall, Macky, on Africa as continent of future, 165
Salovey, Peter: Levin and, 60; requesting investigation, 72–73; on Yale-NUS dissolution, 265

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Samhita, 137
Samra, Tom Abi, global university focus, 260
Śāntideva, Buddhist monk, 259
Sapienta critica, critical wisdom, 189–90
Saussy, Haun, Yale Council on East Asian Studies, 61
Schein, Edgar: on deep norms and assumptions, 242; and organizational culture at Olin, 89; organizational theorist, 14; on underlying assumptions, 209; "visible artifacts," 208
Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University, 173
Sciences Po, 173
Second Axial Age, 33
Seligman, Ayo, Minerva University, 212
Sen, Sandeep, on Ashoka University, 124
Sexton, John: Campaign for NYU, 32; on institutions as victims of original sin, 282; managing conflict at NYU Abu Dhabi, 252; New York University (NYU), 1; NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU, 210–11; NYU Abu Dhabi president, 30, 30–32, 52; reflections on NYU Abu Dhabi, 51; vision of Abu Dhabi, 51, 283; vision of "ecumenical university," 254; Westermann and, 32–34
Shadrake, Alan, on Singapore's judicial system, 62
Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, 259
Shanmugaratnam, Tharman, on new phase in education, 55
shared governance, start-up world, 242–48
Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (crown prince), 1; funding for NYU Abu Dhabi, 214; NYU Abu Dhabi, 30, 32; Sexton and, 43
Sheikh Mohamed Scholars program, 33, 221
Shenandoah University, Virginia, 207
Shih Choon Fong, NUS president, 57, 59
Shofer, Evan, on world culture, 255
Siegel, Jay, Fulbright provost, 116
Singapore, as education hub, 54–55
Sinha, Pramath: building a university, 119; on charges of elitism, 125; cofounding Ashoka University, 4; curriculum of Ashoka, 127–28, 231; education of, 118; entrepreneur, 2; founder's group, 119–21; on goal for students, 127; Indian School of Business (ISB), 118–19, 130; on limiting donor's influence, 132; managing conflict for Ashoka, 249; on political challenges to academic autonomy, 136–37; on poor quality of private universities in India, 120; on regulation, 129; Young India Fellowship, 276
skills: across the curriculum, 78, 168–70, 190, 229; digital, 167; hard skills, 146; jobs and, 18, 55; soft skills and liberal arts approach, 16, 39, 78, 149–50; STEM-oriented, 17; technical and human, 252; transfer of, 183, 190–91, 198, 229
"skunk-works" programs, 270, 300n9
Sleeper, Jim: asking the difficult questions, 282–83; on liberal arts, 257; Yale-NUS College lecturer, 62
Snapfish, 4, 184
Softbank, 200
Somerville, Mark: on development of Olin's culture, 89; hiring faculty for Olin, 224; Olin College architect, 277; Olin culture, 83–84; Olin curriculum, 103, 106; on "Olin's darker years," 85; on Olin's expectations for faculty reappointment, 85–86; on Olin's foundational year, 81–82; on Olin's ongoing start-up, 95; Olin's partner year, 217; on start-ups, 271; on team teaching at Olin, 93
Southern Illinois University, 155
Southern New Hampshire University, delivering higher education, 10
Special Project in Science (SPS), Yale-NUS experiment, 57–58
Stacey, Pam, module on rhetoric, 106
Staley, David, on designing new universities, 28–29
Stanford University, 164, 173, 179, 185, 200, 211, 266
start-up university success, 209; building and launching, 217–21; campus and virtual environment, 234–40; curriculum and accreditation, 226–34; evolutionary phases and underlying assumptions, 263–64; faculty and students connecting, 274–75; generating a sustainable business model, 213–17; generating prestige, 209–13; global, 13; monopoly on liberal arts, 213; recruiting faculty, 222–26; shared governance in, 242–48; values and visible artifacts, 208–9
start-up ventures, 13
STEAM (STEM and art), Yale-NUS College, 69
STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), 13; Ashesi University, 159; Minerva University, 202; NYU Abu Dhabi, 47, 50; Olin College of Engineering, 94; Yale-NUS College, 69
Subramanian, Arvind, resignation from Ashoka University, 136

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Summers, Larry: Harvard University, 183; Minerva University, 186, 212
Sunassee, Veda, CEO of ALU, 266, 296n29
sustainable business model: institutional development, 269; start-up university creating, 213–17
Sustainable Development Goals, World Health Organization's, 158
Sutradhar, Aritra, Ashoka University, 124
Swaniker, Fred: on Africa, 165; African Leadership network of organizations, 266; ALU campuses, 238–39; on ALU faculty recruiting, 223; ALU founder, 211, 246; on ALU's reimagining, 171; Amazon Web Services and, 182; audacity of, 180–81; background of, 162–64; on being African, 260; cofounders of ALA, 295n2; conflict between faculty and, 247; education at Macalester and Stanford, 179; emphasizing peer-to-peer learning, 220; on financial investment, 276; on giving away your Legos, 269; innovation and entrepreneurship, 164; on problem-based learning, 272; on things learned in college, 168; Trojan horse approach, 172; turmoil at ALU and ALX, 177; vision for building university campuses, 2; vision for university campuses, 166
Swarthmore College, 34–35, 72, 142–44, 150, 211
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, 211
Sympathizer, The (Viet Thanh Nguyen), 101

Taft, Isabelle, on China's influence on Vietnam, 100
Taggart, Matthew, Ashesi University, 146–47
Tai Yong, Yale-NUS president, 72
TAL Education Group, 187
Tan, Charlene, on academic freedom at Yale-NUS, 299–300n22
Tan Chorh Chuan: Lewis and, 65–66; National University of Singapore, 2, 60
Tan Eng Chye: NUS president, 73; Yale-NUS financial model, 214
Tan Tai Yong, Yale-NUS president, 73
Tavenner, Diane, ed tech thinkers and doers, 187
Teach for India, 137
Terbusu, 64
Tesla, 185, 200
Texas A&M University, 37
Texas Christian University, 4
Thiel, Peter, on brand in higher education, 185
TikTok, 187
Times Higher Education, 57, 266; University Impact Ratings, 156; World University Rankings, 119, 146
Trachtenberg, Stephen, on describing college, 185
Transcend Network, 200
Tran Thi Ha, on advisory group for university, 97
Trust for University Innovation, 101
Tsinghua University, 173
Tucker, Marc, on global rankings of Singapore schools, 54–55
Tụy, Hoàng, Institute for Development Studies (IDS), 98–99
Twitter, 186

Uber, 186
Udacity course, 165
Udemy, 179
undergraduate education, Vietnam, 99
Universidad de la Libertad, 207
universities: guides to future of, 5–8; questions for starting new, 8–10; start-up, 7. *See also* new universities; start-up university success
University College London, 195
University Grants Commission, 138
University of Arizona, 193
University of Austin, 235
University of British Columbia, 196
University of California (Berkeley), 1, 4, 59, 144, 166, 200, 211; School of Law, 207
University of California (San Francisco), 194
University of California (Santa Barbara), 50, 77
University of Cambridge, 105
University of Cape Coast, 151
University of Cape Hope, 145
University of Cape Town, 173
University of Chicago, 200
University of Copenhagen, 59
University of Delhi, 119, 120
University of Edinburgh, 173
University of Ghana, 145
University of Ghana Legon, 149
University of Iowa, 77
University of Massachusetts, 173
University of Miami, 207
University of Oregon, 193

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University of Pennsylvania, 4, 118, 246
University of Rwanda, Centre for Biomedical Engineering and E-health, 167
University of Southern California (USC), 77, 207
University of Southern New Hampshire, 235
University of Texas, 115
University of Tokyo, 59
University of Washington, 144, 211
University of Waterloo, Canada, 38
University of Wollongong, 38; Australia, 38
University Scholars Program (USP), Yale-NUS College and, 58, 75
University Town, NUS campus in, 63
UN Sustainable Development Goals, 156
US Christian missionaries, central role of, 288n23
user-oriented collaborative design, 90
US higher education, waves of change in, 288n17
US International Development Finance Corporation, 116, 214

Vallely, Thomas (Tommy): on advisory group for university, 97; Dam and, 97, 100; Harvard's Vietnam Program, 1; Trust for University Innovation, 101
Vanderbilt, 79
Van der Wende, Marjik, forces driving global liberal arts innovation, 25
Vassar College, 69
Viet Lam, Fulbright's, 97
Vietnam: idea of founding American-style university in, 97; undergraduate education, 99
Vietnamese Communist Party, 107, 250
Vietnam Executive Leadership Program, Kennedy School, 100
Vietnam Program, Harvard, 1, 97
Vietnam War, 97; Fulbright on US involvement in, 101
Vietnam War, The (documentary), 107
virtual environment, start-up university, 234–40
virtual university, Olin as, 91
visible artifacts, start-up university, 208–9
Vu Thanh Tu Anh, FETP, 100

Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 200
Washington Post (newspaper), 73
Wasserman, Gary, promoting liberal values, 258
Waterman, Bryan, "Hack the Curriculum," 46–47
Weber, Max, 259
Weill Medical College, 37
WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) societies, 283
Wellesley College, 91, 94, 103
Wesleyan University, 282
Westermann, Mariët: ambitions for NYU Abu Dhabi, 49–52; on liberal arts, 38–39; managing conflict at NYU Abu Dhabi, 251–52; NYU Abu Dhabi expansion, 265; NYU Abu Dhabi provost, 30, 32–35, 248; NYU's diplomat plenipotentiary, 33, 277; Sexton and, 32–34; vision for university, 269
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), 188, 189, 204–5, 212
Wharton School, 97, 130, 246
Wieman, Carl, STEM teaching, 202
Wilkinson, Ben: on founding team, 102; Vietnam Program and, 98
Williams, 72, 124
working groups, teaching and learning, 297n35
World Economic Forum, 296n30
World Health Organization, Sustainable Development Goals of, 158
world's honors college, NYU Abu Dhabi as, 35–37

Xuan Linh, Fulbright's, 97

Yahoo, 164
Yale, 59
Yale College, 119
Yale Daily News (newspaper), 61
Yale Institute of the Arts, Abu Dhabi, 59
Yale International Framework (2009), 59
Yale-NUS College, 2, 3, 5; appointment of dean Bailyn, 55–57; approach to steady state, 70–73; building and operating, 221; building common curriculum for world, 66–70, 74–75; campus for, 235–36; cautionary tale of, 241; controversies in New Haven, 61–64; curriculum, 227–28, 230–34; dormitory building for, 236–37; faculty and administration, 71–72, 220; faculty governance, 245–46; fate and impact of, 73–75; financial aid, 63; global ambitions for, 57–61; interdisciplinary education, 57–59, 66, 68–69, 70, 73–74, 220, 227–28, 230; launching of, 53–54; Lewis as first president, 64–66; managing

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Yale-NUS College (*continued*)
conflict, 251, 252; mission statement, 65; National University of Singapore and, 267; prioritizing quality, 11; scholars among graduates, 71; Singapore, 5, 7, 13; Singapore as education hub, 54–55; status and prestige, 210; sustainable business model, 214, 216; traditional forms of tenure, 244–45
Yale of India, Ashoka as, 211, 261–62
Yale University, 2, 5, 13, 70; global ambitions for, 57–61
Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, 58
Young India Fellowship (YIF), 121–23, 130, 134, 211, 269; forerunner of Ashoka, 276; postgraduate program, 219–20; recruiting talent, 226
YouTube, 246
Yu, Diane, Westermann and, 33

Zayed National Museum, 32
Zayed University, 207
Zee Network, 137
Zomato, 137
Zoom, 195, 239

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