

UWC Congress 2013  
Cardiff, Wales  
2013-02-22

Panel discussion  
**To grow or not to grow – what are the realities of growth for UWC?**

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The question is to grow or not to grow – what are the realities of growth for UWC?

I begin with a caveat. My thinking on the growth of UWC is in a state of rapid evolution; so rapid that it has evolved considerably just in the last two days. Today's discussion may change my views again.

Right now my position, bluntly, is that the UWC has very little possibility for further growth using its most common institutional model, which is the two-year, residential, IB-centred programme.

I reached this conclusion after conversations with the college chairs two days ago and from reports I have heard of the discussions that have recently taken place among the college principals.

Yesterday we talked about sustainability. Well, I no longer believe that the two-year UWC programme is a sustainable business model. I hear that nearly all the two-year colleges will need to raise substantial funds if each is to be sustainable for more than a few years. That remains true even after the winds of economic reality and deference to social justice have combined to force the abandonment of the old principle of full scholarships for all.

The psychological effect of this stark situation is that some of the two-year colleges now regard the creation of new two-year colleges as a zero-sum game. In other words, they believe that any further expansion of the two-year college model, beyond the imminent German College, will undermine their own finances. Whether this fear is rational or not, it will ensure that key players view proposals for expanding the number of two-year colleges with either scepticism or downright hostility.

What is the answer? Peter Howe has an article in this month's issue of *United World* titled 'My Conversion to the Whole School Model', which I find persuasive. The whole school model has two great advantages: it is economically much more robust and it ramps up the numbers of youngsters having access to some UWC experience much more quickly.

Remember that the IB now offers Primary-Years and Middle-Years Programmes. The UWC movement did not stimulate their creation as it did with the IB Diploma, but the PYP and MYP are there and now provide UWC-friendly curricula at all levels.

Yesterday colleagues chastised me roundly for even suggesting that something as precious as a UWC education could be partly delivered by technology. I believe that these objections are nonsense – an example of ostrich thinking – but out of consideration

for these sensitivities I shall not mention the opportunities for taking a UWC education online again today. However I would be happy to return to discussions about growth in that direction another day!