

OVER THE COUNTER

Diploma Mills

Due diligence, according to John Bear, co-author of *Bears' Guide to Earning Degrees by Distance Learning*, is essential to curb the spread of fake degrees by "diploma mills." He believes that people "simply don't know or believe or accept how widespread and skillful the fakes have become in recent years." Some states, such as Oregon, Illinois, New Jersey and North Dakota, have passed legislation regulating the use of fake degrees; the punishment ranges from fines to prison sentences. Bear admits that this is a positive trend, however, more needs to be done.

The Internet has only made things worse, with some websites blatantly advertising fake degrees, while others purport to be real academic institutions. In response to the latter, Bear hopes "that EduCause [who registers all .edu domain names] would really regulate the use of the .edu suffix." As a comparison, in England, where some bogus universities claim to be based, only authentic British universities can receive an "ac.uk" domain.

Document falsification in China and the motives of buyers will be covered in the next issue of Insight, On-site: China. For more information on subscribing, click [here](#).

Source: "Crackdown on Diploma Mills," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 19 December 2003.

GLOBE TIPPING

Indian Airport Tips - Delhi

When traveling to India, keep in mind that the immigration procedures can be quite slow if more than one flight is arriving. This is especially true at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, where Indian citizens and foreigners must wait in the same line. Our Jennifer Menard estimates that immigration can take anywhere between 10 minutes to 1 hour. Baggage collection, on the other hand, is usually prompt (although our Mel Broitman reports a two hour wait for bags after arriving in Delhi recently on Bangladesh Biman. Mel said it was due to fog delays at this time of year that resulted in many flights arriving at the same time.)

The best method of transportation into the city from the Delhi airport is by a pre-paid taxi, which can cost between Rs. 200-350. Look for the Pre-Paid Taxi Booth in the arrival building. There are even cheaper local taxis (50% less), to the right after exiting the arrival hall. There is no airport departure tax required.

THE PLAYING FIELD

Assessing Mexican Institutions Pt. 2

In our last issue of 2003, "Assessing Mexican Institutions" ([Not-So-Foreign 2.36](#)) highlighted the need to check on the accreditation of Mexican universities to verify their academic quality. Francisco Marmolejo, Executive Director of the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) responded to Higher-Edge and informed us of further developments in the Mexican higher education system. The Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior (FIMPES) has an institutional accreditation system, although Marmolejo notes that "not all FIMPES members are accredited."

Of particular interest is the creation of COPAES (Consejo para la Acreditacion de la Educacion Superior), which accredits other academic program accrediting agencies. According to Marmolejo, "This entity oversees and provides legitimacy to agencies equivalent to ABET or AACSB for example."

For readers interested in the system of higher education in Mexico (as well as in the U.S. and Canada) CONAHEC posts periodic updates on its portal at <http://www.conahec.org/conahec/index.jsp>.

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

Australia Onwards?

Perhaps countries looking to expand their presence in international education should consider Australia's model. With several government departments and ministries working in a "whole-of-government" approach to improve the desirability of an Australian education, the country is quickly challenging the traditional United Kingdom as a destination for study abroad amongst Indian students. (Ireland and New Zealand, have taken similar approaches with great success in the Asian sub-continent.)

One of the key aspects of this approach are the close links being made between education, trade and potential immigration. Tony Crooks, Executive Director of the Australian Education Office in Washington, D.C. says "It is anticipated that the 'whole-of-government' approach will support industry by contributing to longer term sustainability in the growth of international education, underpinned by quality, diversity and immigration integrity." According to *The Economic Times*, 10,000 Indian students were in Australia in 2003, while trade between the two countries grew by nearly 42% in the past 5 years.

Source: "Australia hooked to India story, trade up 42% in 5 yrs," *The Economic Times*, 13 December 2003.