

**Remarks by Chris Spirou
President
"Hellenic American University"**

**2nd International Conference on
University Assessment
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Athens, Greece**

**"Hellenic American University": An Experiment in
Global Education**

Madame Minister, honored Speakers, distinguished guests,
ladies and gentlemen,

As the President of "Hellenic American University" and
Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Hellenic American
Union, I join Conference Chair Leonidas-Phoebus Koskos in
welcoming you to the 2nd International Conference on
University Assessment.

Three and a half years ago, on May 11, 2004, the
Legislature of the State of New Hampshire, in the United
States of America, passed a historic and unprecedented law:
an Act which created a University, chartered in the United

States of America, with its physical existence, its first campus to be located 6,000 miles away, in Athens, Greece.

The law, Chapter 94 of New Hampshire Laws of 2004 reads:

“Hellenic American University” is hereby authorized to confer degrees upon its graduates, subject to the authority of the postsecondary education commission under RSA 188-D:8, IV. The degrees shall be specified by the postsecondary education commission as provided in the RSA 292:8-h, III.”

The founding of “Hellenic American University” marked the beginning of a great cross-cultural experiment in global education: the creation of an institution of American liberal arts higher education, founded and fully operating as an American university in Greece, with its vastly different economic and cultural heritage.

The law which established “Hellenic American University” is no accident. The New Hampshire State Legislature, with full awareness and intention, adopted into law, the founders’

vision of a true American University with a global presence and a global perspective.

The University's legal existence and degree granting authority are dependent upon the laws of the State of New Hampshire.

The Postsecondary Education Commission of the State of New Hampshire, as required by law, approved the University's initial education plan. New university programs are subject to Commission review and approval. In addition, the Postsecondary Education Commission conducts annual reviews of "Hellenic American University."

"Hellenic American University" is classified by the United States Government Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt institution of higher learning.

"Hellenic American University", as an institution of public interest and public control, shares common ground with the state university system in Greece. By its legal status, "Hellenic American University" also serves as a natural

partner and valid interlocutor with public universities in Europe.

“Hellenic American University” is not an educational franchise or a branch of some other American College or University.

“Hellenic American University” is an autonomous American institution of higher learning and is accountable to regulatory public bodies and other evaluating entities.

“Hellenic American University” is accountable to society at large for the quality of academic programming, faculty and students. It is accountable for its social outreach, for its research activities, for its fiscal health and for the integrity of its policies and procedures. Above all, the University is accountable to its students.

With its public character and mandated public scrutiny, “Hellenic American University” is prepared and in fact it welcomes the opportunity to work with state universities in Europe, on research projects and on exchanges of academic programs and methods.

With our global perspective, “Hellenic American University” is active in developing cooperative working relationships with other public universities in Europe, Asia and the Americas, on research, teaching methodologies, and academic programs.

“Hellenic American University” is not in Greece only to teach or to conduct research. It is also here to be taught. It is here to converse. It is here to engage in ‘dialogue’.

Three guiding principles have shaped and continue to shape the development of “Hellenic American University”:

Excellence, Relevance, and Accessibility.

Excellence -- not only in the sense of exceptional quality, but in the sense of virtue, a capacity for compassion and tolerance and human kindness; **Relevance** – in the sense of equipping students with the skills they need to succeed in their chosen careers and to contribute to social development in their own communities and beyond; and **Accessibility**, in the sense of providing access to education for anyone who has the intelligence and desire for knowledge, regardless of financial position, social status, ethnic identity or religious beliefs.

Quality and Equality are our most important concerns. We are in search of developing a global citizen.

“Hellenic American University” is a young institution – barely three and a half years old. We have much to learn – from our students, from our counterparts in other State Universities, from our colleagues in the United States and Europe, from you, the distinguished speakers and guests of this conference.

To monitoring, assessment, evaluating and regulation entities, we offer this philosophy: "Hellenic American University" supports and embraces the efforts of regulators and their evaluations as partnership experiences, necessary to achieve educational excellence.

Eighteen months ago we participated in the first Athens International Conference on University Assessment. We believed then that assessment and evaluation are essential prerequisites to quality higher education and we believe it even more today.

"Hellenic American University" is willing and prepared to have its academic programs evaluated, its academic staff held to the highest educational standards and to become the pioneers of a system which evaluates the ultimate product of a university: the graduate.

As President of this new American University, I would be pleased to hear the praises of regulators and evaluators about the University's faculty and its academic programs.

But more so, I would simply be elated to hear from employers from around the world that in their midst is an educated jewel with a degree from "Hellenic American University."

Thank you.