New EEE Full

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With the increasing economic globalization and the re-structuring of the world political arenas, educational systems worldwide have changed rapidly in their function, curriculum and approach. The impact of globalization upon education raises concerns with endless debates on how education is being delivered, what should be taught and who should have the rights to access. Professors from the “pre-internet” era are caught with the rapid changes in the knowledge economy, whereas the younger ones are excited with the transformation from the classroom blackboard to the electronic whiteboard.

In NTU alone, we have edveNTUre for e-learning, wireless campus network for Internet connection, centralized staff link for handling e-form submission and emails to replace office memos. We are also busy catching up in commercial activities in linking with renowned institutions like MIT and Stanford. The Government is interested in positioning Singapore as a regional educational hub. Well-known institutions are establishing profit making overseas campuses and branding is also on their top priority list.

On the one hand, some of the immediate products of globalization can be seen as: replacing classroom lectures with distance learning machines; tutorial rooms with chat rooms; and a general trend of education becoming a commodity. On the other hand, the globalization of the economy encourages exploration in technological frontiers, enhances the student’s ability to acquire new knowledge and helps us disseminate information and data in a speedy manner. It also breaks the boundaries of time and space between professors and students and makes the curriculum more flexible. With the challenges of the new initiatives and global players, the new educational debates centre on the questions of how to strike a balance in our educational values and policies. Are we ready for the profound changes and the paradigm shift in the basic role of the university?