

Dear Mr. Bernard,

I have read one of your publications which was "A Brief History of American Higher Education", which was smoothly organized to provide chronological interventions in the evolution of American higher education. I was always questioning some aspects of higher education in USA such as, the freedom of students' choices, the terms that are involved in education systems (graduate degree), and others. So this text is an optimal source to answer most of my questions.

Where I am from, Saudi Arabia, we are still struggling with the weaknesses and shortcomings in our education system. I am not exaggerating if I tell you that we have most of the disadvantages that you have mentioned about American higher education before the change. While I was reading your text, I was relating the American higher education a hundred years ago with what we have today in Saudi Arabia. I have noticed that in most of your points, you focused on freeing our minds in order to be creative and innovative. In our education system this is what we are exactly missing; students are limited and confined with what their instructors teach them. To support my view I have many stories about Saudi students who have acquired their undergraduate degree in back home without any distinction. However, when they have accomplished their graduate degree in US universities they achieved a distinguished achievement. What I would like to emphasize is that the shift in American higher education was the very first step toward the creativity and innovation., which we are still missing in Saudi education. I hope if we can apply some of the strategies and methods which were mentioned in your text in our current system in Saudi Arabia.

Sincerely,  
Esam Alzahrani  
A graduate student at George Mason University  
02/14/2012