Can Ranking learn from Evaluation practices?

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1. THE CONTRADICTORY DEMANDS FOR A CHARACTERISATION OF UNIVERSITIES

STAKEHOLDERS: a network of competing interests

The Triple Helix model, Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000)

- University: (Students, Researchers, Professors, Managers)
- Government (Public authorities. relative shortage of public budgets, increasing competition between states, cut into budget deficits; Tax payers. Short term long term opposition)
- Industry: Business + economic competitiveness (external economies of knowledge and education)
The Multi-helix Model

UNIVERSITY

- Professors
- Researchers
- University Managers
- Students

INDUSTRY

- Big Business
- Local Business
- Startup

GOVERNEMENT

- National (NSI)
- Regional Local (LSI)
- NGOs

JOURNALISTS

- MEDIA

+ (governants and tax payers)
THE VARIETY OF REASONS FOR RANKING

“Our original purpose of doing the ranking

- was to find out the gap between Chinese universities and world-class universities, particularly in aspects of academic or research performance.

- It has been done for academic interests without any outside support” (Prof. Liu).
2 - RANKING vs. EVALUATION

- **Monitoring** (to verify the process of an activity; to admonish, caution and reminds)
- **Control** (to verify an experiment or an activity by duplicate it and compare)
- **Accountability** (capability of providing explanations)
- **Evaluation** (to fix the value and measure what is one position in comparison with objectives and partners)
- **Ranking** (to put elements in order and relative position; to classify according to certain criteria)
CRITERIA FOR RANKING DATA COLLECTION

Worldwide ranking objective limit the indicators to those which are already:

- 1/ existing
- 2/ comparable
- 3/ already collected.

CONSEQUENCES: basically limited to structurally rough bibliometry. The smallest part of most visible output of the complex process of knowledge management. May end into a caricatured vision of the university missions. It provides almost no possibility to draw relations between input and output ...
Criteria for evaluation

Indicators that represent a wide range of intellectual activity: from production of knowledge to its diffusion.

**CONSEQUENCES:** over complex, too much qualitative and subjective. It may only be useful for a given university, for its own purpose. External comparisons will be limited to the benchmarking of specific functions between selected universities. Evaluation is hardly adapted to global comparisons.

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**Table:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>USEFUL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Comparable</td>
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<td>Significant</td>
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<td>Feasible</td>
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- **Useful**: allows decision making both by internal and external users.
- **Relevant**: provides information that can modify or reassure the expectations of decision makers. At this point the information should be:
  - **Significant**: related to issues critical for the Universities,
  - **Understandable**: presented in a way it is easily understood by potential users
  - **Timely**: available when it is required for analysis, comparison or decision making purposes.
- **Comparable**: indicators should be proposed following generally accepted criteria for all implied organisations, in order to make comparative analysis and benchmarking possible.
- **Reliable**: The trust that users will put into these indicators requires them to be:
  - **Objective**: the value is not affected by any bias arising from the interests of the parties involved in the preparation of the information,
  - **Truthful**: the information reflects the real situation,
  - **Verifiable**: it is possible to assess the credibility of the information it provides.
- **Feasible**: Calculation of indicators should be cost-efficient. That is to say, the information required by the proposed indicator and its computation should be easily obtained. The information from the University’s information system, or the cost of modifying those systems to obtain the required information should be lower than the benefits (private or social) arising from the use of the indicator.
METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

Boundaries of the universities

Level of the institutional detail (Faculty, Department, Laboratory, Research team...)

- **Discipline vs. Institution**
- **Input-based vs. Output-based**
- **Self vs. External evaluation**
- **Qualitative vs. Quantitative ...**
## INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION

OEU Matrix for evaluation of the universities

[www.prime.org](http://www.prime.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools → Objectives</th>
<th>FUNDING</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCE</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>THIRD MISSION</th>
<th>GOVERNANCE</th>
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<td>STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES</td>
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○ **Funding**: includes all budget elements both revenues and expenses (total budget; budget structure, sources of funding, rules for funding and for management)

○ **Human Resources**: includes professors, researchers, research engineers and administrative staff, + PhDs and post docs (number, distribution, functions between research, teaching and management, turn over, visiting and foreign fellow). Human resources must be considered both as stocks (numbers of people) and as flows (human flows, mobility)

○ **Academic Outcomes**: includes articles and books, other academic publications, citations, and the knowledge embodied in PhDs being trained through research

○ **Third Mission**: concerns the linkages between the university and its non-academic partners: industry, public authorities, international organisations, NGOs and public at large (employment of alumni, patent and licences, spin-off and job creation, support of public policy, consultancy and promotion and diffusion of science and research activities)

○ **Governance**: includes the process by which the university converts its inputs (funding and human resources) into research outputs (Academic Outcomes and third mission). It concerns the management of institutions, from above the university (mode of relations with government and other finance providers) and within the university.
- **Attractiveness**: University capacity to attract the different resources (money, people, equipment, collaboration, etc.) within a context of scarcity.

- **Autonomy**: measures the university margin of manoeuvre, formally defined as the limits, established from external partners (mainly government and other finance providers), to which a university must conform.

- **Strategic Capabilities**: indicates the real ability to implement the university strategic choices.

- **Differentiation Profile**: Main features of a given university which distinguish it from the other strategic actors (competing universities and other research organizations): degree of specialisation, degree of interdisciplinarity...

- **Territorial Embedding**: Geographical distribution of university involvements, contacts, collaborations and the measure of territorial utility of the university activity...
4 - INSIGHTS FROM EVALUATION PROCESS

Ranking must reflect a minimum of diversity

New indicators
- Differentiation by discipline (including social sciences)
- Input data and input-output ratio
- Indicators for local embeddedness (global and local impact of universities)
- New teaching indicators (compared to research)
THE MISSING LINKS: RANKING AND THE GOVERNANCE OF THE UNIVERSITIES

- Ranking induces new rationales for public intervention
- It must reflect that University is increasingly embedded into a multi-actor space that modifies governance of fundamental, applied research and teaching, along with the dynamics of public sector and third mission
- This implies to consolidate a platform of quantitative data, measuring the multidimensional nature of performance,
- + to initiate a debate on the quality of data and their adaptation to the diversity of legal, financial and administrative structure of universities.
To enrich the debate in order to enrich the ranking process

- **What does mean excellence** and what are it impact on the orientation of research and teaching + on the role of university toward society?

- **How strategic is the degree of scientific diversity within globalisation** (not limited to the dual global-local debate)?

- What are the differences and specificities between **production**, **productivity** and **visibility** of science?