First international conference on world class universities (wcu-1)

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The purpose of this presentation

- A presentation on a very specific subject matter
- A contribution to the methodology of the ranking process from a planning perspective raising questions and underlining the importance of data
- To avoid a biased and distorted ranking process and false premises requires complete, extensive and reliable metrics and measures
« If we’re going to rank world universities, we will have to refine the process…
Content

- A case study: the University of Montréal and its affiliates
- Criteria for ranking universities with affiliated components
The University of Montreal and affiliates
a case study
The University of Montreal and affiliates in numbers

- 55,150 students
- 9,693 degrees
- 5,036 foreign students
- 6,009 professors, researchers, clinician educators, lecturers
- 4,183 Staff
- 283 undergraduate programs
- 381 graduate programs
- 71 doctoral programs and 1 postdoctoral program
- 5 millions books and audiovisuals
- 1,1 billion dollars operating budget
- 446 millions dollars in research revenues
The University of Montreal and affiliates
the academic structure

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

AFFILIATED SCHOOLS (2)

FACULTIES (14)

Departments (60)

FACULTY of MEDICINE

Departments (21)

Affiliated Hospitals and medical centers (27)

Research Centers, Groups, Chairs (200)
Criteria for ranking a university with affiliated components
3 criteria may be suggested for benchmarking and ranking universities with affiliated components
The first criteria or principle concerns the academia. The affiliated component must be an academic component. Namely that the affiliated components contribute to and is integral part of the academic mission of the Institution in respect to teaching, learning, mentoring, supervising, conducting research (publication and research revenues and expenses).
A second criterion

- The second criteria, which falls under the first one and confirms it, underline the necessity and obligation that the affiliated components be approved and agreed as an academic component, being acknowledged as an equivalent or of an extension of the existing faculties, schools and departments by the deciding relevant boards. This means that:

  - The programs, the curricular activities and the academic regulations are submitted and approved by the University;
  - The faculty members are nominated and appointed or receive agreement by the relevant boards;
  - The teaching/learning/mentoring/training/supervising activities as well as the research activities (publications, grants, and contracts) are being conducted and realised within the professorial mandate.
A third criterion

The third criterion concerns the process through which the two previous criteria are applied: **the concordance between the output, the throughput and the input**. What a university declares and reports as outputs and outcomes (publications, grants, prizes, awards, degrees and diplomas) should refer in rigorous conformity and concordance to the throughput (programs, learning, teaching...) and to the input (students and teachers, budget). The ratios output/input must be processed with great care and rigor.
The application of the 3 criteria have encountered at the University of Montreal 2 reporting problems
the number and quality of the scholarly articles and papers (and of the citation impacts deriving from them) published by the faculty members of the University of Montreal were in many ways questionable, inconsistent and unreliable.

After the OST had codified, harmonized and coordinated the articles reported from 8,500 scholarly journals compiled in the 3 databases of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), it appeared that 40 to 20% of the publications related to the University of Montreal might be missing.

The OST is now working with the G10 to undergo an extensive process of cleaning, harmonization and codification of the databases allowing to determine very accurately the number and quality of scientific publications produced by each Canadian university.
Reporting the activities of the clinicians

The status of clinicians: they are not employed neither paid by the University, yet they are appointed as a university professor – a condition to teach, train and supervise medical students and be eligible for grants, and also a condition to hold a position as a medical doctor in a university hospital and in an affiliated medical center.

The work load of clinicians: How do we count them, since 60 to 75% of their time is dedicated to medical practice and 40 to 25% to academic activities? How do we benchmark them and report comparable data?

The G10 members agreed then on a formula by which each university would report a proxy count, namely only those who were active in research, i.e. to count only those who in the course of the last 3 years had applied or had obtained a grant.
Concluding remarks
That’s not quite what I had in mind when I urged rational ranking methods…

Stop me before I launch another ranking process
We must applaud the initiative of Dr Liu to invite a select group of people in view of providing innovative thinking and research on the rapidly growing phenomenon of world-class universities and internationalization of university ranking.

Innovative thinking and research is indeed badly needed. The concepts, the definitions and the methodology must be refined, the databases fully validated, the goals clarified, the indicators more carefully chosen, the peer selection revisited, benchmarking and ranking refined by exploring new paradigms.

It is a strategic step for the Jiao Tong University to lead and re-appropriate such an enterprise which has been most of the time realized by non-university people, namely in North America. It belongs to the university to accept the challenge of transforming a very political venture into a genuine university project!