The Challenge of Establishing World-Class Universities

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Conclusion
to be or not to be

a WCU?
WCU health warnings...

• the rise of Asia
looking back to the past
looking ahead to the future
Key  City with highest publication output in the period 2004-2008; growth is since period 1996-2000.

- Decreased or stayed constant
- Increased 5-10 places
- Increased 10-20 places
- Increased 20+ places
WCU health warnings…

• the rise of Asia
• what is your purpose?
  – chasing rankings and national prestige?
  – search for excellence?
WCU health warnings…

• the rise of Asia
• what is your purpose?
  – chasing rankings and national prestige?
  – search for excellence?
• distortion of resource allocation
• stress of competition
• global talent war
• danger of homogenization
We need a climate in which colleges and universities are less imitative, taking pride in their uniqueness. It’s time to end the suffocating practice in which colleges and universities measure themselves far too frequently by external status rather than by values determined by their own distinctive mission.
a word of caution

- danger of homogenization
  - dare to be different
- not all institutions “world-class”
- world-class tertiary education system
money is not enough

- the most expensive universities in the world are not world-class
  - George Washington U (Washington DC)
  - Kenyon College (Ohio)
  - Bucknell U (Pennsylvania)
  - Vassar College (NY)
  - Sarah Lawrence College (NY)
it’s all about alignment
Characteristics of a World-Class University
Alignment of Key Factors

Source: Elaborated by Jamil Salmi
danger of complacency
He who waits with mouth open, hoping for roast duck to fly in, will have a very long wait. (Chinese proverb)
the road to academic excellence

• constantly challenge yourself and seek to renew your institution to keep improving

  *sense of urgency*

  – “rising above the gathering storm” (U of Illinois)
  – “change without a burning platform” (Aarhus U)
  – “expiry principle” (Olin C of Engineering)
  – “good is not good enough” (USP)
  – “if we stand still we will fall behind” (UK University Alliance)
World Class University Recipe
Lots of Talent
Plenty of Resources
A Touch of Governance
Allow to Simmer for a Long Time