vidual institutions. The strategy also acknowledged the constraints of the country's size and budget. The government seeks to hold institutions to account through a negotiated process called "Strategic Dialogue," to ensure better alignment between institutional mission and performance and overall national policy objectives. A research prioritization strategy has also been adopted, linking funding to key industrial sectors.

Today, many assumptions that have underpinned public support for higher education investment have not held true.

- In the Netherlands, a series of events led, over recent decades, to greater government involvement with the intention to make universities more productive and efficient, and to introduce the principle of long-range scientific planning. This followed concerns around institutional differentiation and student performance, especially poor retention and the inability of the system to meet the varied needs of students and labour markets. Universities and universities of applied sciences have both signed collective strategic agreements with the relevant government ministries through their associations, which have provided the framework for these agreements. The agreements, made by individual higher education institutions, include statements and targets around system structure, institutional profiles, and programs, and are linked to funding.

Time for a New Social Contract?

These examples illustrate just some ways in which growing tensions between higher education and society, often described in terms of (social) accountability vs. (institutional) autonomy, are becoming both more visible and, at times, contentious. Recent events and decisions in Hungary, India, and Turkey worryingly expose a different set of fissures. However, collectively, all these instances raise questions about higher education's role in society today, and how the "public good" is determined in practice by universities, governments, and the public.

Government "incursions" into domains traditionally associated with academic self-governance, such as focusing on performance and outcomes, is often presented as evidence of neoliberal new public management (NPM). More recently, nationalist and nativist thinking and policies have put higher education at odds with governments, which have campaigned to restrict foreigners, stem multiculturalism, and question liberal social values. These "ideological" developments have enabled the academic community to brush aside genuine criticism, thus feeding public concerns about higher education's arrogance and isolationism.

Ireland is again an interesting case in point. Failure by one university to respond to legitimate allegations of financial irregularities by whistle-blowers has led to the entire sector coming under public scrutiny. In turn, universities have argued that declining public funding has transformed public institutions into private ones, thus altering the governance model. However, in doing so, the universities have effectively recast their "public good" role as a transactional relationship—opening up a can of worms.

Over recent decades, we have witnessed a significant shift in governance arrangements, from strict regulation to steering-at-a-distance, to signs of a new social contract. The latter model involves higher education institutions and governments coming together to form a common vision with agreed outcomes. Such practices are underway in, inter alia, Australia, Hong Kong, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Ontario. The process shows the potential that different goals need not be mutually exclusive, and that being responsive to society can give the academy's own goals legitimacy in a wider sense.

Whereas the state historically provided for the needs of universities, today—in the age of globalization and near-universal higher education—higher education institutions provide for the needs of society. In this new environment, higher education can choose to engage meaningfully in helping to construct the new social contract or the state will step in—taking full responsibility to itself. ■

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"Free Speech" and "Offensive" Speech on Campus

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Threats to free speech and academic freedom are legion—from authoritarian regimes in China, Hungary, Russia, and Turkey, and Middle-East states beleaguered by religious fundamentalism, to right-wing populists who believe their cultures and communities are under attack (and

often see universities as bastions of liberalism and cosmopolitanism).

But liberals too have got in on the act. Students at Yale University and Princeton University have campaigned for campus buildings to be renamed, one of their targets being President Woodrow Wilson, the author of the "Fourteen Points," the impeccably liberal principles that ended the First World War. Following the success of students in Cape Town, students at the University of Oxford have attempted to replicate the "Rhodes must fall" campaign, although the offending Oxford statue of the late-Victorian imperialist Cecil Rhodes is a more modest affair high on the wall of Oriel College.

The final and most important change is that the student base of twenty-first century mass higher education systems is much more heterogeneous than that of the elite university systems they replaced.

Confused Political Responses

Even in democracies, political responses have been confused. For example, in the United Kingdom, the government legislated requiring university leaders to guarantee free speech for unpopular (right-wing?) speakers and resist "no-platform" campaigns that seek to exclude them. But, at the same time, it insisted that the same university leaders ban the efforts of Islamic fundamentalists to radicalize students, even inventing new categories previously unknown in democratic thought, like "nonviolent extremism."

The truth is that "free speech" and "political correctness" are best seen not as opposing principles, but as part of a spectrum. No sensible person argues that free speech is absolute: first, because no one has the right to call "fire" in a crowded movie theatre (or use racist language on a multicultural campus?); and secondly, because free speech has always been exercised within a regime of laws. Indeed, some of its most avid advocates argue that it is precisely the rule of law that guarantees free speech.

A Changing Context

Rather than attempting to establish some absolute principles, it may be more helpful to identify some trends that impact on this debate. The first is that there are, and always have been, legitimate debates about the (absolute) beneficence of science. In the past, the objection was not so much to science itself but to the uses to which it might be put. Now, some go further. Stem cell research and human genomics certainly, and arguably artificial intelligence and (some aspects of) cognitive science, are seen as raising questions about the autonomy, and even sanctity, of human existence.

A second shift has been toward a more confused, fractured, volatile, and ideologically diverse global environment. The heady days of post-1989 triumphalism, when Francis Fukuyama pronounced the "end of history," are a distant memory. Ideological struggles have revived with the rise of so-called "populism"—the election of Donald Trump as US President, the UK's decision to leave the European Union, the rise to political dominance of Putin, Erdogan, and others. Inevitably, these new discomforts are reflected on campus, and provoke sharper contests about "free speech" and "political correctness."

These are linked to a third big change, the rise of so-called "identity" politics. Traditional markers of social identity such as nationality, religion, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic class have been joined by new identifiers, some of which are (fairly) fixed, such as sexual orientation, while others are more fluid, associated with lifestyle preferences and cultural habits. The campus is often an arena in which these new more fluid, and even experimental, social markers are most pronounced. Those with nonstandard social, cultural, or even sexual preferences are no longer content to resist discrimination.

The final and most important change is that the student base of twenty-first century mass higher education systems is much more heterogeneous than that of the elite university systems they replaced. For all their faults, higher education systems, in most advanced countries, have become "rainbow" systems that reflect the diversity of the societies in which they are embedded.

This diversity has had important implications for debates about "free speech" and "political correctness." For the first time, the disadvantaged, with most to gain from a recalibration of the language permitted in these debates, are now present on campus—and often in strength. Classic liberal values, once accepted as universal and absolute, are more likely to be regarded by the former as partial and partisan. The exercise of free speech that appears to threaten their identity or culture and even their still precarious foothold in higher education can easily be interpreted as intolerable.

Responsibilities of Universities

Two conclusions can be drawn from the impact of these changes on the tone of the debate about "free speech" and "political correctness." The first is that there are no absolutes. No society has ever granted its citizens unrestricted

freedom of speech. No campus—although the university should offer a space where this freedom is exercised up to (and even a little beyond) these legally imposed and socially mandated limits—can agree that "anything goes." On the other hand, although sensitivities and vulnerabilities should be respected, there are clearly limits of the extent to which they can be indulged if free and vigorous intellectual enquiry is in danger of being seriously inhibited. We have just to be pragmatic and try to strike the right balance, which will be different in different places and in different times.

The second is that universities are, or should be, exceptionally well placed to strike these shifting balances. Free expression, in the shape of critical enquiry, is a core value in the academy. A university education designed to produce not simply technical experts but also critical citizens depends upon it. So too do a progressive science and enlightened scholarship. But moderation in language, and mutual respect within an academic community, are also core components of a college and university experience—although they should not be invoked too often to protect the thin-skinned or accidentally promote those bent on censorship.

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Postsecondary Systems, Massification, and the Research University

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The expansion of both student numbers and increasingly diverse functions of postsecondary education worldwide in the past seventy years has been unprecedented, representing a true revolution in postsecondary education. Just in the past decade or so, global enrollments have doubled. In few countries, however, has there been any comprehensive effort to create clearly defined and differentiated academic systems to serve new academic functions, to ensure that quality is maintained, or that the wide range of needs of an increasingly diverse student population are met.

As economies have become more sophisticated and globally intertwined, ever-higher levels of skills are needed to sustain them, and postsecondary education has been called on to prepare a qualified labor force. A postsecondary qualification has become a prerequisite for social mobility and entry into the skilled job market almost everywhere. The growing diversity of postsecondary institutions has responded to popular demand for access, but while the landscape has diversified, it has not been coherently differentiated.

The research university, as the apex academic institution, is central to the global knowledge economy.

At the same time, the traditional research universities around the world have come under increased pressure to educate academic staff for the expanding higher education sector, undertake research, and engage in the global knowledge networks, while also preparing professionals for leadership positions in society. Before massification, these traditional universities dominated the postsecondary sector. Now, they are typically a small minority in most countries. Yet, they are of central importance as the leading academic institutions but are under unprecedented budgetary pressures, increased demands for accountability, and global competition to be "world class." The rest of the postsecondary sector looks to these prestigious universities for leadership, but for the most part the research universities have kept to their traditional roles. They have by and large not recognized that they are an integral part of a broader postsecondary ecosystem and that they have a responsibility to provide some leadership to the broader academic community.

There is a clear need to coordinate the confused array of postsecondary institutions that have emerged everywhere. In many countries, a considerable number of new institutions are in the private sector and a growing proportion of these are for-profit. Ensuring that private postsecondary institutions work in the broader public interest and at an acceptable level of quality is of great importance.

The generally unhindered diversification that has emerged in response to market demand needs to be replaced by a deliberate effort to develop differentiated academic systems to serve the complex set of social purposes that have emerged in the past half-century. Such a system should recognize the specific roles and responsibilities of different types of institutions and ensure effective coordination and recognition of the importance of each type of school.

While research universities sit at the top of any academic system, they must recognize that they are an integral part