

nalized international students by restricting time limits on student visas, working rights, and the number of courses that they could take. Similarly, Canada's introduction of the Express Entry selection system in 2015, aiming at streamlining the visa application process and facilitating integration in the labor market, made it more competitive for international students to seek permanent residency. In both cases, the governments in power claimed to be competing for the best and brightest, while making it hard for international students to subsist or to become residents.

Looking at a range of areas such as health care, employment rules, regulations on dependents, financial aid, tuition fees, and taxation, it becomes clear that none of the countries displayed a pattern toward facilitating international student mobility. Public policy in those and other areas impact international students, and they span government agencies or ministries. Isolating policy to a single ministry overlooks the complexity required to manage issues connected to international students. Hence, coordination both across government and with the higher education sector is needed to address constraints on international students. The Prime Minister's Initiative in England and the recent strategy for international education in Australia are examples of policy initiatives that sought a cross-sectoral approach. For the most part, however, policy coordination in this area remains elusive.

CONCLUSION

If policy makers in the Anglosphere were intentionally engaging in a global race to recruit international students, one would expect to see policy changes in a certain direction. That is expected from countries that compete in a certain industry: decisive action is taken to maximize one's comparative advantage. In reality, policy changes that are consequential for the recruitment and possible retention of international students have been anything but consistent or convergent over the first 16 years in this century. While there may be similarities in the discourse governments use, invariably endorsing the ambition of universities to recruit students globally, over time policy action has followed divergent logics. In this context, international student numbers in the four countries have arguably grown *despite* rather than *because of* political and policy changes. ■

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Measuring Education Quality in Global Rankings: What's the Likelihood?

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The most influential global academic rankings—the highly influential Shanghai Academic Rankings of World Universities (ARWU), *Times Higher Education (THE)* World University Rankings, and QS Top University Rankings—have been in existence for more than a decade and are now a major force in shaping higher education worldwide. One of their key purposes is to demonstrate the world's best universities, based on their own criteria. However, they consider fewer than 5 percent of the more than 25,000 academic institutions worldwide. The rankings are influential—students make decisions on where to study; some governments allocate funds; and universities struggle to improve their position in them.

From the beginning, these rankings have focused primarily on research productivity. Reputational measures are also included in the QS and *THE* rankings, but these measures remain controversial due to low response rates that accentuate biases and limited perspective. Each survey indicator is considered independently, where multicollinearity is more persuasive—in other words, doctoral students, citations, research income, internationalization etc. are highly interdependent. Allowing for some overlap, research-related indicators constitute approximately 70 percent of the total score for QS while reputation influences 50 percent. Both ARWU and *THE* are 100 percent based on research/research-related indicators.

TEACHING/LEARNING ENTER THE RANKINGS EQUATION

Without question, teaching is the fundamental mission of most higher education institutions; with few exceptions, undergraduates comprise the majority of students enrolled in higher education worldwide. However, the “world-class” concept is derived from those universities that score highest in global rankings. This is relatively easy to explain.

Research-intensive universities tend to be the best known internationally and hence, the most recognizable in reputational surveys. Bibliometric data is easily captured, albeit that practice continues to undervalue art, humanities, and social sciences research as well as research with a regional or national orientation—especially research published in languages other than English.

Global rankings have been quick to capitalize on finding a solution to this issue by including more indicators about the quality of education and teaching. Richard Holmes pointed out that this remains “unmapped territory.” However, the problem is more fundamental than the choice of indicators. One reason teaching and learning have not been included in global rankings is the difficulty of measuring and comparing results across diverse countries, institutions, and students. In addition, there is the necessity to take account of how and what students learn, and how they change as a result of their academic experience without simply reflecting the student’s prior experience—their social capital. The focus is the quality of the learning environment and learning gain rather than the status or reputation of the institution. Thus, many individual colleges and universities seek to assess teaching quality using a variety of measures, including teaching portfolios and peer-assessment, for purposes of recruitment and promotion of faculty members. In many countries, faculty must acquire a credential in teaching and learning practice prior to, or upon, appointment. More importantly, it is misplaced to think we can measure teaching, at scale, distinct from the outcomes of learning. The concept of teaching quality as an institutional attribute is also problematic because research shows most differences occur within, rather than between, institutions.

MEASURING EDUCATION QUALITY AND STUDENT LEARNING

The debate about educational quality takes different forms in each country, but increasing emphasis is being put on learning outcomes, graduate attributes, life skills, and, crucially, what higher education institutions are contributing—or not—to student learning.

In 2011, following the success of PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), the OECD piloted its Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) project. By administering a common test to students in 17 countries, the aim was to identify and measure both good teaching and learning. Developed to challenge the prominence of global rankings based primarily on research output, AHELO proved controversial and was suspended. Another ranking alternative, PIAAC, the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies,

measures adults’ proficiency in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments—first published in 2013.

Measures of teaching quality are being developed in several nations. In 2016, England pioneered the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The initial government concept was controversial, not least because results were to be tied to funding. TEF was developed by a consortium of key stakeholders to assess undergraduate provision and will be extended to disciplinary (subject) level beginning in 2020. National testing is another method; Brazil’s *Exame Nacional de Desempenho de Estudantes* (ENADE-National Examination on Student Performance) assesses student competence in various professional areas. The exam is aimed at evaluating university programs rather than student or academic knowledge. Likewise, Colombia has developed SaberPro with similar objectives. In the United States, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), and the ETS

Measures of teaching quality are being developed in several nations.

Proficiency Profile seek to measure learning using national tests. There are also student self-reporting exercises, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and, for the community college sector, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). NSSE assesses the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally relevant activities, and how an institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum. The NSSE program has been duplicated in Australia, Canada, China, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa with similar initiatives in Japan, Korea, and Mexico.

WHAT GLOBAL RANKINGS ARE DOING

All global rankings, including the European Union’s U-Multirank (UMR), include indicators for educational quality—some more successfully than others. QS, *THE*, and U-Multirank (the latter at discipline level) use faculty-student ratio. However, due to different methods by which faculty and students are classified between disciplines and within institutions and countries, this is considered a highly unreliable indicator of educational quality. QS and *THE* both include a peer survey of teaching, but it is unclear on what

basis anyone can evaluate someone else's teaching without being in their classroom. ARWU uses Nobel Prizes/Field Medals awarded to alumni and faculty as a proxy for educational quality—which is clearly ridiculous.

THE has just launched its "Teaching Quality Ranking for Europe" drawing on the experience of the *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education* College Rankings. Fifty percent of that ranking is based on the *WSJ/THE* student survey and another 10 percent on the academic reputational survey. It also allocates 7.5 percent of the final score to the number of papers published and 7.5 percent to the faculty–student ratio. The student surveys appear to draw from the American NSSE methodology, but there is considerable debate about the use of such surveys on an international comparative basis without ensuring a representative sample and accounting for differences among students and the shortcomings of self-reported data. *THE* also uses the proportion of female students (10 percent) as a measure of inclusivity, but this is questionable, given that female students accounted for 54.1 percent of all tertiary students in the EU 28 as of 2015. Thus, it is worth noting how few underlying measures have anything to do with actual teaching—even if it is defined broadly.

CONCLUSION

Despite some scepticism about the methodological and practical aspects of a global ranking methodology, the race is on to establish one. There are various actions by ranking organizations, governments, and researchers to identify more appropriate ways, using more reliable data, to measure and compare education outcomes, graduate employability, university–society engagement, etc. In a globalized world with mobile students, graduates, and professionals, we need better information on how to evaluate an individual's capabilities and competencies.

But one of the lessons of rankings is that, without due care, indicators can lead to unintended consequences. We know that student outcomes will determine future opportunities. But conclusions based on simplistic methodologies could further disadvantage students who could and should benefit most, if universities become more selective and focus on students most likely to succeed in order to improve their position in global rankings.

Thus, it is clear that creating reliable international comparisons of educational outcomes is extremely challenging. Clearly, assessing teaching and learning is central to determining the quality of higher education, but using current methodologies to produce comparative data is foolhardy at best. Rather than deceiving ourselves by believing that rankings provide a meaningful measure of education quality, we should acknowledge that they simply use inadequate indi-

cators for commercial convenience. Or, better yet, we could admit, for now at least, that it is impossible to adequately assess education quality for purposes of international comparisons. ■

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World-Class Universities and the Common Good

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This article is a revised version of "A shift to the global common good in higher education," by Lin Tian, Yan Wu, and Nian Cai Liu (2017) in University World News; and it is also based on CWCU's unpublished book chapter for the WCU-7 conference "World-class universities: A double identity related to global common good(s)," by Lin Tian.

Globalization and the development of internationalization, the advancement of science and technology, the enhancement of life-long learning, and trends toward marketization and privatization all contribute to constant changes in the global higher education landscape. Against this backdrop, the term "public good(s)," which once dominated the field of higher education, is now being questioned. In 2015, UNESCO published a report titled *Rethinking Education towards a Global Common Good*, which proposes "common good" as a constructive alternative to "public good(s)" (the latter being traditionally considered closely associated with education and its outputs), with a distinct feature of *intrinsic value* and *sharing participation* (UNESCO, 2015). This article explores the relationship between world-class universities (WCUs) and this newly proposed notion of global common good(s). It states that WCUs, as a network or group, themselves play a role as global common good, and produce and contribute to global common good(s) benefiting not only individual students, but also the larger global society.