ranked in the Academic Rankings of World Universities by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and five ranked in the QS World-Class University Rankings. What do these rankings mean? The results of international university rankings vary according to selected indicators and weights. The U-Multirank does not provide comprehensive rankings, and some rankings now allow users to choose indicators and weights. It is becoming common for ranking providers to publish subject-based rankings and other rankings based on specific themes.

The golden age of university ranking providers has likely passed. Users, including universities and governments, now have more options for searching ranking results that fit their purposes. If it works for a better understanding of the rich context of universities, then it is good. However, further convergences or standardization of diversified university characteristics should be avoided through the efforts of various stakeholders. ■

# Revisiting the Academic Marketplace

**Maria Yudkevich**

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For many decades, our image of the university was associated with the metaphor of the ivory tower. While this metaphor is deeply embedded in our minds, we do not challenge it. However, it is neither ivory nor tower anymore. Indeed, university identity and borders become more and more unclear and illusory. There are several reasons for that.

First, new teaching and learning technologies challenge the university monopoly on both fundamental and applied knowledge. The number of students that follow courses on major online educational platforms grow exponentially, and faculty in many universities have to think about adjusting their courses in a way that they are still attractive to students. While advantages of a strong university in the provision of teaching services are evident, massive middle-tier institutions must identify how to compete for the attention of prospective students—not only with other universities but also with online providers. With lower transaction costs of combining curriculum from different providers in different universities, will the best and most demanding students still enroll in one university or will they combine experiences from different universities?

Second, traditionally junior faculty hired to tenure-track positions had a good chance of obtaining tenure. Today, chances are substantially lower. The share of permanent positions is getting significantly smaller in many countries and the age of obtaining a first stable position is increasing.

The monopoly of universities in producing basic research is also challenged by nonuniversity research organizations and corporations. These organizations compete for the best scholars and offer them competitive conditions—in some cases, including long-term employment—both in terms of salaries and opportunities for research.

Finally, there is an increasing pressure of productivity performance criteria and the need for constant search of external funding opportunities. This pressure may negatively affect academic norms of excellence, which assume the intrinsic motivation for the search of new knowledge and push universities toward considering faculty more as employees with clear performance indicators than as a community of scholars.

Massification of higher education leads to a substantial growth in a number of universities and also contributes to their diversity. Will universities from different parts of the quality continuum still recognize each other as species of one type in 20 years? Will there be much in common between top-tier research universities and those elsewhere in the academic hierarchy? Are we about to have traditional research universities becoming rare exceptions among numerous institutions of "used-to-be-university organizations"?

Since universities have been among the most stable organizations across the centuries, we might expect they will exist into the future. However, the questions are what will be their borders, how will their organizational identity be defined, and will the best and brightest minds be willing to come to work there. ■

# The Global Knowledge Society: Conflict Between Instrumental and Principled Reason?

**Pavel Zgaga**

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Within a few decades after its creation, the concept of the knowledge society is no longer an exclusive concept of the social sciences; it became common in politics, the media, and everyday language. It has gained new meanings and interpretations, even opposing definitions and uses, thus raising a number of questions. For example, what consequences does it bring for traditional forms of knowledge, such as academic knowledge?

Academic knowledge, recognized and appreciated for centuries, has gotten a new accent that may be well illustrated in a frequent phrase: "This is only academic knowledge." The attribute "only" expresses certain reluctance. It suggests that in addition to the "traditional" academic knowledge there is yet another knowledge—"modern" knowledge of higher value. It is promoted as "useful," "effective," and "productive," as opposed to "useless," "abstract," and "theoretical," that is, "only academic" knowledge. Academics around the world, especially those who work in the humanities and social sciences, are more and more frequently placed in a position to prove the "significance," "relevance," and "usefulness" of their allegedly suspicious "traditional" research. Did knowledge, for the sake of knowledge, become an endangered species in the knowledge society?

The knowledge society appreciates "useful knowledge," which is characterized by a high degree of *reliability*. Today, this kind of knowledge drives the economy. In the knowledge society, risk has been transferred to the managers, while reliability and certainty are expected from "knowledge workers." Useful knowledge, produced by them, is based on a specific research endeavor that is restricted to *certainties* only. This knowledge is being produced on campuses worldwide but also elsewhere: the production of "useful knowledge" is increasingly expanding into nonuniversity institutes and commercial enterprises.

Throughout their history, universities have been a space that permitted and encouraged another kind of research endeavor, which cannot be restricted to certainties only. Universities promoted themselves as places of intellectual confrontation—with the unknown spaces. Research confrontation with these dark spaces is confrontation with *uncertainty, with the unknown*. This is what really attracts a true researcher. Unfortunately, knowledge that is the outcome of this kind of research endeavor is today easily considered "useless."

But principled and instrumental knowledge, if we use a different set of words, are not a necessarily mutually exclusive forms of knowledge. They are just two forms of knowledge: two out of several epistemologies. One of the challenges universities face today is the profane interpretations of the concept of the knowledge society, which generate conflicts and a hierarchical relationship between "useful" and "*only* academic" knowledge. From a higher education perspective, it is therefore necessary to retheorize and reconceptualize the idea of the knowledge society—including criticism of its normative and ideological dimensions. This issue has major implications for the purposes of higher education, as well as the mission of higher education institutions.

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# The Carnegie Classification of American Higher Education: More—and Less—Than Meets the Eye

**Philip G. Altbach**

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The Lumina Foundation and Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Education will be taking over the important Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Lumina announced that its Degree Qualifications Profile will inform the 2015 edition of the classification. This development is yet another step away from the original intent of the classification—to provide an objective and easy-to-understand categorization of American postsecondary institutions.

In recent years, the Carnegie Foundation made its categories more complex: in part to suit the foundation's specific policy orientations at the time, and in part to reflect the increased complexity of higher education institutions. As a result, the classification became less useful as an easy yet reasonably accurate and objective way to understand the shape of the system, and the roles of more than 4,500 individual postsecondary institutions. Among the great advantages of the original classification were its simplicity and its objectivity, and the fact that it did not rank institutions but rather put them into recognizable categories. Unlike the *U.S. News and World Report* and other rankings, the Carnegie Classification did not use reputational measures—asking academics and administrators to rank competing colleges and universities.

It is not clear how the classification's new sponsors will change its basic orientation, and its new director says that the 2015 version will not be fundamentally altered. Yet, giv-