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What implications for Japanese HEIs?

– comments on the three presentations –



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The three presentations – main characteristics

- Practices of three countries (regions)
 - very different contexts
 - market-oriented
 - public, policy-oriented
 - international environment ...
 - very different approaches
 - retention rate
 - student evaluation
 - non-quantitative approaches ...

Presentation 1: California, US (D. A. Dowell)

- US context – public policy emphases
 - contribution to the development of the local community
 - under-represented students (minorities)
 - retention/graduation rate
- CSULB Highly Valued Degree Initiative
 - “All goals are specific and quantitative” (s.18)
 - emphasis on data

- Some questions:
 - Ways to support students for completion?
 - many efforts by staff (academic and non-academic)
 - necessary change of the organisational culture
 - Effect of pressure for improvement of graduation rate on the quality?
 - How about learning outcomes?
(not on the topics today)
 - Is graduation rate really important?
 - cf. Duru-Bellat, M. (2006). *L'inflation scolaire: les désillusions de la méritocratie*. Paris: Seuil. (デュリュ=ベラ, マリー・林昌宏訳 (2007) 『フランスの学歴インフレと格差社会: 能力主義という幻想』明石書店)

Presentation 2: Uni. Ballarat, Australia (T. Walker)

- Teaching intensive university
- Market-oriented approach
 - Emphasis on students' perceptions of their learning experiences
- eVALUate
 - Extensive use of student evaluation and other data
 - unit survey
 - teaching survey
 - 5 star rating

- Some remarks
 - Seven indicators
 - simple, avoid overburdening
 - Enough for rating units?
 - Many technical issues
 - ex. Incomparable datasets
 - diversity in number and rate of responses
 - difficult to read data?
 - How is the system accepted in the university?

	Enrolment	Responses	Response Rate
	64	22	34%
	12	6	50%
	32	16	50%
	60	35	58%
	60	16	27%
	54	10	19%
	14	5	36%
	23	10	43%
	3	1	33%
	17	2	12%
	5	1	20%
	64	22	34%
	3	1	33%
	22	6	27%
	1	0	0%
	3	0	0%
	20	2	10%
	10	3	30%

Presentation 3: Europe (H. T. Jensen)

- Diversity of systems in spite of Bologna Process
 - “A single set of narrowly defined standards for HE is not desirable ...” (s. 22)
 - “There is no single definition of quality or excellence in higher education (s. 24)
- Quality culture
 - “Create or develop a quality awareness” (s. 3)
 - “A shared concept of quality among the university community (leadership, students & staff)” (s. 25)

- Definition of “quality culture” by EUA
 - “shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitments toward quality”
 - “a structural/managerial element with defined processes that enhance quality and aim at coordinating efforts”
- How is it accepted?
 - promoted by the management
 - scepticism among academic staff
 - a kind of management tool
 - “Quality has to be controlled by the leadership.”
 - (s. 3)

- Learning outcomes (student-centred learning)
 - emphasis placed by Bologna Process, combined with Copenhagen process in vocational education
 - “Still much to be done” (s.34)
- cf. Bologna Process Stocktaking Report
 - difficulty related to learning outcomes
 - many misunderstandings about learning outcomes

Implications for Japanese HEIs

- The Japanese context
 - high access rate to HEIs (nearly 60%)
 - high graduation rate (around 90%)
 - requirement for learning outcomes of students
 - two factors
 - access conditioned traditionally by entrance examinations, which no longer function for many HEIs
 - decline of in-house training in enterprises
 - demand for definition, evaluation, certification ... of learning outcomes by MEXT (Ministry of Education)
 - cf. 2005 Central Council for Education report on undergraduate education (中教審学士課程答申)

- What approaches are suited for Japanese HEIs to assure their educational quality?
 - Impossible (almost) measurement of learning outcomes
 - Quantitative approaches
 - promoted in the US and Australia
 - not recommended in Europe
 - little experience, still to be developed, in Japan
 - to avoid overburdening
 - “Quality Culture”
 - a very attractive idea, but ambiguous
 - reflecting diverse institutional situations in Europe
 - difficulty in creating “shared” values, beliefs, ... towards quality

- Necessity for an entire institutional governance reform
 - if we are to
 - develop “quality culture”
 - use data, but we need
 - an organisational culture of data usage, firmly recognising their limits, which should develop at the same time as IR functions
- Development of trust
 - between leadership and staff
 - among staff
 - between leadership/staff and students

- Necessary support for wide-range of students' experiences
 - important experiences outside of classes
 - cf. Light, R. J. (2001). *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

“... learning outside of classes, especially in residential settings and extracurricular activities such as the arts, is vital. When we asked students to think of a specific, critical incident or moment that had changed them profoundly, four-fifths of them chose a situation or event outside of the classroom.”