The increasing expectation of relevance for higher education and the academic profession: Some reflections on the case of Mexico

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1. Introduction

During the last decades the world has experienced an intense and complex series of events that can be characterised, although quite simplistically, by a globalisation-regionalisation dynamic in which knowledge and information technology are playing a growing central role. Changes are taking place in many different parts and aspects of the world, but they are not, as some would have expected, simple or, in some cases, inclusive and positive. The recent invitation by UNESCO (2005) to help build societies of knowledge constitutes a reminder of such a situation.

With changes taking place at the societal level, it is no wonder that higher education has also been in a state of flux. With the increasing economic role of knowledge and its potential contribution to the marketisation and democratisation processes taking place in many countries, higher education has regained attention from a variety of international agencies, several of which have generated reports dealing both with its current state and with the direction in which it should move (e.g., Task Force on Higher Education and Society 2000; UNESCO 2005). There is, in short, a growing expectation regarding higher education relevance, and so the winds of change have been impacting higher education all over the world and, consequently, the academic profession that lies at its core. Such situation is no different for Mexico.

In this paper we briefly describe the recent evolution of Mexican higher education and, in that context, explain the reasons (drivers) why the expectations that Mexicans have regarding higher education relevance have increased along that same period. Then, we discuss four challenges that the Mexican academic profes-
sion needs to confront and solve, if it is to contribute more significantly to the increasing relevance that higher education is expected to have for the country and, more concretely, for its inhabitants’ well-being. We believe that the challenges identified constitute issues that need to be attended and, to that extent, we hope this essay will contribute to the discussion of what needs to be done in order to strengthen the academic profession in our country, without which the future of Mexico will be in jeopardy.

2. Recent Evolution of Mexican Higher Education

As Table 1 shows, Mexican higher education has grown impressively during the last four and a half decades. While in 1960 there were 78 higher education institutions, by 2004 there were 2,074. Concerning students the growth has been equally large: in 1960 78.8 thousand students were enrolled in a licensure programme, but in 2004 there were about 2384.9 thousand students, representing an approximate enrolment rate within the corresponding age group, respectively, of 2.7 and 22.0 per cent in those same years. Working with such students, in 1960 there were around 10.8 thousand faculty positions, among which the full-time academic was practically non-existing. By 2004 251.7 thousand faculty positions were reported, and of them, in 2003, 27.2 per cent were full-time (Urbano-Vidales, Aguilar-Sahagún, and Rubio-Oca and Rubio 2004). There have been other major changes as well, such as the increment in student enrolment in private institutions, which changed from 13.8 to 32.7 per cent of all students in higher education in 1960 and 2004, respectively, and the female enrolment participation, which arose from almost none in 1960, to 50.3 per cent in 2004.

In addition to the above mentioned quantitative aspects related to institutions, Mexican higher education institutions have also changed along important qualitative aspects. So, for example, public institutions are now more diverse, including 2-year institutions, technical universities, as well as indigenous oriented intercultural universities. Also, private higher education institutions have, particularly after 1990, increased their number largely by way of small and in many cases low-quality institutions which have been described as demand-absorbing institutions (Muñoz Izquierdo et al. 2004).
Table 1: Recent Evolution of Mexican Higher Education, 1960-2004.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>115.0</td>
<td>307.0</td>
<td>776.0</td>
<td>1250.0</td>
<td>2047.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (thousands)</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>257.0</td>
<td>935.8</td>
<td>1252.0</td>
<td>2047.9</td>
<td>2384.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty positions (thousands)</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>134.4</td>
<td>208.7</td>
<td>251.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment rate of age cohort</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private enrolment</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female enrolment participation</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of students in Mexico City</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country’s population (millions)</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>103.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Anexo del Sexto Informe de Gobierno 2006 (2006; p. 037, 039, 040).
2 Grediaga Kuri, Rodríguez Jiménez y Padilla González (2004; Anexo Estadístico, Cuadro 2.1) In the case of students and faculty positions, the corresponding figures are for the licensure (undergraduate) level. Enrolment rate and female participation figures correspond really to 1984.
4 SEP (2005; p. 142).

At the same time that the previous changes have taken place, the relationship between public higher education and the Mexican state has changed significantly, mainly along four dimensions intimately related between them. First, and probably the central component of the larger set of changes, while budget appropriations before the early 1980s were based upon the reported number of students and personnel working in an institution and, more importantly, an exchange between the institutions’ leaders, the political groups in which they participate, and the officials in charge of administering the budget, after the mid 1980s public revenues have increasingly depended on the number of students attending a particular institution, but now with the great difference that such number, as well as that of the institution’s personnel, are highly supervised cross-checked. Such “non-reducible” appropriations, on the other hand, have been increasingly complemented by addi-
Second, while there is a tradition of considerable autonomy awarded to public state universities, and there used to be a considerable discretion in relation to the hiring of personnel and the opening of educational programmes (Levy 1980), after the mid-1980s the federal Undersecretariat of Higher Education has closely supervised the hiring of new faculty and has exerted some degree of control over educational programmes by way of favouring the channelling of funds to accredited higher education programmes.

Third, previous to the mid-1980s there was very little concern about results, impact and accountability of higher education performance. Nowadays, in contrast, there is an evaluation environment that includes several evaluations systems and agencies that work with various aspects and actors of higher education institutions (e.g., educational programmes, faculty, and students). While the incorporation of these evaluation and accreditation practices has been a major development in the manner by which public higher education institutions are coordinated, and several important positive consequences have emerged from it, the incorporation of such schemes is still in its initial phases (Brunner et al. 2006; Mendoza Rojas 2002). However, the emphasis put on measurement has also had undesirable collateral effects, as aspects central to higher education institutions have been left out because they are not easily measurable or are not considered in the evaluation schemes implemented by the financing agencies.

Fourth and finally, the governance of Mexican higher education institutions used to have, before the mid-1980s, important participation of unions and faculty bodies, as well as of student organisations. Since then, and associated with the use of the budget as a steering instrument, there has been an increased influence on decision making by the managerial levels. At the same time, there has been a decrement in faculty participation in decision-making.

3. On the Relevance of Mexican Higher Education

Initially provided to a small proportion of the population that would assume leadership roles in the professions and in the public sphere, Mexican higher education has grown impressively during the last four and a half decades. Although such growth was initially a response to the political unrest that the 1968 student movement left behind, as well as associated with the provision of legitimate and selective means for social mobility, nowadays there is an increasing consensus, in the state’s discourse if not always at the level of its initiatives, that higher education is highly relevant to the country’s future. In general, Mexican higher education relevance is currently understood largely in terms of its contribution to the solution of social problems such as employment, job creation and specialised training (work force training), research and development (economic competitiveness), the inclu-
sion of marginalised segments of the population into modernity (promotion of social mobility and equity attainment), and the strengthening of the Mexican democracy. This situation is not exclusive of Mexico, as much the same can be said of other countries, especially those in a developmental stage. In general, higher education has gained recognition for its potential contribution to society at large and, therefore, it is expected to increase its relevance in the near future.

In Mexico as in other countries, an increased expectation of relevance for higher education has been driven by a complex set of internal and external factors. We next discuss briefly the most salient drivers, of which the first three are common to many countries, while the last four are somehow more characteristic of Mexico.

First, the increasing centrality of knowledge to a nation’s economic activity and competitiveness. As commented widely, knowledge is a key element in increasing economic productivity and the possibilities that a product or service will be able to compete, survive and thrive in the current markets. In this sense, countries are advancing various strategies to increase higher education enrolment rate, focus on areas closely related to the productive sectors, and promote and stimulate scientific research and technology developments closely associated with the economic activity. In addition to its contribution to a country’s economic sphere, knowledge is also central for a society in the process of becoming an integrated set of knowledge societies (UNESCO 2005).

Second, an ever-present globalisation process by which goods, services and funds travel rapidly all over the world and with less and less barriers. In such a situation higher education institutions acknowledge that their programmes are to “produce” graduates capable not only to serve local needs and demands, but also be sensitive to international calls for work pertinent to them. So, for a country to have a competitive higher education system it must take into account international standards of quality and performance. Although there are serious concerns about the influence of international tendencies over the local relevance of higher education, there is no doubt that some Mexican higher education institutions, both public and private, are taking important steps along this line of development. For countries not among the most developed ones the situation represents the dilemma of how to be local, national and global at the same time or “globacal” (Marginson and Rhoades 2002).

Third, the displacement of a socially-oriented state by one dominated by a market perspective in which competition for scarce resources is now the norm. The people’s well-being has shifted from being a state responsibility to constitute a consequence of individual performance in a world dominated by market forces. Under these new conditions people have to compete in the job market so they can earn a living, and such competition has become increasingly dependent upon individuals who are able to provide evidence of their competences or, at least, of their potential for learning. Higher education credentials are therefore increasingly
being asked as a prerequisite for being considered for a job in the formal sector and, beyond such an economic function, for being included into the dynamics of a modern and global world (Tedesco 2000). Under these conditions the emergence of non-traditional providers of higher education services represent a growing competition for traditional higher education institutions.

Fourth and more closely related to the situation of Mexico, there is an inequitable situation of the country in key aspects of its life, such as income, culture, education, and significant participation in public decision making. While providing access and promoting success in higher education, specially for people in underserved groups, will not eliminate by itself the above asymmetries, it is expected that allowing for more people to attend higher education will facilitate their full involvement into the economic, social and political life of the country.

Fifth, a general perception that education, and higher education in particular, is key to social mobility and inclusion. While the groups placed at the top of the economic, social and political pyramids have since years ago acknowledged the value of higher education in this regard such expectation has extended itself and has been assumed by larger proportions of the population, including, quite significantly, those citizens with very low income.

Sixth, a general perception that public higher education relevance and quality have decreased, particularly after the very intense expansion period of the 1970s. Being largely public before the 1980s, higher education functioning was negatively impacted by the growth of the sector and by the early 1980s economic crisis. So, after 1980 public higher education quality was seen (until very recently) as low in comparison with pre-1980s levels and so a door was open for the private sector to improve its image and standing. Under these circumstances private higher education institutions attracted considerable more students. A dramatic reduction of state funding, the consequences of an indiscriminated growth policy (e.g., in faculty profiles and student learning) and the lack of jobs for higher education graduates, all contributed to a widespread perception that the quality and social relevance of public Mexican higher education dropped significantly.

Seventh, the increasing perception that the country viability requires a significant change in the structure of its economic activity, which in turn requires improving the educational profile of its population. Mexican economy has been supported during the last decade mainly by oil, remittances from Mexicans immigrants working in the United States, tourism, and by the assembly and manufacturing industry. In an effort to attract more foreign investment, the idea has been spread that, whatever the case may be, revenues depend in an important degree on the qualification level of the work force. Research and technology development have also been identified as critical for national economic development, but financial and human resources are scarce. In addition, Mexican democracy requires a much more active, participatory and critical citizenship, and some observers have
highlighted the potential role that higher education could play in promoting such
development among their students, personnel and the public in general.

So, it is now common place to accept that Mexican higher education has to
train professionals and help form citizens; provide continuing education courses to
professionals in service; provide its surrounding community with cultural offer-
ings, perform research, technology and, in general, contribute to the economic and
social development of its context. All of these responsibilities, on the other hand,
are to be assumed in a changing environment were there are new financing
schemes dictated by the state, a tighter evaluation and accountability set of regula-
tions, more diverse institutions and students, a stronger managerial segment within
higher education institutions and, very importantly, working with a faculty that is
still characterised by its limited professional profile. Indeed quite a demanding set
of tasks in the context of a not so impressive set of working conditions.

4. Main Challenges Facing the Mexican Academic Profession

As a central actor of a national effort to increase and improve higher education
services, Mexican faculty have gone through a major change process during the
last four and a half decades (Gil-Antón et al. 1994). As a central characteristic of
the professional level with which they first enter the academic profession one can
observe the degree with which full-time are hired. According to data collected in a
national survey carried out around 2001-2002, before 1970 2.0 per cent of faculty
hired into a full-time position held a doctorate degree; from 1970 to 1984 that
figure dropped to 1.0 per cent; in the period 1985-1990 the corresponding figure
was 2.5 per cent; in 1991-1996 the figure was 6.7 per cent, and in 1997-2001 the
figure had reached 11.8 per cent (Grediaga-Kuri, Rodríguez-Jiménez, and Padilla-
González 2004). Although the proportion of all full-time faculty that hold a doc-
torate degree was in 2004 considerable larger, around 19.0 per cent in the public
state universities (Urbano-Vidales, Aguilar-Sahagún, and Rubio-Oca 2004), the
previous figures speak still, of a weak offering of highly trained professionals
aspiring to enter into the academic profession.

In the face of a higher education system that has been growing at the rates
mentioned above and, at the same time, under strong pressures to improve the
quality of their work, Mexican faculty as a whole (with certain important excep-
tions) are now expected to perform a larger set of activities: teaching, research,
participation in the institution’s collegial life, administrative work, participation in
technology development, counselling and taking a central role in service activities,
both to the productive and social sectors. The adding up of all these responsibili-
ties have not come without stress (Aguirre-Lora 1988) and some discussion re-
garding the potential conflicting nature of some of these activities (Garritz-Ruiz
1997). Looking at all these changes in faculty work, Gil-Antón (2000b) has ques-
tioned whether Mexican academics have participated in them as actors or objects.
Moreover, the context in which the above tasks are to be performed have also changed. Among its main characteristics are the following: more students to attend, internal and external to the institution performance-based economic incentives, professional development programmes stressing the attainment of formal degrees rather than competences for their actual work, in many instances less than ideal working conditions (office spaces, communication facilities, base salaries, etc.), a highly rigid and segmented academic job market and a career structure that is not well defined.

So, the Mexican academic profession has come to a situation characterised, on the one hand, by stronger expectations of relevance and, on the other, by a set of conditions that make it very difficult to fulfil those expectations. As in many areas of public policy, the alternatives to the tensions implicit in this situation are not simple, and their pertinence is not always evident in the short run. It is contended here that for Mexican faculty to be in a position to answer more meaningfully to the expectations of relevance on their work, the following four main challenges need to be confronted.

In the first place, Mexican faculty need to continue their specialised training beyond the point of the attainment of a formal higher degree than the vast majority holds at this moment. In this regard two main issues need to be confronted. One, faculty training and professional development need to be re-conceptualised. Some programmes such as PROMEP (Programme for the Improvement of the Professoriate, as for its name in Spanish) and the internal merit-pay systems that public higher education institutions have in place, have promoted an atmosphere in which the goal, both institutionally and at the individual level, is to obtain a higher degree in the fastest possible way, and without necessarily much respect for traditional academic values (Gil-Antón 2000a). Of course, this is not a generalised situation, but informal evidence suggests that some research needs be done in this respect to complement the quite positive data provided by the Undersecretariat of Higher Education in this respect (Urbano-Vidales, Aguilar-Sahagún, and Rubio-Oca 2006). In contrast to such approach, higher education institutions need to create the conditions for their academics to hold a degree level appropriate to the mission of the institution in which they work, the disciplinary area where they are located, and the particular tasks they perform. More importantly even, once the faculty had attained whatever degree is pertinent under the above considerations, higher education institutions need to keep in place strong, meaningful and effective faculty-support systems, including professional development opportunities that consider faculty in the context of the institution, their profession and themselves as persons (Wheeler and Schuster 1990). Without doubt, given that by 2005 about 58 per cent of all faculty held as their highest degree a licensure (Brunner et al. 2006), many of them need to work towards a higher degree, but such work needs to be carefully coordinated if it is to contribute substantively both to the individual academic and his institutional work. Being aware of figures as the one
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just mentioned can also help understand why Mexican faculty are still very local and little international in scope.

Two, the professionalisation process requires a clarification of the roles, responsibilities and particular tasks that academics are to perform in the higher education institutions where they work. A most evident implication of the above statement is that higher education institutions need, instead of the 27.7 per cent reported for 2005, more full-time faculty to be able to provide all the services that are expected from them (Brunner et al. 2006). On the other hand, it is our impression that public and institutional policies and practices are, through a diversity of means,pressing for academics to perform, regardless of the academic setting in which they work, the discipline that they cultivate and the mission of their institution, under an ideal model of teaching-research-service, which we know that doesn’t hold for the vast majority of individual faculty members, including those working in the most developed countries (Fairweather 1997). Additionally and in the context of scarce resources, there has been a tendency for the administration to assign faculty tasks that would (should) normally be performed by other professionals or, at the least with the support of other professionals. Such is the case, for example, with extra-academic student mentoring (Galaz-Fontes, Duarte-Godoy, and Martinez-Stack 2006) and non-academic fund raising. Another issue regarding the challenge of the continuing professionalisation of the Mexican academic profession is that as such it doesn’t appear to hold a high level of professional autonomy in the sense that the selection, promotion and permanence of colleagues are to a great extent perceived and dependant upon other institutional actors (Galaz-Fontes and Viloria-Hernández 2004). Finally, while faculty positions in public institutions come with a good deal of stability, such is not generally the case in the private sector, a situation that doesn’t facilitate assuming a professional role at such workplaces.

A very important second challenge for the Mexican academic profession is that it needs better and more homogeneous working conditions. A particular pressing situation is that of faculty’s income and the way its sources are structured. In the case of full-time faculty working in the public sector the current situation is such that there are three main sources of income, all of which are important in order for the faculty to maintain an adequate income level. The three income sources are those of the institution’s salary, the institution internal merit pay system and, for those doing research, an external merit-pay system associated with such activity. While merit-pay systems are not something strange to academic work, the problematic issue in the Mexican case is that the salary base is, in many cases, the smallest portion of the income of an academic, reaching down up to 30 per cent for those in the highest levels of the merit-pay structures (Brunner et al. 2006). Under such circumstances, where the incentive component of faculty’s compensation has transformed itself into an indispensable part of their normal income, it has been observed how faculty’s actual work becomes more responsive to short-term
and criteria external to the institution, rather than to their local work setting (Suárez-Zozaya and Muñoz-García 2004).

There are other academic working conditions that need to be attended for faculty work to be as productive as it can be. Infrastructure, classrooms, laboratories, equipment, and office spaces are among the most evident, specially now that there has been a great effort in bringing into higher education institutions more students. Additionally, faculty work needs to be clarified and accepted that in some institutions there should be other professionals to support the educational experience of students (counsellors, learning centres professionals, research grant specialists, etc.). Another working condition that needs to be improved is faculty evaluation. Faculty need to be confronted with the impact of their work and with alternatives of how to improve it, and these tasks are a central component of evaluation systems, which need to go beyond being a facilitator for an academic to improve its income.

A third major challenge that the Mexican academic profession faces is the structuring of an academic career. Until very recently the recruitment, entrance, promotion, permanence, and retirement of academics in Mexican higher education institutions has been the result of very specific conditions like the need to attend more students and even political considerations. Such conditions have not been necessarily associated with substantive academic criteria and sound evaluation considerations. In public institutions there are rules in place since some time ago, but the actual dynamics of the academic career is still driven by factors going beyond the merit logic that lies at the bottom line of what is usually thought of as an academic career. Moreover, in the context of federal programmes targeted at improving faculty’s credentials and profiles, fulfilling formal requirements (e.g., having a graduate degree) have transformed, from being an element in a larger evaluation context, into the main evaluation criterion.

The weakness of a clearly defined academic career under the ruling of institutional norms has been intensified by the way in which the academics’ income is structured to the extent that internal institutional rules are usually overridden by the way pecuniary benefits are distributed. In particular, the way merit-pay systems work have diminished the possibility for local collegiality, something essential of a true professional body of academics. Additionally, usually merit-pay systems are not able to take into account the various missions that different institutions (and academic units within institutions) might have and, consequently, the diverse roles of the academics that work in them. While income is without doubt an important component of an academic career, it is counter-productive in the long run if it becomes its principal driver.

A particular situation that the Mexican academic profession needs to consider currently is the retirement, during the following ten to twenty years, of all those faculty that were hired during the 1970 higher education growth period. Nowadays, there are no attractive conditions for retirement and, therefore, many aca-
demics will delay their retirement as much as possible, which is something that will most probably complicate the replacement process. Unfortunately, few institutions have analyzed recently the structure of their academic career (Gil-Antón et al. 2005).

Finally, if we see higher education institutions as demanding professionals to perform a particular set of scholarly tasks relevant to their particular missions, and academics as the supply of those professionals, it is obvious why several scholars of the academic profession have proposed as one lens for its study the use of the market concept (Ordorika 2004). Under this perspective the study of the academic labour market helps us to identify factors and dynamics that can help explain and improve the conditions of the academic profession. We have previously discussed income in the context of working conditions, so we will not touch again this topic, although it is a most important element that should be kept in mind when analyzing the academic labour market.

In the case of Mexico the current academic labour market is clearly divided into two types; the public and the private which, in turn, are segmented by type of contract: full- versus part-time. The part-time faculty market is largely determined locally by higher education institutions and it responds to the demand and supply of local professionals to attend, the majority of occasions, teaching activities, although it is not uncommon to have part-time academics that, by virtue of several part-time contracts, are in fact “full-time” faculty. While part-time faculty are not usually involved in their institutions beyond the teaching that they do, some of them might also be involved in the management of academic programmes.

Although part-time faculty are not expected to have strong academic profile, but rather professional expertise, the demands for more or less qualifications are associated with the prestige of the institution which is to hire them. So, while high-prestige universities, whether public or private, demand some graduate degree even of their part-time faculty, low-prestige institutions (demand-absorbing) welcome “professionals” working in the field, irrespective of their credentials.

While the nature of the contracts of part-time faculty makes their market multi-institutional, the full-time faculty market is limited to a much smaller set of institutions. In the case of the public sector the availability of full-time positions responds not only to local conditions, but also to considerations taken at the federal Undersecretariat of Higher Education, where such positions in public higher education institutions are finally approved and financed. In contrast, in the private sector full-time positions are largely associated with certain institutions offering the more traditional set of services associated with a higher education institutions, including in some instances research. In any case, up to now inter-institutional mobility is very limited, as there are no conditions for an academic to follow its career continuously if he moves from one institution to another, which means that for all practical purposes there is no academic job market at the national level. Additionally, hiring and salary practices and structures are usually so rigid that
academics not from the locality have little incentives to move away from the institution in which they started their academic career.

5. Final Comments

It is clear that Mexican higher education, as that of many countries, is expected to increase its relevance for the country. The issue at stake is crucial, as the viability of the state to provide for its citizens is what is at risk here. In such circumstance the faculty plays a central role and they are expected, as well, to work in a more pertinent manner. To this, however, we believe that the Mexican academic profession needs to confront the above described challenges and dilemmas. The way in which they are solved will mark, for better or worse, the next generation of academics and, with it, Mexican higher education in the first half of the twenty first century.

Notes

1 The Mexican licensure degree is a 4-5 year undergraduate programme that is normally highly professional oriented, as compared to the liberal arts and sciences bachelors’ degree in the United States higher education.

2 People can be economically active and, however, live in the periphery of society, as the informal sector of economy shows. In the case of México the economic informal sector is very important, as it is reported that by early 2006 28 per cent of the employed population was in it. In general, people in the informal sector have a low economic condition and few years of schooling (Brunner, Santiago, Garcia Guadilla, Gerlach, and Velho 2006).

3 The most prestigious private higher education institutions have also adopted the notion than the highest the degree of their faculty the better, although the reasons for this are more related to accreditation and marketing reasons.
References


The academic profession all over the world has experienced substantial and rapid changes of its societal, institutional and academic environment. The gradual move towards the knowledge society provided opportunities for a growth of the number of academics but the challenges to reconsider the professional role were by no means without any hardship. The authors of this volume address four areas of key challenges to the academic profession. What do the rising expectations to generate and disseminate relevant knowledge mean: a leap from “scholarship of discovery” to “scholarship of application” or new combinations of discovery with social, economic and cultural implications? How does internationalisation affect academics as a step towards a cosmopolitan academic world or as localistic competition on world scale? How does the growing power of institutional management shape the academic role: Does the dependent “knowledge worker” substitute the “republic of scholars”, or is there a new space for academic freedom and responsibility? What does the expansion of graduate education mean: an extension of school-type learning towards the doctorate, or an increased chance of open discourse between senior academics and academics in their formative years?

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Maurice Kogan
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(eds.)

Key Challenges
to the Academic Profession

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