The Realities of University Reform in Japan

Why is it difficult for university presidents to take their initiatives?

Shinichi Yamamoto
Hiroshima University
Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University, Japan
http://en.rihe.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/

- The oldest research institute for higher education established in 1972
- 11 faculties, 3 researchers, and 8 supporting staff
- Wide variety of concern, including S&T, for the better understanding and solving problems of higher education system and institutions
The Development of Higher Education in Japan

1. The First Modern University in 1886 (Imperial Univ.)
2. Expansion of Higher Education System in 1918
3. Big Reform after the War II
   Various kinds of HE Institutes became Universities.
4. Massification of HE in 1960s and 70s
   Quality and Managerial Problems
5. The 20-years Big Reform of HE since 1990s
   Why Reform and Why so FAST?
Enrollment of Higher Education
1900-2009
Current University System in Japan

- **Senior High School**
- **Undergraduate Programs (4 years)**
  - **Junior Colleges (2 years)**
  - **Equivalent Schools in Foreign Countries**
- **Masters Programs (2 years)**
- **Professional Schools (2-3 years)**
- **Doctoral Programs (5)**
  - **D. Programs (3 years)**
- **Adult Students**

Years:
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27 years old
Distribution of Enrolment per 1,000 students in 2005

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<th>Humanities</th>
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<th>Engineering</th>
<th>Medical</th>
<th>Education</th>
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Public institution includes national and local public universities

Humanities and social sciences are major field of study for undergraduate level

Graduate enrolment is relatively small especially in doctoral programs
The 20-years Big Reform since 1990s

1. The Cold War Ended
2. The Bubble Economy Collapsed
3. 18-year-old Population Declining
4. Science and Technology Gain Priority
5. HE Becomes More Globalized

All Factors Relate to University Reform
Main Modes of Reform

• **Deregulation**
  Setting up New Institutions, Schools and Departments
  Designing Curriculum and Management

• **Accountability and Quality**
  University Evaluation and Quality Assurance
  National University Corporations
  Information Disclosure

• **Competition**
  for Resources (Research Grant and others)
  for Students (18-year-old population)
  Diversification of HE System
Decline in 18-year-old Population

Thousand

2000 2010 2020 2030 2040 2050
Who does take initiative for University Reform?
National University Corporation

Government

Block Grant
6-years Goals
External Evaluation

University

Autonomous Management
Responsible for the Results
National University Corporation
(Newly Independent Administrative Institutions)
continued

• Independent Legal Status, not a branch of the government
• The President, appointed by the Minister, appoints vice presidents and other administrators including people from business and others
• Six-year Plan MUST be approved by the Minister of MEXT
• The result of six-year plan will be EVALUATED by the external panel located at the Ministry, which reflects next term’s resource allocation from the Ministry
The Role of University Presidents, Past and Present

- Ministry of Education
- University Presidents
- Faculties

Ministry of Education

University Presidents

Faculties
The 20-years Reform since 1990s
Its Technical Reasons

1. Very Short Cycle in Reform Policy Makings

2. Competitive Environment both for Institutions and for Individual Faculties
Higher Education System has been GROWING and EXPANDING.

(professional training) applied (collaboration with industry)

well-known basic (academic) (advanced research)

(traditional mode)
The Future of Japan and the Role of Universities
2001, The Association of National Universities

National Universities as the Knowledge Infrastructure

1. Creation of New Knowledge and Technology
2. Nurturing of Talented People
3. Guarantee of Equal Opportunity for Higher Education
What are the Rationales of UNIVERSITY REFORM?

Still left for Further Discussion
Recent Reports on University Reform(1)

National Council on Education, Jan. 2005
-- Future of Higher Education in Japan
1. Very important role at the age of knowledge-based society
2. Massification, Globalization, and Quality Assurance
3. Division of roles among institutions
   research intensive, teaching oriented, contribution to local development, etc.
Recent Reports on University Reform(2)

-- Graduate education at the new age

1. Quality improvement
   coursework and research training
2. Clarified aims of graduate education
   researchers working for univ. and industry professionals working for business and others
Recent Reports on University Reform (3)

-- For the improvement of undergraduate Programs

1. Basic skills and knowledge who complete undergraduate programs (GAKUSHI-RYOKU)
2. FD (Faculty Development) as an important measure for the quality improvement of programs
3. Practices by each institution and support by the government
Recent Reports on University Reform(4)

National Strategy for Economic and Financial Reform approved by the Government, June 2007

Among various schemes, in higher education policy; University and graduate education reform for the knowledge-based economy

1. Quality assurance, internationalization
2. Top-ranked universities in the world
3. Further reform of national universities
Recent Reports on University Reform(5)
Interim Report on Corporatization of National Universities
Ministry of Education and Science, May 2010

1. Background
   Globalization, Quality Assurance,
   Decline of Young Population, Financial Problem

2. Aim of Corporatization
   Has been realized although left a few problems

3. Further Reforms
   Teaching and Research, Governance, Finance