

The seal of the University of Porto is a circular emblem. It features a seated female figure on the left, holding a book. The figure is surrounded by a decorative border with the Latin motto 'VIRTUS UNITA'. The seal is rendered in a light, faded style in the background.

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

Which model to meet global challenges

J.C. Marques dos Santos
University of Porto

Summary

- A changing university in a fast changing world
- Main global challenges facing portuguese universities
- Fundamental challenges to effective governance
- Which model of governance?
- Conclusions

A changing university in a fast changing world

- In the past: Universities changed slowly in a slow moving world
 - “useful Knowledge” (Bacon) “liberal knowledge” (Cardinal Newman)
 - Medieval model, Napoleonic model, Humboldt model
 - Federated model, centralized model
 - Inside/outside of the general social fabric of a given era
- Nowadays the same options are discussed but within much shorter periods of time
 - Scientific and social progress are much faster
 - Society makes universities accountable for the investment on them

Main Global Challenges Facing Portuguese Universities

- Demography
- Reduced direct public funding
- Massification
- Quality assurance
- Increased multi and interdisciplinarity
- Critical mass needed
- Internationalization
- Mobility
- Increased accountability
- Expected role of university in economic development
- Diversification of funding sources

Fundamental challenges to effective governance

- Increased complexity of management – not for “amateurs”
- Personal responsibility of university leaders
- Bureaucracy (impairs required decision speed in a fast moving environment)
- Against change culture of part of the academic community
- Pseudo democratic paradigm – elected leaders
- Lack of trust in appointed leaders – collegiate decisions only
- Balance between acting leaders and collegiate participation
- New culture for teaching/learning methodology
- Mission focalization
- Multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity promotion
- Critical mass building – cooperation/organization
- communication
- Diversification of funding sources – fund raising

Which Model of Governance

Main Principles:

- Board of stakeholders for strategic decisions and supervision
- Leader selection/dismissal by board of stakeholders with justified decision
- Leadership with power to decide
- Elected collegiate senate as counselling board and indirect participation of academic community
- Deans appointed by rector with participation of local academic community
- Informal boards for true participation of academic community in decision processes
- Bureaucratic environment as simple as possible
- Accountability

Possible Juridical Models of Governance (1)

Keeping main principles of governance model

- Public Institute

- Very complex bureaucratic environment
- No management tools available
 - Bank financing and real estate management requires formal authorization of government (complex, difficult, long delays)
- Very limited financial autonomy due to integration into state budget
- Very complex reporting to government due to state budget discipline
- Very time consuming and large delays
- Very slow response to management needs



Possible Juridical Models of Governance (2)

- Public Foundation with private law regime
 - Less complex bureaucracy for hiring human resources, acquiring goods and services and for economic and financial accounting
 - Larger financing autonomy
 - No direct integration in state budget
 - Free use of yearly economic and financial results
 - Simplified reporting to government
 - Management tools available
 - Bank financing possible within limits
 - Management of real estate possible within limits
 - Extra government financing possible through negotiation
 - Easier integration into the University of Research and Development Institutions
 - Foundation curators as partners for fund raising

Conclusions

- Universities must change in accordance with changes in their environment
- Universities must adopt government models that allow them to answer as quickly as possible to changes in the environment
- The model of Public Foundation with private law regime might be a good solution and deserves to be tested

