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Public Universities: A Benchmark for Higher Education in Brazil

by

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Abstract. *Over the past few years, the debate on the future of higher education in Brazil has been by and large split into two camps. One side stresses the urgent need to broaden the system, to allow a growing number of Brazilians to gain qualifications and enter an increasingly competitive and international labour market as skilled workers. This is the view behind the significant expansion of private higher education in Brazil over the past decade. The other side does not disregard the problems of public higher education, or the demands of thousands of young people deprived of a university education, but holds that the expansion of higher education should be based on the conclusions of the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education in Paris. Rather than setting public against private education, this approach envisages the growth of the system as a whole, on the premise that education is a strategic asset for national development, a universal right and one of the duties of any State.*

Introduction

Universities produce and transmit a wealth of cultural and scientific experience that belongs to mankind, and yet they are not always accessible to all. In each country, the gradual emergence of universities has been shaped by distinctive social developments and institutional trajectories. For that very reason, further insight into the current debate in Brazil on the mission of public universities, their funding, productivity and governance can only be gained by starting with an historical overview of Brazil's experience in this field.

By and large, the institutions that go to make up Brazil's higher education system, whether public or private, fall into three categories, namely universities, joint faculties and what are known as "isolated" units. Most of the country's public universities are part of the Federal Higher Education System. These are the "federal universities", managed and funded by the federal government. Brazil also has a large number of public universities run by the federal States and known as "estaduais" or what we might call "regional" universities, as well as some municipal universities.

In 1999, 2 377 715 students were enrolled on "*graduação*" or undergraduate courses in the country's universities and other higher-education facilities, both public and private.¹ Of those students, 1 544 622 were in private education, i.e. 65%. However, of the 86 851 students enrolled that year on master's and doctoral courses in the same institutions, only 11 509 were in private education, i.e. 13%. This second set of figures reflects an important feature of the Brazilian higher education system, namely the close link between teaching and research in public universities. These and other public institutions account for virtually all the research carried out in Brazil.²

Brazil's higher education system expanded noticeably in the 1990s, as the figures in Tables 1, 2 and 3 show. From 1994 to 1999, enrolment rose by 43% on undergraduate courses, 23.5% on master's courses and 58.4% on doctoral courses. This growth can be put down largely to private-sector expansion, as can be seen from Table 4. Over the period 1994-1999, for example, i.e. only half a decade, the number of places available in the private sector almost doubled. In 1999, private institutions offered 115 689 more places than in 1998, a figure in excess of the overall number of places then available throughout Brazil's federal system of higher education! This sharp growth in private-sector provision stems from two factors, namely an increase in the places available in existing universities, and the establishment of new universities and

Table 1. Undergraduate courses: number of students enrolled (1981-1999)

	Total	Educational institutions			
		Federal	Regional	Municipal	Private
1981	1 386 792	313 217	129 659	92 934	850 982
1994	1 661 034	363 546	231 936	94 971	970 584
1996	1 868 529	388 987	343 101	103 339	1 133 102
1998	2 125 958	408 640	274 934	121 155	1 321 229
1999	2 377 715	422 835	303 178	87 080	1 544 622

Source: Ministry of Education, National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP).

Table 2. Master's courses: number of students enrolled (1987-1999)

	Total	Educational institutions			
		Federal	Regional	Municipal	Private
1987	31 717	15 862	9 797	–	6 058
1994	46 086	23 298	15 926	–	6 862
1996	45 622	23 725	15 918	–	5 979
1998	50 931	26 681	17 312	–	6 938
1999	56 911	29 337	18 802	–	8 772

Source: Ministry of Education/CAPES (agency for graduate education).

Table 3. Doctoral courses: number of students enrolled (1987-1999)

	Total	Educational institutions			
		Federal	Regional	Municipal	Private
1987	8 366	2 469	5 264	–	633
1994	18 907	6 941	10 470	–	1 496
1996	22 198	8 658	11 559	–	1 981
1998	26 810	11 251	13 097	–	2 462
1999	29 940	13 027	14 176	–	2 737

Source: Ministry of Education/CAPES (agency for graduate education).

isolated units – the kind of growth that is often accompanied by a decline in the quality of educational provision.

Further aspects relating to these figures are addressed below. However, it is worth noting that 12% to 15% of the Brazilian population aged 18-24 are enrolled in higher education.³

From a broad historical perspective, the gradual construction of the higher education system occurred in five phases, beginning with the

Table 4. **Number of places available in Brazilian public and private higher education (1986-1999)**

	Total	Educational institutions			
		Federal	Regional	Municipal	Private
1986	442 314	68 188	43 650	38 421	292 055
1994	574 135	85 017	58 501	33 935	396 682
1996	634 236	84 197	63 603	35 713	450 753
1998	776 031	90 788	70 670	44 267	570 306
1999	904 634	99 973	85 488	33 178	685 995

Source: Ministry of Education, National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP).

Portuguese court's move to Brazil in 1808. To understand how the system evolved, we need to look at specific events and processes that took place outside the academic world and were to prove decisive not only for the future of the universities but also for Brazil's emergence as a nation. An in-depth study of those contributory factors would not, however, be relevant here.

Historical overview of the Brazilian higher education system

Compared with universities in Spanish America, those in Brazil emerged relatively late.⁴ No universities were transferred to Brazil during the colonial period or under the Empire (1822-1889), but a few schools were set up and served to found the first Brazilian university. In the early 19th century, when the Portuguese court moved to Brazil, a number of schools were established in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador da Bahia, the former capital of the colony. Rio de Janeiro, for instance, was given a Royal Military Academy and an Academy of Medicine and Surgery. In 1874, under the Empire, the Royal Military Academy became the Polytechnical School.

With the advent of the Republic in 1889 came a new phase. A host of schools and faculties appeared, most of them training students for careers in medicine, engineering and law. Around 1910, the cities of São Paulo, Manaus and Curitiba were the scene of initial attempts to establish universities. But the experiments failed – either the universities did not even come into being, or their existence was precarious and short-lived.

In 1920, one of the initiatives to commemorate the country's independence was the founding of the University of Rio de Janeiro, later the University of Brazil and what is now known as the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The approach used here, *i.e.* merging existing public and private institutions, would subsequently serve as the model for virtually all the country's universities. One was the University of Minas Gerais, founded in Belo Horizonte in 1927.

In 1930 Getúlio Vargas came to power and the third phase of Brazilian higher education began. In April 1931, the new Ministry of Education and Health began awarding the status of Brazilian University. Prior to that time, the founding of universities was not regulated by the federal government. Using these new rules, but the same model that had served to found the University of Rio de Janeiro, i.e. merging existing schools and faculties, public universities were set up in the cities of São Paulo and Porto Alegre (1934), then Recife and Salvador da Bahia (1946). During that time, the model was also used to found Brazil's first private universities: the Catholic Universities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (1946) and then Porto Alegre (1948).

The next phase began in 1950, when the Federal System of Higher Education was formed. The country's public universities, with the exception of São Paulo, were "federalised", meaning that they would henceforth be run by the federal government. The public system of higher education then underwent significant expansion. During the presidencies of Getúlio Vargas and Juscelino Kubitchek, a further 14 federal universities were founded.⁵

In 1961, when the recently elected president Jânio Quadros resigned, the Brazilian political system was plunged into crisis, culminating in a military coup in 1964. By then, the country had 22 universities and 125 other public institutions delivering higher education, as well as a private sector comprising 12 universities and 86 other institutions (see Table 5). Their combined enrolment amounted to almost 100 000 students, some 80% of them in public education. The picture began to change from 1964 onwards, with the putsch and the onset of the last phase of change to have affected higher education in Brazil.

Table 5. Number of public and private institutions providing higher education in Brazil in 1961 and 1998

Institutions	Public		Private		Total	
	1961	1998	1961	1998	1961	1998
Universities	22	77	12	76	34	153
Joint faculties				93		93
Isolated institutions	125	132	86	595	211	727
Total	147	209	98	764	245	973

Source: Statistical Survey of Higher Education, MEC/SEEC (1961); Higher Education Survey, MEC/INEP (1998).

Initially, the military maintained the pace of expansion in the Federal Higher Education System, while at the same time relaxing the requirements for granting university status, with the transfer of substantial public resources to the private sector, thereby creating mechanisms to facilitate the expansion of private provision. Over the years, in response to requests from private

institutions, the military regimes would eventually do away with the “federalisation” process launched in 1950, and regional public universities once again became a feature of the system. Yet it is worth noting that those same military regimes (1964-1985) also invested significantly in public universities, with a view to developing scientific research. From the 1970s onwards, that investment brought about considerable growth in the scope and importance of postgraduate courses in the higher education system as a whole.

In the late 1980s, however, governments came to exercise strict control over the budgets of federal universities. Public universities became subject to restrictions on the recruitment of senior staff and on investment aimed at raising enrolment. By the mid-1990s, against a background of globalisation, there had already been a marked rise in the number of private-sector providers within higher education. In 1998, as shown in Table 5 (universities plus joint faculties and isolated units), Brazil had 973 higher education institutions, only 209 of them public.

Legacies and challenges

Throughout its history, Brazilian society has had little success with the funding of new universities, whether by the public or the private sector. Today’s leading public and private universities were all established using the same model, i.e. merging schools and faculties. Moreover, Brazilian history shows that the public and private education systems have always been “complementary”, as it were, since the public sector has never attempted – or had the resources – to finance higher education in its entirety.

One of the legacies of the past to have left its imprint on Brazilian higher education is institutional fragmentation, a problem visible today in the Federal Higher Education System too. In fact public and private universities are by no means uniform categories. Public universities account for practically 90% of the scientific research conducted in Brazil. Yet all of this research and the best postgraduate courses are concentrated in a handful of universities, particularly the regional universities of São Paulo and Campinas and the federal universities of Rio de Janeiro, Brasília, Minas Gerais (Belo Horizonte), Pernambuco (Recife) and Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre). It is worth noting, however, that some private universities are of a very high academic standard.

The picture of higher education in Brazil today is therefore somewhat complex and would certainly merit a major in-depth study that cannot be included here. In any event, the public system of higher education in Brazil is currently in a phase dominated by deep uncertainty about the future. According to senior government officials, the current funding model for the

Federal Higher Education System, which does not charge monthly tuition fees, may be drawing to an end.⁶

Various indicators reveal a steady decline in public funding for federal universities over the past few years,⁷ forcing them to find new sources of funding including service delivery. The system's failures are also affecting the private sector, where high enrolment costs are generating a steady increase in the number of students unable to pay their monthly fees.⁸

Table 6. Number of places available, applicants and students enrolled in public and private higher education institutions in 2000

Higher education	Educational institutions		
	Total	Public	Private
Places available	1 216 287	245 632	970 655
Applicants	4 039 910	2 178 918	1 860 992
1st year students	897 557	233 083	664 474

Source: Higher Education Survey, Ministry of Education, National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP).

Consequently, there are a host of major challenges to be met. While universities have viewed themselves from the outset as centres for the production and transmission of cultural and scientific knowledge that belongs to all mankind, those in Brazil appear to be encountering innumerable obstacles in achieving this. On the one hand, universities can only accomplish their mission by remaining at the frontiers of knowledge, and must even seek to break new ground. This requires substantial investment, not to mention patience, as scientific progress is a long-term commitment. On the other hand, universities cannot achieve their mission without extending their outreach, without putting back into society the knowledge which in fact belongs to everyone. From that standpoint, the situation in Brazil is both paradoxical and dramatic. As shown in Table 6, only 68% of the places available in private institutions in the year 2000 were actually taken up. In other words, both public and private university places remained vacant that year in Brazil's higher education system as many young people did not have time to study, either because they had to earn a living for themselves and their families, or simply because they could not afford such an education. In Brazil today, thousands of young people are deciding against enrolling at university, either because there are too few places in public institutions, or because the places available in the private sector may well be rising in number but are too expensive.

In short, the main priority of Brazilian higher education over the past decade has been to increase the number of places available. While this goal is

fast being met, the figures show that there has been no corresponding increase in university enrolment and, worse still, no rise in the enrolment of young people from poorer backgrounds. On the contrary, research reveals that the proportion of “low-income” students in Brazilian higher education in the 1990s fell from 8.5 to 6.9%.⁹

Commitments

If universities, with their potential for inclusion and social integration, find their mission hampered even in the “developed” world, the problem is clearly more critical in countries like Brazil, which suffer from severe inequalities and whose experience of universities is relatively recent. The problem is compounded by the many other goals to be achieved by many Brazilian universities, one being to strengthen their position as institutions qualified to produce and transmit a “good” that is increasingly “costly”, i.e. knowledge.

Over the past few years, the debate on the future of higher education in Brazil has been by and large split into two camps. One side stresses the urgent need to broaden the system, to allow a growing number of Brazilians to gain qualifications and enter an increasingly competitive and international labour market as skilled workers. This is the view behind the significant expansion of private higher education in Brazil over the past decade.

The other side does not disregard the problems of public higher education, or the demands of thousands of young people deprived of a university education, but holds that the expansion of higher education should be based on the conclusions of the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education in Paris. Rather than setting public against private education, this approach envisages the growth of the system as a whole, on the premise that education is a strategic asset for national development, a universal right and one of the duties of any State.

Brazil’s public universities are certainly experiencing their own “in-house” problems and failures – and those in charge of them know that more resources are not the answer. They also know that the problems facing these universities will not be solved with new “management techniques”. What is needed is a change of attitude throughout the academic community. Again, the Paris Conference should serve as a benchmark for any action to achieve this. A public university should readily be viewed, like knowledge itself, as part of our social heritage, as the fruit of a collective effort that endures with the passing governments and generations, and as what Roland Barthes wisely described as *acritic* or independent of power. In such a strongly hierarchical institution with the emphasis on individual merit, and in an increasingly competitive society, a “collective effort” is certainly hard to visualise – yet this

is precisely the best approach and one that should be given increasing emphasis, particularly by the bodies evaluating institutional and academic performance. It is therefore important for the many groups that make up the academic community to extend an open invitation to become involved in and make a commitment to university governance.

Against a background of academic and institutional evaluation and the introduction of new technologies, Brazil's public universities should in our view give serious thought to four key themes developed at the Paris Conference: the relevance, quality, funding and internationalisation of higher education. We believe that, in the context of Brazil, it is in public universities that the commitments made by the international academic community in 1998 are most likely to thrive. The proof lies less in statistics than in the history of Brazil's experience of universities.

Throughout the 20th century, Brazil's public universities played an extraordinarily vital role in modernising the country, developing its economic driving forces and forging regional identities. For those and many other reasons, and however severe the criticism, public universities still enjoy legitimacy in Brazil. Yet this complex, diverse structure that is probably one of the Republic's greatest successes needs to be revamped. There appears to be a consensus on this today among university leaders, who are also aware that the process will only succeed with the active involvement of the academic community and society at large.

The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), of which I have been rector for the past six years, is one of Brazil's highest ranking institutions, according to a whole range of evaluation criteria. It has been recognised by the education authorities and society at large as being soundly governed. Yet this should not suggest that the UFRGS is free of many of the problems encountered by Brazil's other public universities. To overcome its weaknesses and enhance its strengths, it has launched a series of initiatives, beginning with a Management Plan based from the outset on the active involvement of broad sectors of the academic community – academics, administrative staff and students.

The debate leading up to the Management Plan, known as the *Universidade Viva* ("Living University"), took as its starting point the definition of a university as an institution gradually built up by "collective effort" over several generations. But it is destined never to be completed, and should view its role as the legatee and vehicle of change for all the cultural and scientific experience accumulated by mankind. The debate accordingly concluded that universities should not turn their backs on their own history and identity but open up to their own diversity and, more importantly, to the demands of society. As "living", open, multi-faceted institutions, universities should move

with the times by learning how to innovate on an ongoing basis. The debate about the *Universidade Viva* was also worthwhile in educational terms. It raised awareness among large sections of the academic community that our financial, material and human resources should be allocated according to precise criteria, based on pre-defined goals and specific programmes and projects.

Democratising and modernising university management were two themes highlighted in the debate on the *Universidade Viva* and its implementation. One of the key challenges was perceived to be the academic community's involvement in university management, a long-term commitment requiring familiarity with university life. During the debate on the Management Plan, the academic community realised, for instance, that the UFRGS knew very little about itself. We form a community of over 35 000 people spread across four campuses, with a choice of hundreds of courses (undergraduate, specialisation, master's and doctoral) as well as numerous libraries, laboratories and teaching units (schools, faculties and institutes), not to mention the various administrative services and institutions. Hence the project known as "Democratising Information", which includes initiatives to provide fuller information giving guidance on proposed improvements and solutions to our problems, and give the academic community and society at large better access to information. Thanks to this project, for instance, we have published easy-to-read reports on UFRGS activities featuring not only graphics and statistics but also quality evaluations, comments and photos – while at the same time giving a strictly accurate assessment of the activities. Thanks to these widely disseminated reports, it is now safe to say that the UFRGS is better informed about itself. Another example of an initiative to democratise access to information is the availability of our library resources on-line. Of course computer-users also have access to a wide variety of other academic and administrative information and services via our Internet site (www.ufrgs.br).

As part of the *Universidade Viva* plan, we have also introduced "management seminars". These are held once a week and are attended by leaders, managers, academic/administrative commission co-ordinators, and representatives of the various councils, student bodies, teaching and clerical staff – in short a wide range of university officials. Other participants include colleagues from other universities and representatives from "outside" organisations, who are invited to take part in our debates as guest speakers. The first seminar, on "The university of the 21st century", was held in 1997. At these meetings, we discuss daily life at the university, training for the world of work, the role of knowledge in economic and social development, and international co-operation. During the year, the conclusions reached at these management seminars serve as a basis for other meetings on themes that

require more urgent or detailed consideration, thereby subjecting our proposals and projects to a continuous process of analysis and enhancement.

Another major initiative under the *Universidade Viva* is institutional and academic evaluation, which has gradually become a permanent feature of life here at the university. We began by setting up an Institutional Evaluation Secretariat with the same status as the leading bodies involved in university governance. The Secretariat's main task is to assess the "collective" nature of our teaching and administrative work, focusing on the practical aspects of our academic project and on our concern to make management tools effective and efficient.

We view the democratisation and modernisation of university management as crucial to Brazil's public universities. But the UFRGS, like other universities, must innovate and progress in many other ways. Brazilian society sees its public universities as institutions that can adopt solutions to a whole host of problems, ranging from the simplest, most immediate and urgent ones to those requiring major, long-term investment. As centres for research and knowledge production, they are approached by small rural communities, owners of small businesses and village mayors as well as by city mayors, regional government authorities and major firms in the public and private sector. Closer links with governments, enterprises and social movements are also, in our view, vital for change in Brazil's public universities. Universities cannot turn down partnerships. They can and must deliver services. However, this kind of activity should always be based on criteria that are clearly defined as part of an academic project. The UFRGS is now committed to more than 800 agreements¹⁰ with community groups, trade unions, NGOs, municipal authorities and small firms, and also with major enterprises in a wide range of industries from petrochemicals (Petrobrás, Copesul), and steel (Gerdau) to computers (Dell). Some of these agreements are for the transfer of very basic technology, while for others the university will be exploring the very frontiers of knowledge. But the important point is that for public universities, the benefits of providing services or meeting any other demand lie less in the potential financial returns than in what they can gain from putting back into society the knowledge they are developing, and what they can learn from such partnerships about society as a whole.

Faced with such wide-ranging demands, Brazil's public universities have therefore to meet the dual challenge of developing closer ties with local communities while at the same time broadening their international outreach. This is why we at the UFRGS have encouraged the formation of networks and research groups, academic mobility and exchanges with universities and countries already working closely with us (*e.g.* France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, the United States and Japan) and with universities in other Latin American countries, with which we have recently – and paradoxically

perhaps – been establishing the same kind of ties, particularly the MERCOSUL countries (via the Montevideo Group Universities Association). Then there are our ties with the Spanish and Portuguese universities, which help to bring cultural identities in the Spanish American world closer together.

Closer links with society have shown the UFRGS community that we can no longer stay out of the debate on the importance of research within individual universities and in Brazilian higher education as a whole. Where public universities are concerned, we believe that knowledge generation should be more clearly associated with teaching work. Furthermore, in the name of academic freedom, public universities should not neglect specific social demands or, worse still, focus solely on a few members of the academic community and specific fields of knowledge. Consequently the UFRGS has placed great emphasis on: a) projects integrating teaching and research; b) closer links between the university and various sections of society via academic extension; and c) research across all branches of knowledge, in particular the less developed fields, and increasing interaction with productive sectors and the economic and social development policy-making institutions.

Another initiative launched by the UFRGS to tackle the problems it encounters seeks to rebuild the community spirit. Public universities have to overcome their growing fragmentation. Where Brazil is concerned, universities in general but more specifically those in the public sector are socially significant because they create material wealth for the country but also, and more importantly, moral and spiritual “values”. Universities are and must continue to be places in which a range of different disciplines and forms of education can exist side by side. The best feature of our public universities is this diverse, multifaceted atmosphere which, more than anything else, helps our young people to do what is asked of them and act as responsible citizens in the world of work. The UFRGS has undertaken numerous initiatives of this kind. One has been to found the *Jornal da Universidade*, a monthly publication giving every section of the university community its say in articles on the key issues facing public universities, as well as the more mundane aspects of life at the UFRGS. We have also set up an architectural project to renovate our oldest campus in the city centre of Porto Alegre. Involving the community formed by UFRGS alumni, administrative and academic staff, the project has had excellent results and led to closer and more tangible ties between the university and the city.

Many other topics merit consideration here, if only briefly, as a further illustration of the UFRGS’ recent trajectory as one of Brazil’s public universities. However, for want of space I should like to conclude on a brief personal note: my experience of university teaching and governance has convinced me that Brazil’s public universities will make no headway if the

academic community does not have a “university vision”, i.e. a clear perception of a public university’s mission and the debt it owes to “collective effort”. In my view, this is crucial if we are to foster a general attitude of involvement rather than allowing conservative mentalities to prevail, preventing or undermining any attempt to promote change.

Notes

1. The statistics in this paper are, unless otherwise indicated, from the Higher Education Survey conducted jointly by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP) and the Ministry of Education – www.mec.gov.br/superior/censosuperior/default.asp
2. See, in this connection, “Public funding of research and institutional responses: the example of Brazil”, by Maria Alice Lahorgue, presented at the IMHE General Conference, Paris, 16-18 September 2002.
3. There is some controversy as to the proportion of young Brazilians entering higher education. However, all available indicators show that only a small number manage to complete their university education.
4. For more insight into the emergence and development of Brazil’s higher education system, see Luiz Antônio Cunha. “A universidade temporã”, Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 1980. On this subject and the development of universities in the Latin American context, we recommend two major collections of papers: Jorge Brovetto and Miguel Rojas Mix (editors), *Universidad Iberoamericana – Globalización e identidad*, Madrid, CEEXCI, 1999; Jean-Michel Blanquer and Hégio Trindade (editors), *Les défis de l’éducation en Amérique Latine*, Paris, IHEAL, 2000.
5. In the cities of Fortaleza (1954), João Pessoa (1955), Belém (1957), Natal and São Luis (1958), Juiz de Fora, Santa Maria, Curitiba, Goiânia and Florianópolis (1960), Brasília, Niterói, Maceió and Vitória (1961). During the same period, Catholic Universities were established in Recife (1951), Belo Horizonte (1958), Curitiba and Pelotas (1960), together with the Mackenzie University in São Paulo (1951).
6. In Brazil’s public universities, undergraduate and postgraduate education is free of charge.
7. For instance, investment in federal universities from 1995 to 2000 fell from 396.1 to 216.2 million reais according to a recent report by the National Association of Directors of Federal Higher Education Institutions.
8. For students in the private sector, the federal government has a loan scheme whereby the government pays monthly instalments directly to the institution so that students do not need to begin reimbursing their loans until they have completed their education. However, the scheme has now run into serious difficulties, mainly because many students cannot meet their repayments.
9. A study by Simon Schwartmann shows that, during the 1990s, the proportion of higher-education students from the top 20% of wealthiest households rose from 67.1 to 70.7% of the total number of students. See “Crescimento de vagas não leva pobre à universidade”, *Folha de São Paulo*, 27 May 2002, p. c-1.
10. The fact that UFRGS has signed so many and such diverse contracts with firms as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations prompted us to set up a new administrative structure with a special focus on technology transfer: the

Secretariat for Technological Development. Along with other university bodies such as the Research Pró-Reitoria, it has made a significant contribution towards closer ties between the UFRGS and society at large, and towards progress in our R&D work.

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Information for authors

Contributions to the IMHE Journal should be submitted in either English or French and all articles are received on the understanding that they have not appeared in print elsewhere.

Selection procedure and criteria

Articles are selected for publication by the Editor of the Journal and submitted to independent referees for review.

The Journal is primarily devoted to the needs of those involved with the administration and study of institutional management and policy in higher education. Articles should be concerned, therefore, with issues bearing on the practical working and policy direction of higher education. Contributions should, however, go beyond mere description of what is, or prescription of what ought to be, although both descriptive and prescriptive accounts are acceptable if they offer generalisations of use in contexts beyond those being described. Whilst articles devoted to the development of theory for its own sake will normally find a place in other and more academically based journals, theoretical treatments of direct use to practitioners will be considered.

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** Electronic submission is preferred. **Three copies** of each article should be sent if the article is submitted on paper only.

Length: should not exceed 15 pages (single spaced) including figures and references.

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Abstract: the main text should be preceded by an abstract of 100 to 200 words summarising the article.

Quotations: long quotations should be single-spaced and each line should be indented 7 spaces.

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The covering letter

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