Globalizing Higher Education in Japan: The Culture of Management and the Power of Tradition

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Managing Personnel Affairs of Faculty

- Salary based on age, not merit
- Salary not negotiable
- Appointment level based on age, not merit
- Short term non-renewable appointments of 3 – 5 years common as seen in Global 30 hiring practices

Managing the Budget

- At most Japanese universities budget controlled by bureaucrats, not academic leaders
- At **private universities** budget controlled by Board/Trust appointed bureaucrats
- At **national universities** budget controlled by Ministry of Education bureaucrats assigned to these positions

Managing Administrative Staff

- All non-academic personnel appointments responsibility of bureaucrats/no academic leadership input

- Junior, middle and senior staff regularly rotated to new positions in different university offices with no input from academic leadership

Consequences for Global Relations

- University officials from abroad expect level of authority in budget, programmatic initiatives and personnel rests equally with both parties

- Confusion arises when Japanese counterparts regularly change positions, show limited knowledge of details and require lengthy discussion to make decisions

- Adaptation of western management models unlikely at this time

- Influence by Japan on Western systems unlikely any time

Conclusion

"Japanese universities do not yet have a pool of academic administrators with extensive management and financial experience to take on the strategic management of more autonomous and entrepreneurial university institutions."
(OECD Reviews of Tertiary Education – Japan, 2009)

"In this global community, where more and more countries are interconnected with one another, if Japan is to make a significant contribution, each of us must expand our network in and out of the country and accept more diverse values." (Kiyoshi Kurokawa, former special advisor to the Cabinet and professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies)