

Excellence in research, teaching and learning: A balancing act and shared responsibility

Professor Anna M. Kindler, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

As universities endeavour to strengthen their research profiles, they face a risk of polarizing important facets of their mission. Research and teaching and learning often become seen as the opposite ends on a continuum of priorities. Awards structures, deployment of resources and even internal cultures within departments develop with little consideration of the possible positive interdependence between the knowledge creation and the educational mandates of the institutions in their drive towards excellence. As global competition intensifies and international university rankings increasingly balance the two key academic priorities of universities, it is especially relevant to reflect on this trend and consider more productive alternatives. This presentation proposes a systems approach to academic excellence that entertains the possibility of a research-intensive and teaching-intensive university and explores the respective responsibilities of faculty, students, and university leadership in making this system work towards institutional success.