



# School of Graduate Studies and Research

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## Faculty Research Colloquium



### Prof. Muhammad Mukhtar

Chair and Professor of Biotechnology Department, School of Arts and Sciences

## “Ranking Universities: Practices, Problems and Way Forward”

**3:30-4:30 PM, Wednesday, February 3, 2016**  
**Conference Room - Building D**

#### *Abstract*

The quality of education in developing and developed countries is strongly linked with economic performance. Nations that have top ranked higher education institutions have always led in global competitiveness when compared with the ones that have lower ranked higher education institutions. Historically, the general reputation of a university was mainly determined by the alumni and their contributions in the society. In the past decade, quantitative global ranking of universities namely Academic Ranking of World Universities or Shanghai Ranking in the year 2003 was followed by other global ranking systems like QS World University Ranking, Times Higher Education World University Ranking, CWTS, Leiden Ranking and Ranking Web of Universities. Global ranking of universities has also led to the emergence of national and regional ranking of universities besides ranking individual country educational system.

We report here a comparison of various global ranking systems of universities and their impacts in the society. Our initial evaluation of five global ranking system parameters revealed that Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking System is more basic in nature when compared with highly sophisticated parameters of other ranking systems which include such criteria as publications in world top ranked journals. Ranking parameters of THE global ranking system i.e. teaching, research, citation, industrial outcome and international outlook for the year 2014 were initially compared among universities from all across the world, those having age less than fifty years, Asian and five major emerging economies designated as BRICS (Brazil, India, Russia, China and South Africa). A careful analyses of top ten universities from each group revealed that top ranked universities (mainly from USA and UK) excel in teaching, research and citations whereas Asian universities lead in industrial outcome. As far as the international outlook is concerned, universities less than 50 years old are in fierce competition with the world top ranked universities. Times Higher Education 2014 ranking of Asian universities revealed Japan leading in teaching and research. Turkey, South Korea, and Hong Kong in citations, industrial outcome and international outlook parameters respectively. The top ten universities in 2014 Times Higher Education Ranking of Global Universities were compared with other four global ranking systems and except one, Yale University, all other nine universities differ significantly in their relative ranks. Our analyses further revealed that the situation is even more complicated with respect to discipline wise ranking by various global rankers. For example, a university ranked 3rd by 2014 Times Higher Education Ranking of Global Universities in social sciences was ranked 61st by the other global ranker the Leiden ranking. Parents and the public develop their perception about universities and make informed decision for their children's education based on institutions ranking. Different ranking systems have created a dilemma for the public, parents and students. A way forward is to normalize global ranking systems and establish programs aimed at public literacy and parental literacy for informed decisions regarding youth education and development.

#### *About the Speaker*

Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar PhD is serving in the Department of Biotechnology as Professor of Biotechnology and Chairman of the Department. Prior to his arrival at AURAK he served as Vice Chancellor/Professor of three Universities in Pakistan concomitantly – a unique honor for any academic leader. Through his judicious academic leadership and innovative governance he converted a regional university in Pakistan into one of the top ranked in the country. Dr. Mukhtar received his Master and MPhil in the field of Biochemistry from Pakistan and his PhD in biosciences from the Drexel University of Philadelphia, USA, and also completed a Graduate Certificate in Research Management from Thomas Jefferson University of Philadelphia, USA. He served at various academic/administrative positions in the USA on an outstanding scientist (O-1) visa.