

Yale Alumni Talk

Title:

"If Harvard is the Michigan of the East,
then what is Yale?..."

Background

Yale, Caltech

UM: 20 years in trenches -- faculty, dean, provost

Yale, Harvard: daughters...

UM Strategic planning effort

Hypothesis

1. These three institutions, and indeed, most major research universities are not only quite similar, but converging over time to "national universities".
2. To this point in time, perhaps the real distinction was that Yale and Harvard were outstanding, comprehensive research universities with an extraordinary commitment to the quality of undergraduate education. By way of contrast, UM was probably more committed to education in the professions. But even that is changing...

The Myth

Yale, Harvard, Princeton:

small

elitist

tradition

private

Ivy League (athletics)

preppy

Michigan

gigantic

quality education for the masses

public

big time athletics

Joe College (fraternities,...)

Fact 1: The UM is known as a "public Ivy"... a "hot" school

1. 18,000 applications for 4,500 positions
2. Drawing from the East...students interested in the "Michigan" experience: a quality education + excitement of comprehensive intellectual environment + big time athletics + fraternities, sororities + cultural + ...
3. Drawing from most prestigious prep schools...
4. Always have competed with Cornell, Northwestern, Penn
Now competing directly with Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, MIT

5. In my role as Provost, it is important that one knows the competition.

Fact 2: Ivy League vs. Big Ten Athletics

Image #1: Bright fall weekends, 105,000 fans crammed into Michigan Stadium for battle between UM and OSU for Rose Bowl and possible national title, the pagentry, precision, and tradition as the Michigan Marching Band takes the field with "Hail to the Victors"...

Image #2: A typical overcast day in New Haven...10,000 fans sprinkled about Yale Bowl for Yale-Colgate game, the precision of the Yale Marching Band as they scurry about the field to form an "approximate" Y position for "March Down the Field"...and then play for the Saybrook strip

Image #3: Harvard vs. MSU for NCAA Hockey Championship

Image #4: Harvard (and at one time Yale) beating the nation's best crews for the national rowing championship

Image #5: Even in football, Yale almost beat Army ... who beat Tennessee, who barely lost to Alabama...

Fact 3: The Numbers

Michigan = 2 x Harvard = 3 x Yale

Fact 4: Comprehensiveness

UM: 17 schools and colleges

all major professions and academic disciplines

Yale: 12 schools and colleges -- no engineering, government

Harvard: 10 schools and colleges -- no engineering, music

Fact 5: Quality

1. Students

Note: If you skim off top 1,600 UM freshman (out of 4,500), they exceed Yale and Harvard in SATs, GPAs

2. Faculty

All three institutions draw only from top schools.

Salaries are comparable (H-Y better at top, UM at aP, AP)

But:

H-Y recruit primarily at top...tenure few junior faculty

UM recruits at junior ranks and develops

Note: Strong signs that UM now attracting better faculty

because of this policy, and that H-Y will have to change

3. Programs

Overall ranking of graduate programs:

UCB-Harvard-Stanford-Yale-Princeton-Chicago-Michigan

UG: Stanford-Princeton-Michigan...

Fact 6: Culture

Students

Myth: Harvard-Yale: Ivy League (elitist/preppy/eastern)

Michigan: Joe College (high school/midwestern/frat type)

Actual: H-Y: 65% public (many drawn from the "west")

Michigan: 10% private

Residential Life

H-Y: 90% in houses or colleges

UM: 30% in dorms (but another 30% in F&S)

Management style

Yale: highly centralized

Harvard: Every tub on its own bottom

UM: moving toward ETOB

Tradition:

H-350, Y-300, UM-175

But note: 1 out of every thousand Americans is a Michigan grad!

Fact 7: Financials

Myth: Yale-Harvard are privately supported

Michigan is publically supported

Reality

Notes:

1. All institutions derive 25% from tuition

2. All institutions derive 25% - 30% from federal government

3. All institutions derive 15% from housing

Only differences:

H-Y: 30% from private gifts and endowment income

UM: 10% from private gifts; 25% from state

Hence, if we view state support as our endowment income for educating instate students essentially "for free"...

But, remember, most private giving to H-Y is really paid by Uncle Sam through tax breaks...

Hence, in reality, H-Y just as public as UM (except all from feds for H-Y, and half from state for UM)

Fact 8: Commitment to Undergraduate Education

The cornerstone of Yale and Harvard: Yale College, Harvard College

...both institutions draw their strength from a long term commitment to the quality of the undergraduate experience

Since WWII, UM focus has been more on the professional schools: Law, Medicine, Engineering, Business, ...
Even undergraduate programs were focused in this way...
UM produces more MDs, engineers, dentists, ... than any other university in the nation.

But this is changing at UM

Strategic planning process: What, not how!

Conclusion: We must refocus our efforts on the quality of undergraduate education!

Why?

Quality of students -- stewardship for the best

Unique opportunity: quality x breadth x size

Mission Statement:

Building leadership for tomorrow on a foundation of academic excellence!

Conclusions

1. To be sure, Yale, Harvard, and UM are different in many ways: size, selectivity, elitism, ...comprehensiveness, culture, ...
2. But these institutions are probably more alike than different:
 - i) Commitment to academic excellence
 - ii) Quality of students and faculty
 - iii) Balance between public and private support
 - iv) Commitment to producing leaders of our society
 - v) Commitment to quality of undergraduate education... as well as professions and graduate studies
3. In fact, Yale, Harvard, Michigan...just like Stanford, Berkeley, UCLA, are all converging toward a common nature:
"national research universities:
characterized by an unusual commitment to academic excellence across the full spectrum of academic and professional disciplines

Q: "If Harvard is the UM of the East, then what is Yale?"

A: "Yale is the Michigan of the East as well...just as Michigan is the Yale or Harvard of the West!"...

Go Blue (either Old or with Maize...)