

# **Analysis of information presented in Spanish Universities' webs about doctoral degrees**

Universidad de León

Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

Universidad de Extremadura

Universidad de Jaén

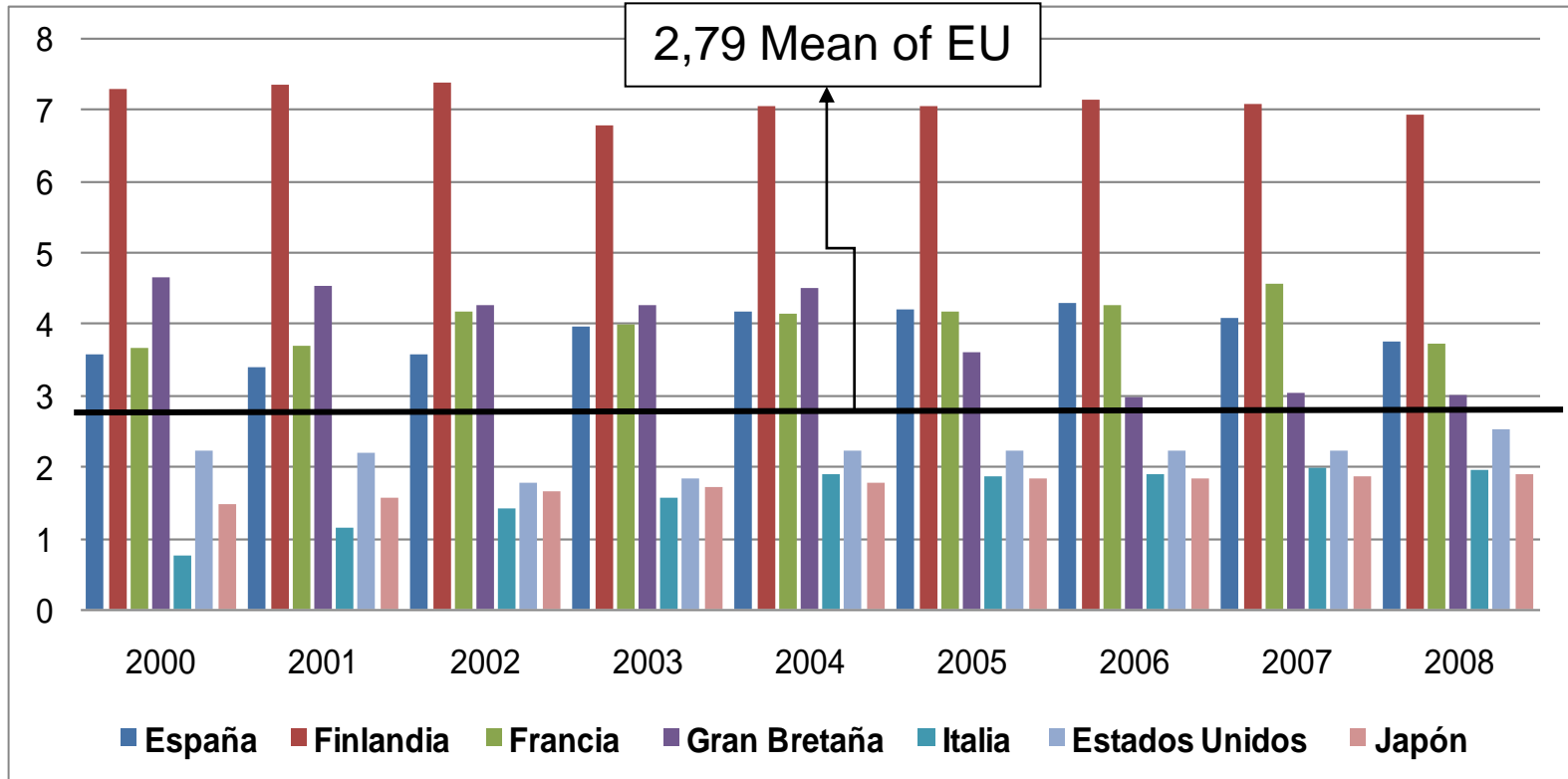
## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has intensified competition, as evidenced by the growing number of international classification systems (rankings) and the attention paid to them.

Doctoral education has an international character in itself. It should promote opportunities for graduate students to participate in these international studies.

The quality and competitiveness are two of the most important issues for universities.

# INTRODUCTION



Percentage of students in doctoral degrees in the countries of the European Union (EU), compared to the total number of graduate students

# INTRODUCTION

To promote the interest of graduates to continue their education by accessing the training of graduate level, it would be necessary to increase the visibility of supply and provide high-quality, easily accessible and comparable to other institutions which allow the knowledge depth of doctoral programs.

**GUIDE TO APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION**  
**MPhil and PhD Studies**  
at The University of Hong Kong

**Why Study at HKU?**  
**MPhil and PhD Degrees at HKU**  
General Information  
Awards and Financial Assistance  
**Application for Admission**  
Faculties/Departments/Centres/Institutes  
Coursework Requirement  
Research & Scholarship  
Support Facilities & Services  
Way to HKU  
Campus Map  
Contact US

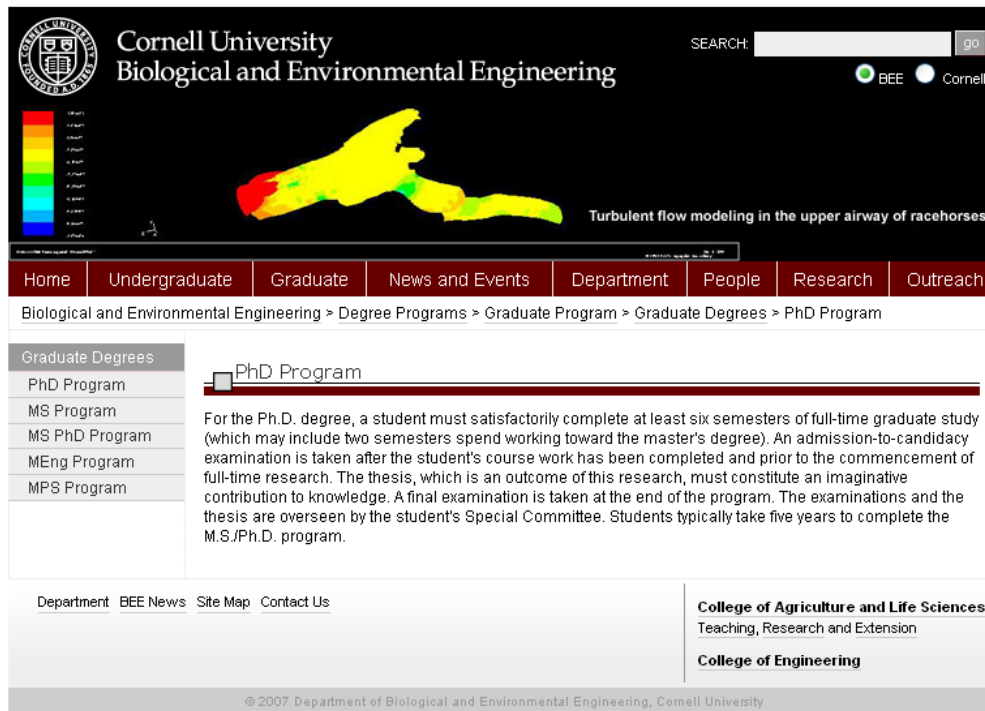
**MPhil and PhD Degrees at HKU**  
**General Information**

**Definitions**  
The University offers Master of Philosophy (MPhil), 3-year and 4-year Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programmes. A successful MPhil thesis should represent the result of the candidate's research which displays some originality and which demonstrates a sound understanding of the field of study and the appropriate research methods, and a successful PhD thesis should represent the result of the candidate's research which should be an original contribution to knowledge and worthy of publication.

Candidates will conduct research work under the supervision of at least one member of the University's teaching staff. Candidates without a research Master's degree shall be considered for admission to a 4-year PhD programme, and those who hold research Master's degrees shall be considered for admission to a 3-year PhD programme. Candidates for the research degrees of MPhil and 4-year PhD will be required to follow an approved course of study and research including coursework. The objective of the coursework component is to aid research work and preparation for writing the thesis. A candidate shall be required to take at least five but not more than ten courses as specified in the coursework syllabuses. The number of courses specified will include two compulsory courses offered or approved by the Graduate School. Please refer to the section "Coursework Requirement" for details.

A student may register as a full-time candidate when he or she holds

# INTRODUCTION



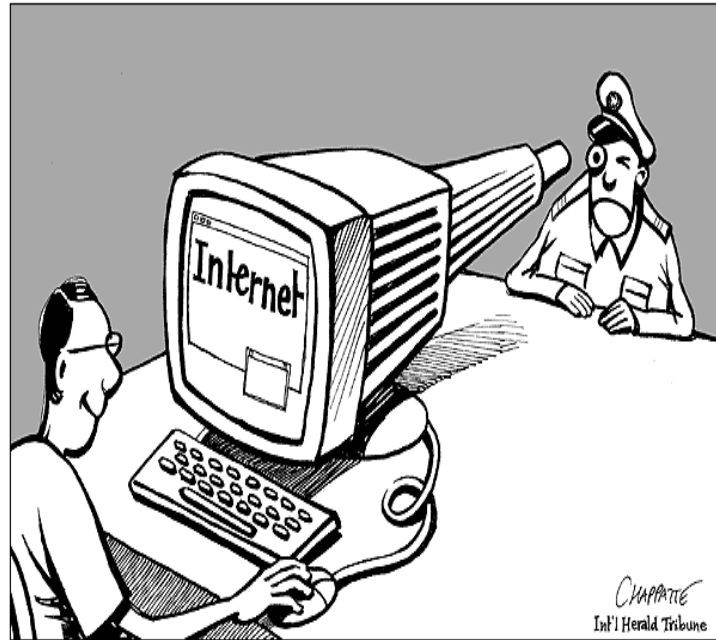
The screenshot shows the Cornell University Biological and Environmental Engineering website. At the top left is the Cornell University logo and the text "Cornell University Biological and Environmental Engineering". To the right is a search bar with a "go" button and radio buttons for "BEE" (selected) and "Cornell". Below the header is a colorful image of a horse's head with the text "Turbulent flow modeling in the upper airway of racehorses". A navigation menu includes "Home", "Undergraduate", "Graduate", "News and Events", "Department", "People", "Research", and "Outreach". The breadcrumb trail reads "Biological and Environmental Engineering > Degree Programs > Graduate Program > Graduate Degrees > PhD Program". A sidebar lists "Graduate Degrees" with options for "PhD Program", "MS Program", "MS PhD Program", "MEng Program", and "MPS Program". The main content area is titled "PhD Program" and contains text describing the requirements for the degree. At the bottom, there are links for "Department", "BEE News", "Site Map", and "Contact Us", along with affiliations to the "College of Agriculture and Life Sciences" and "College of Engineering". A copyright notice at the very bottom reads "© 2007 Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering, Cornell University".

A website is a digital business card, either for companies, organizations, individuals, etc.

Also, the new trend oriented to Web pages is not only attractive to our visitors, but is also optimized to be quickly located by search engines through the source code. Reaching this dual purpose may pose a conflict with the quality of the content.

# OBJETIVES

The objectives of this study have been to analyze the accessibility and visibility of the information network of prestigious international universities and propose a basic outline of information in the publication of a doctoral program.



## **METHODOLOGY**

In the analysis of web pages, some general questions have been considered.

The "five classic criteria": Authority, Accuracy, Objectivity, Currency, Coverage are not useful for the objective proposed in this study because university pages generally cover these criteria.

More useful are other elements, such as information access, navigation, design, and language.

# METHODOLOGY

The list of universities is as follows:

## In Europe:

Hohenheim University (Germany),

Agrosup Dijon (France),

University of Leuven (Belgium),

Wageningen University (Holland),

Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro (Italy)

Agricultural University of Athens (Greece).





# RESULTS

In USA:

Virginia Tech (Virginia),  
University of California  
(Berkeley),  
University of Minnesota  
(Minnesota),  
University of Illinois  
(Illinois),  
Cornell University  
(Ithaca),  
Washington University  
(Washington).



# RESULTS

In Asia:

University of Tokyo (Japan),

Kyoto University (Japan),

National Taiwan University (China),

University of Hong Kong (China),

Chinese University of Hong Kong (China).



# RESULTS

The results of all tested:

<b>Analysis</b>		<b>Universities</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>UE</b>	<b>USA</b>	<b>Asia</b>
Quality	Access	17	17	40
	Navigation	0	33	20
	Design	0	67	40
Number	Language	67	0	100
Include information	Teachers	0	0	0
	Program	0	0	20
	Results	0	0	0

Table: percentages (%) of universities with good quality content analyzed on the total of the 17 universities considered

## RESULTS

The discussion group formed for this work is an already established group of people; most know each other and the type of so-called natural groups.

The natural group has been formed for experts with the following characteristics:

- ✓ Spanish nationality
- ✓ PhD in Engineering
- ✓ Extensive teaching experience in the area (more than 5 years old and more than two different materials)
- ✓ Varied experience in corporate management (leadership of working groups, teaching management work, membership of national and international groups working in academic organization, etc.).
- ✓ Gender diversity and range from 35 to 65 years of age.

# RESULTS

There are for important points to analyze when we consider the diffusion of doctoral programs in the university web pages:

- 1.- Attractive.
- 2.- Easy to use and appropriate information structure.
- 3.- Easy to find the page with search engines.
- 4.- Contents



## Research

### Newsflash

[International Students Week 15 - 20 March 2010](#)  
[Presentation: Introduction session for Doctoral students \(pdf\)](#)

### Doctoral schools

[Arenberg doctoral school](#)  
[Doctoral school for Biomedical Sciences](#)  
[Doctoral school for Humanities and Arts](#)

## Doctoral studies @ K.U.Leuven

Do you have a passion for your field of study and for research? Then a PhD may be your thing.

Doing a PhD at K.U.Leuven gives you the chance to carry out research in an internationally competitive environment under the supervision of our professors, experts with strong international reputations. You will tackle fundamental or concrete topics in your field of study with the intention of making original contributions.

K.U.Leuven has three doctoral schools:

- [Arenberg doctoral school](#) (Science, Engineering and Technology)
- [Doctoral school for Biomedical Sciences](#)
- [Doctoral school for Humanities and Arts](#)

The doctoral schools stand for openness and versatility. K.U.Leuven forms young scholars with an open view upon the world and its societies, within which they can take up their responsibility. Such broad-thinking scholars are undoubtedly an added value for society. They may settle into different sectors, such as education, science, health care, welfare, industry, economics, culture, justice, security, and mobility, and so on.

If you are interested in doing PhD research at K.U.Leuven please consult our open PhD topics. We wish you in advance a fascinating period of research on your PhD!



### Practical & juridical information for prospective (pre) doctoral students

- [Regulative framework](#)
- [Where can you find financial resources](#)
- You wish to begin doctoral research, you can apply for a [vacant doctoral project](#)
- Application for Doctoral Students
  - [Form and instructions](#)
  - [Proposal for a doctoral dissertation \(pdf format\)](#), only for predoctoral and doctoral students. [Guidelines for drafting a PhD proposal in Law](#)

### Practical & juridical information for current (pre) doctoral students

- [Doctoral process](#)
- [Doctoral education programme](#)
- [Competence profile for doctoral students](#)
- [User license](#)
- [Progress report](#)
- [My PhD](#)
- [Doctoral defence](#)
- [An overview of the doctoral defences](#)
- [Regulation with regard to author's rights to doctoral theses](#) (internal info)
- [Career opportunities](#)
- [Social status and facilities](#) (pdf file)
- [Travel leave application form](#) (word)

### Contact:

Contactperson doctoral studies Research Coordination Office: [Klara Gisbers](#)

## **Discussion and recommendations**

### **Contents to be included in a University web about doctorate programs: Recommendations**

Detailed program for the certification, list of teachers, and research proposals and:

1. Number of students enrolled
2. Num. new students
3. Num. of teachers and categories
4. Num. of subjects face
5. Num. of e-learning courses
6. Num. of subjects offered
7. Num. of subjects that the student must attend

## Discussion and recommendations

8. Num. of publications related to the thesis of those programs:

a) International or national JCR Publications.

b) Other International P.

c) other National P.

d) Communications in Conferences.

e) Reports

f) Book Chapters

g) Books

9. Num. of research projects related to those programs

## Discussion and recommendations

10. Num. of students with scholarships
11. Num. of languages in which information is given
12. Num. of foreign lecturers
13. Num. of different Spanish universities involved
14. Num. of different foreign universities involved
15. Num. of mentions of "European Doctor" or similar
16. Num. of Awards Outstanding Doctoral Thesis or Doctoral Awards
17. Num. of weeks of stay by doctoral students in foreign research centers for conducting their thesis.



## Discussion and recommendations

18. Num. Thesis rejected in the first round for corrections
19. Num .of theses completed
20. Mean time for completion of the thesis
21. Num. of evaluators of the thesis, outside the University.
22. Has the Univ. Web information about quality references ?
23. Has the Univ. Web information about quality assurance system?
24. Has Univ. Web information about graduates satisfaction surveys ?
25. Has Univ. Web information about Percentage of doctor graduates that get a job?
26. Percentage of doctors graduates to work in research and teaching.

## CONCLUSIONS

In some of the best universities in the world, analysis of information in websites about doctorates show, in general, a poor quality and limited content related to the doctoral program.

We haven't found any web that could be recommend as a model to be copied.

We should recommended an attractive design, an easy access to content, dynamic and important links.  
To be easy to find on the net

In this way, information should be useful for any professional, no matter its nationality.

# CONCLUSIONS

- In terms of content,
  - it should include comprehensive information on programs (materials and schedules) and a brief biography about professors participants in the PhD program.
- Results must be in an understanding form;
- Most of the 26 quantitative data collected in this work can give an idea of the overall quality of doctoral programs, facilitating the choice of program for students interested.

# Acknowledgments

This research was funded by the “Estudios y Análisis” Program of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the EA-Web search portal. At the top left, there are logos for the Spanish Government and the Ministry of Education. The main header features the word "UNIVERSIDADES" in large blue letters, followed by "PROGRAMA DE ESTUDIOS Y ANALISIS (EA)". A navigation bar includes "Buscador EA-WEB" and a "GUIA DE USO" button. The main content area has a yellow sidebar with a paperclip image and a central text block. The text describes the program's goal to improve higher education quality and lists the types of projects supported. An "Entrar" button is present. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice for 2009 and a contact email address.

**GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA** **MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN**

# UNIVERSIDADES

PROGRAMA DE ESTUDIOS Y ANALISIS (EA)

Buscador EA-WEB

GUIA DE USO

BUSCADOR EA-WEB

El Programa de Estudios y Análisis promueve la realización de proyectos que contribuyan a la mejora de la calidad de la enseñanza superior, al incremento de la competitividad y al perfeccionamiento de los recursos humanos del sistema español de educación superior.

Para avanzar en esa dirección, la Web recoge y pone a disposición de la comunidad universitaria y científica los resultados de los proyectos financiados por la Dirección General de Política Universitaria en el marco de este programa.

Entrar

Cualquier incidencia en el correcto funcionamiento o sugerencias para la mejora en los procesos de búsqueda y recuperación de la información contenida en esta base de datos, puede comunicarse a la siguiente dirección: [programa\\_ea@educacion.es](mailto:programa_ea@educacion.es)

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Thank you!