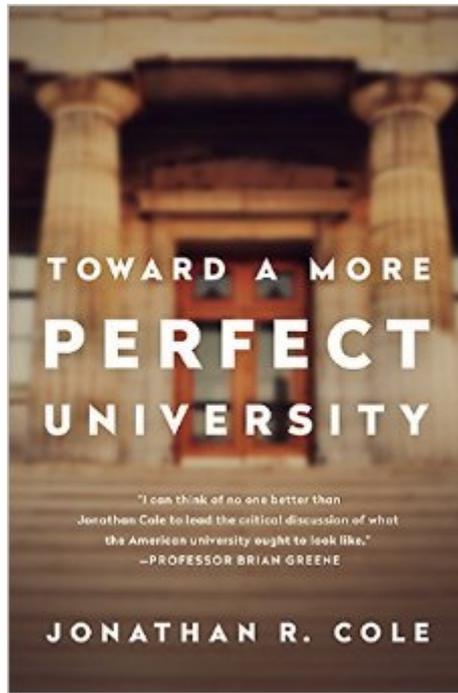


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# Toward A More Perfect University



## Synopsis

A renowned academic leader identifies the ways America's great universities should evolve in the decades ahead to maintain their global preeminence and enhance their intellectual stature and social mission as higher education confronts the twenty-first-century developments in technology, humanities, culture, and economics. Jonathan R. Cole, former provost and current University Professor at Columbia University, addresses some of the biggest challenges facing the modern American university: developing effective admission policies; creating the most meaningful examinations; dealing with rising costs; making undergraduate education central to the university's mission; exploring the role of the humanities; facilitating new discoveries and innovation; determining the place for professional schools; developing the research campuses of the future; assessing the role of sports; designing leadership and governance; and combating intellectual and legal threats to academic freedom.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

J. R. Cole is one of America's premier sociologists and any work by Professor Cole is worth reading closely. This is no exception. He is always balanced and judicious in his observations. And that is both a blessing and sometimes a bit of a disappointment. Take one telling example. Cole probably understands the student debt problem better than any other social scientist alive--certainly better than I do as much as I would like to become much more informed about it. But on the matter of student debt he largely confines himself to issues of the university's image and the esteem it enjoys

with the public in this work. He points out, quite correctly, that the Ivy League schools are not saddling their students with debt. Not only was he the beneficiary of Columbia's generosity while a student many decades ago but he notes that they and their sister institutions continue to extend themselves to help their students graduate on time and debt free. This is laudable but is it enough for them to do? I have called on Harvard, which as Cole notes is the most prestigious university in the United States to host a conference on student debt where scholars will have a chance to present learned papers on the dimensions of the problem and offer solutions to a problem that I and many others believe could damage America's economy and military security if ignored. On this problem Cole I hope would offer courageous proposals and insightful remarks as he is well qualified to do at that conference. It is not Columbia's problem, perhaps, in a narrow sense, but Columbia and Harvard are as much a part of America as University of Wisconsin, under attack from that state's governor Scott Walker.

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