

# Strengthening of Academic Culture to Reduce Intellectual Banality in Universities

Tuesday, 21 February 2012 WIB, By: Marwati


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Intellectual banality is increasingly widespread in the education sector, including in higher education today. This phenomenon is characterized by the undetected degradation with the decrease of academic quality and, at the same time, declining commitment in the field of science in which academics are involved. Academics tend to be more concerned with pragmatic values rather than the value of knowledge, conducting many researches but the results are not significant in the development of science and technology, have no high working spirit and academic asceticism.

Heru asserted the need to strengthening the academic culture in order to encourage academic work ethics by creating adequate institutions and infrastructure to reduce intellectual banality in universities. For instance, the university facilitates networking, seminars, library and publication in a prestigious forum. In addition, the state provides welfare assurance to the intellectuals of the campus, not only with the lecturer certification and financial support and professors, but also equivalent international assurance.

"In addition, it needs institutional strengthening of university based on discipline, punishment, and surveillance systems to achieve self-internalization and to implement the assurance of freedom, independence and academic order based on national legislation," said Prof. Drs. Heru Nugroho, SU, Ph.D., when confirmed as a Professor at the Faculty Social and Political Sciences, Tuesday (14/2), in the Senate Hall of UGM.

Heru said, the strengthening phenomenon of intellectual banality in college cannot be separated from how the pattern of power relations between countries and universities are working. Ideally, as was the case in developed countries, universities are given funding by either the state or other



sources, and are given the freedom to perform academic activities without the intervention of politics and administration. In fact, he cited the opinion of the late Umar Kayam, university organization in the country is like the "government service" so that it can be treated as a government "office" which functions to carry out the instructions of Central Government, in this case the Ministry of Education and Culture.

In a speech titled *The State, University and Intellectual Banality: A Critical Reflections From Within*, Heru said that despite the political changes after the reform that have created autonomy, but in real terms higher education is still under the grip of state's power. For example, a variety of research policy funded by grants from Director General of Higher Education is very administrative and bureaucratic. Studies format is also standardized with complicated financial administration while the instrument to look at substance aspects of the research tends to be neglected. A number of policies in the field of research in Higher Education Office are also conditioned to be research activity that is well below standard, such as the policy in equal distribution of research funds to universities.

Such policy made only for the sake of budget absorption and to meet the demands of the government is more concerned with outputs rather than outcomes. As the result, academic substance is not achieved and much below the standard. "It is all a result of the research budgets control politic by the state, so the state will be able to control the university. As the result, university becomes not independent which leads to intellectual banality of research," said the sociologist who was born in Yogyakarta, January 9, 1959.

Heru added that governance and institutional weakness of the university is also one of the triggers for intellectual banality in college. Even today it is visible that university became an object of struggle for power between stakeholders.

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