



Rector Josep Joan Moreso
Speech at the Barcelona GSE Opening Ceremony
AXA Auditorium, Thursday October 13th, 2011

M. H. President of the Government of Catalonia,
Magnificent Rector of the Autonomous University of Barcelona,
Chairman of the Barcelona GSE,
Chief Executive of AXA Spain
Students and faculty of the Barcelona GSE,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As rector of the UPF, it is always a pleasure to start a new academic course of the Barcelona GSE surrounded by leading international scholars and promising students from around the world.

Nevertheless, today's event is a bit different because, in addition to open the new academic year, we are here to celebrate the fifth anniversary of this energetic institution. And, actually, we could not have chosen a better time after hearing some recent good news regarding the Barcelona GSE and the UPF.

First, on Monday, we celebrated that Americans Thomas Sargent and Christopher Sims shared the 2011 Nobel Prize in economics for providing ways to understand the impacts of policy changes on output, inflation or employment.

Both professors are members of the scientific council at GSE and, as the rector of UPF, I am happy to remember that also, both of them have pronounced the Opening Lecture at the Faculty of Economics and Business Sciences at our University in 1991 and 1996, respectively, and supervised the doctoral dissertation of some of our scholars.

The second reason why we have to be proud of GSE is that, last week, this institution was distinguished by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation as one of eight top research institutions of excellence with an international impact within the Severo Ochoa Program framework.

Let me explain a little bit the essence of this competitive call: Severo Ochoa program was funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation in order to recognize those institutions that are defining the global scientific debate, and also grants each selected centre with four million Euros to promote cutting-edge research.

Within a rigorous accreditation process (75 candidate centres in three areas of knowledge), GSE was the only centre elected in the Social Sciences and Humanities field which, in my opinion, proves the potential of its vocational mission.

Furthermore, I wish to emphasize that four of the eight centres acknowledged by this competitive program are Catalan.

On the other hand, we are very proud to know that, according to the 2011 *Times Higher Education* Ranking, one of the most prestigious and influential university rankings, the UPF is the only Spanish University among the top 200 in the world as the results put Pompeu Fabra University in 186th position world-wide.

UPF is most noted **for its scientific production and internationalization** and the scientific production developed within the GSE framework has been essential to obtain such good results.

In 77th position, UPF is the **first Spanish university** in the European ranking, and the prevalence of Catalan institutions within the Spanish university system is confirmed since UPF, the University of Barcelona and the Autonomous University of Barcelona are **among the top 100 European universities**.

Regarding this good results we may conclude that Catalan higher education institutions are working in the right direction. From my point of view, this means developing a model based on teaching quality, on the one hand, and internationally recognised research, on the other. Because postgraduate studies having significant prominence internationally, is the result of solid connections between scientific research and teaching. In addition, this model needs to be opened to other prominent centres because, in a more and more globalized world, academics have to be able to work together keeping in mind that, bringing together capacities, let increase excellence.

In that sense, the new regulation of Doctoral Schools places Research & Development activities at the heart of the university project at the same time that opens the door to interuniversity projects: Because if universities and higher education institutions are called to become key actors in a knowledge-based economy model, we need the appropriate framework to make it possible. In our case, for example, an interuniversity PhD program on Economics jointly developed by UPF and the Autonomous University, with the expertise of the Barcelona GSE will be the basis of the future economists and -I am sure- a great success.

To finish this short address let me say a few words for the new students: You are lucky, you have been accepted in an outstanding institution. You have a future full of opportunities and the skills to make them true. Now, you are just asked to take as much advantage as possible from the resources provided and to stretch them to their greatest extent. And we strongly hope that your talent and your effort will contribute to overcome this such difficult economic circumstances.

I wish you the best of luck,

Thank you,