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Transforming a College: The Story of a Little-Known College's Strategic Climb to National Distinction

By George Keller



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Forty years ago, North Carolina's Elon College was struggling to attract students and remain solvent. Today Elon enrolls students from 46 states and 40 foreign countries. Since 1988, it has erected a new library, student center, football stadium, fitness center, and science facilities on its 500-acre campus. The number of applications has risen 40 percent since 1995, and SAT scores of incoming students have improved by 98 points. Elon has emerged as one of America's most desirable colleges.

How did this transformation happen? What can other colleges and universities learn from Elon's remarkable turnaround? Taking a new approach to the study of higher education, George Keller examines the decisions made by Elon's administration, trustees, and faculty to transform a school with a limited endowment into a top regional university. Using Elon as a case study, Keller sheds light on high-stakes competition among America's colleges and universities?where losers face contraction or closure and winners gain money, talented students, and top faculty.



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Transforming a College: The Story of a Little-Known College's Strategic Climb to National Distinction By George Keller Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #374927 in Books
- Brand: Johns Hopkins University Press
- Published on: 2004-09-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.50" h x .66" w x 4.75" l, .52 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 136 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

Keller's study sheds light on the competitive nature of higher education today, and may provide inspiration and guidance for other colleges and universities currently facing similar challenges.

(*Book News*)

Keller has brought his estimable experience as a consultant, strategic planner, and scholar to the task of presenting an engaging case study of institutional transformation... The resulting account is appealing and engaging, challenging the mindset of readers who are cynical about the possibilities for change in higher education and further inspiring those readers who remain hopeful that, at least in some situations, wholesale transformation is achievable.

(Kristen A. Renn and William A. Edwards *Review of Higher Education*)

About the Author

George Keller is an education consultant and one of America's leading scholars of higher education. The former chair of the graduate program in higher education studies at the University of Pennsylvania, he is the author of *Academic Strategy: The Management Revolution in American Higher Education*, also available from Johns Hopkins.

Users Review

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