

Research management and academic profession: external research funding and gendered academic work

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Further topics for today

- Changing importance of external research funding in academia
- Gendered academic work and work-life balance

Changing institutional context of academic profession

- New Public Management approaches in European higher education: efficiency, effectiveness and accountability
- Universities become 'complete and corporate' organizations with strategic capacities (Krücken and Meier 2006, Leisyte and Dee 2012)
- Academic capitalism both in the U.S. and Europe - competition for research funding, students and knowledge commercialization
- Changing performance expectations in universities: profiling, HR policies, matrix structures, standardization.

Research management at European universities

- Increasing competition for research funds and staff
- Diversifying resource base
- Complying with external research evaluation criteria
- University's "third mission"
- Changing promotion criteria of the academic staff
- Professional training of staff

Research funders in the Netherlands

NWO

STW

Province/Mu
nicipality

OCW

Sectoral
programmes:
Nano Ned

ERC

ESF

Horizon
2020

Firms

Research funders in the UK

TRUSTS:
Leverhume
Trust,
Welcome Trust

ESF

7 Research
Councils

British
Academy

Royal
Society

ERC

Municipali
ties

Firms

Horizon
2020

Department of
Business, Innovation
and Skills

Comparison of the performance pressures in NL and the UK

- **UK – evaluation results related to funding, NL – no direct link to funding**
- UK: Research Assessment Exercise since 1986, now Research Excellence Framework
- NL: ‘Visitations’ since 1993

- **The variety of funding sources available in the system:**
- NL – a model with a few funding agencies
- UK and the US – multiple funding agencies

Discussion in small groups

- Take a couple of minutes to think about:
 1. What outputs and funding levels are important for you to build your academic credibility? How do you know about this?
 2. Which grants (national, European, global) are important in your discipline and in your country?
 3. Have you applied for external research funding for your project already? If yes, please discuss the process and outcomes (what you found positive and what was negative)?
 4. What implications does performance monitoring and external funding have for your career?
- Please discuss your answers with your group.

Do research funders care about research evaluation results?

- “[Research evaluation helps] get granted projects. From NWO, that is fair because these reports tell them you are excellent, and if you are excellent, people can trust you if they give you a project. If you are not so good, there are doubts if the quality of the project will be the same as with the group that is excellent. I think that this is the way it works.”

(Prof, Biotech, NL)

Academic life in projects – going for “fundable” topics

- “I wouldn’t possibly immediately have chosen [the research topic] although it’s actually very much connected; it’s not central to my research. And so it’s influencing....Market funding has influenced what my future research expectations would be over a period extending about 2 to 3 year period. I would actually have to say, ok, I will be concentrating on something which I might not concentrate or probably would not concentrate otherwise.” (Post-doc, History, England)

A short exchange with your neighbour

- How straightforward is career advancement in your case within the department - is it only about building academic credibility via publishing, and research funding? How clear are the criteria?
- If not- what else is important for your career progression?
- When was last time you asked for promotion/permanent or new contract? Did it materialize?
- How do you balance work and life? What would you advice for improvement of work life balance for your colleagues?

Issues with career progression

- Low promotion frequency
- Constraints for career advancement ('glass ceiling')
- Work-life balance related issues

Reasons to leave the current university

- For PhD students:
 - The stage of PhD program
 - In case of no help from mentors in career progression
 - Ambition to become a senior academic
- For other academics:
 - Low attractiveness of academia as a career option for women
 - Temporary contracts
 - Lack of recognition for individual efforts; especially for promotion
 - Lack of equality in recruitment, selection and promotion

Work-life balance

- Work intensification and performance monitoring have implications for work-life balance: working 60 hours per week and having family?
- Work life balance and how it is (not) secured is gendered (Deem, 2012)
- Saying 'no' is gendered - women tend to get involved in pastoral care functions which are not rewarded (Deem, 2012)
- Household chores and care take more time from women than from men
- Some countries introduce paternal leave besides maternal leave, still socially not fully accepted
- “The best decision of my life was to choose the right partner who will share with me household and childcare duties” (Soc Science Assist Prof, NL)

Take aways

- Money gives you independence wherever you are: look for funding
- Performance counts – but it has to be fun
- Do not accept being tolerated but not valued
- Look somewhere else if you get too frustrated – but only move for upward positions
- Do not get distracted from that what you care about – having fun and doing what you like – research and/or teaching

Last question

- What would be no. 1 priority for you for the next year in terms of your career progression?

Thank you for your attention

Related publications:

- **Leisyte, L. and Dee, J.** (2012) Understanding Academic Work in a Changing Institutional Environment. Faculty Autonomy, Productivity and Identity in Europe and the United States. In Smart, J. and M. Paulsen (eds.) *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- **Leisyte, L. and Hosch-Dayican, B.** (2014) Changing academic roles and shifting gender inequalities: A case analysis of the influence of teaching-research nexus on academic career perspectives of women in the Netherlands. In Eggins, H. (ed.) *Gender in Higher Education*. Springer, forthcoming.
- **Leisyte, L.** (2014) Changing academic identities in the context of a managerial university – bridging the duality between professions and organizations. Evidence from the U.S. and Europe. In Cummings, W. and U. Teichler (eds). *The Relevance of Academic Work*. Dordrecht: Springer, forthcoming.