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Abstract

The new demands of mass systems of higher education and the emerging environment of global academic competition are altering the traditional institutions for assuring academic standards in universities. As a consequence many nations are experimenting with new instruments for academic quality assurance. Contemporary government control of academic quality assumes three primary forms: ?oversight? or direct regulation; ?competition? or steering of market forces; and ?mutuality? or professional self-regulation structured by the state. The challenge confronting all nations is to design a policy framework that effectively balances the forces of the state, the market, and the academic profession to assure academic standards in universities. Based upon the strengths and weaknesses observed in 14 policy analyses of innovative national instruments of professional self-regulation, market-based regulation, and direct state regulation for assuring academic quality in universities, we outline the essential components of a national framework for assuring academic standards. (HRK /

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