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Title

Entangled in academic capitalism? : a case-study on changing ideals and practices of university research

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Abstract

During recent years universities have engaged increasingly in academic capitalism as a response to the decrease in budget funding and the external push towards entrepreneurial activities. This paper explores on the micro level what impacts the changing funding patterns have on university research, how the changes are responded to in different research units, and how researchers experience them. Based on focused interviews with senior researchers in three different types of research settings in Finland, the paper argues that engaging in academic capitalism is everyday reality in all units but takes a diversity of forms depending on how close or distant the field is from the market. In addition the disciplinary and institutional cultures shape the process of adaptation to the changing environmental conditions. It is concluded that increasing market-orientation does not displace traditional academic practices, values and ideals as researchers try to accommodate them to entrepreneurial activities. However, especially due to the growth and intensification of project work

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on short-term contracts, achieving a balance between the two value-sets is at present felt to be increasingly difficult, thus generating a variety of tensions in the daily work of the researchers and even endangering the quality of research. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Ylijoki, Oili-Helena, E-Mail: oili-helena.ylijoki@uta.fi