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**Abstract**

Striving universities seek to gain prestige in the academic market. One characteristic of striving universities is a change in the faculty reward system. In this study, we examined historical promotion and tenure criteria in five disciplinary units at one striving university and then conducted interviews with senior faculty and recently tenured faculty in each unit to better understand the striving dynamics at play. Findings demonstrated that pressures to seek legitimacy were a result of the faculty themselves, the institution's desire to gain legitimacy through an increased research profile and the disciplinary ties outside the university. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)