

08.9.2024

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Title

Re-inventing shared governance : implications for organisational culture and institutional leadership /

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Publication year

2013

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education quarterly. - 67 (2013) 3, S. 256 - 274

Inventory number

34906

Keywords

Ausland : Dänemark : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Finnland : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Norwegen : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Schweden : einzelne Hochschulen ; Hochschule : Verwaltung allgemein

Abstract

Shared governance has been a key historical characteristic of higher education although this form of governance has come under increased pressure in recent decades. It is often argued that shared governance is less relevant for tackling the challenges related to a more dynamic environment of the sector. This paper discusses underlying premises for the current conceptions of shared governance and analyses how a sample of Nordic universities perceives the place and role of governance in their strategic development. It is found that most universities emphasise leadership and leadership development as a key measure to strengthen their governance capacity and it is argued that most universities seem to overlook the cultural and symbolic aspects of governance along the way. This may have serious consequences for the internal legitimacy and trust when universities enter into demanding change processes..(HRK / Abstract übernommen)