The Rise of the Logic of Quantification in Korean Higher Education

Monday, April 24, 2017
2:00 - 3:30 pm
W113 Seashore Hall

Hyunsik Chun, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Iowa
Mike Sauder, Associate Professor, University of Iowa

Drawing on a 22-month ethnographic study examining how a Korean university responded to university rankings, this paper traces the emergence and development of a “logic of quantification” throughout the institution. This case study allows us to carefully detail the ways in which both national and world rankings transformed the organizational structure and practices of the school. In particular, we show how a new organizational entity—the rankings management department—came to assert its influence over university governance and prompted dramatic changes in work expectations, surveillance, and accountability practices. We then identify the micro-processes that help to maintain this new technical system and discuss what has been lost in this transformation.

This talk is part of the Inequality Seminar which is a seminar and speaker series that provides a forum on campus for faculty and graduate students who are interested in inequality broadly defined. It is an opportunity for faculty and graduate students to present their research and to hear about other inequality-related work from researchers on the off-campus. These talks are free and open to the public. For more information about the Inequality Seminar, contact Professor Sarah Bruch at sarah-bruch@uiowa.edu.

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