

## Reconfiguring Academic Labor in Evaluative Universities: Organizational Designs and the Distribution of Institutional Pressure

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### INTRODUCTION & AIM

Academic intensification is commonly treated as a workload or well-being problem. This study argues it is an **organizational design problem** — and uses Spain as a revealing case study of a broader structural phenomenon.

When evaluative demands expand without functional redistribution, pressure concentrates. Spain illustrates this structural mechanism — but the pattern applies wherever organizational design lags behind formalization.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Functional differentiation

How distinctly roles (teaching, research, admin) are assigned across positions

#### Evaluative formalization

Expansion of metrics, audits and accreditation over academic work

#### Professional bureaucracy

Coordination via standardized expert competencies, not hierarchy

#### Hybrid governance

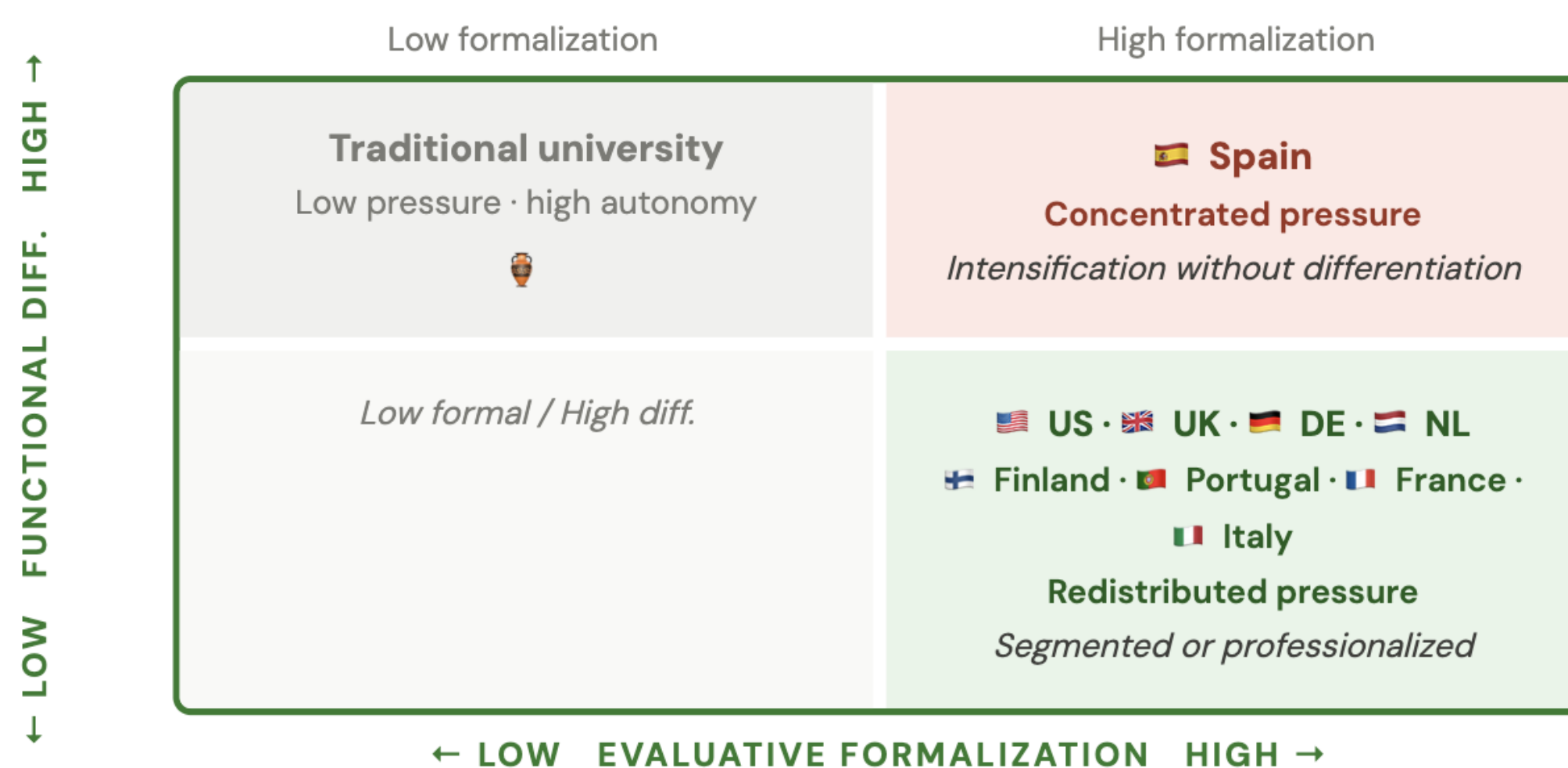
Academic autonomy + NPM (New Public Management: market-based efficiency and audit-driven accountability applied to public institutions) logics coexisting

### METHOD

Conceptual study · structured review of empirical literature and comparative governance research. Countries selected for contrasting organizational configurations across two dimensions.

Spain (focal) · United States · United Kingdom · Germany · Netherlands · Finland · Portugal · France · Italy

### CONCEPTUAL MODEL — QUADRANT



### RESULTS — COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

System	Countries	Funct. diff.	Eval. form.	Pressure
Integrated	Spain	Low — all in one role	High — metrics & audits	Concentrated
Segmented	US	High — tenure vs. contingent	Medium — varies by inst.	Unequal
Hybrid prof.	UK · DE · NL	High — third-space roles	High — via support structures	Redistributed
Restructured	FI · PT	Med-high — external boards	Med-high — legal reform	Partial redist.
Divergent	FR · IT	Medium — Bologna reforms	Med-high — Europeanization	Variable

**Generalizable pattern:** Any system combining low functional differentiation with high evaluative formalization is structurally vulnerable to this same concentration of pressure.

### CONCLUSIONS

- Academic intensification is **not inevitable** — it is a predictable outcome of organizational design, not of modernization itself. Where evaluation grows without role redistribution, pressure concentrates.
- Spain exemplifies this pattern: **low functional differentiation + high evaluative formalization** yields what this study terms *structural intensification without differentiation* — a foreseeable, and therefore addressable, institutional design effect.
- Comparative systems (US, UK, Germany, Finland) show that **functional redistribution** — through contractual segmentation or third-space professionalization — channels pressure differently, though generates its own tensions.
- Addressing academic sustainability requires **organizational redesign** — not only individual well-being policies. The key question: under what architecture does the university want to modernize?

### FUTURE WORK

Empirical validation of model across governance systems with primary data

Comparative case studies: Spain, UK, Germany, Finland over time

Cross-national burnout & gender gap analysis by organizational configuration

Policy research on third-space professionalization conditions & limits

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