

U.S. research doctorate programs to be evaluated

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The National Research Council announced Wednesday it has launched its latest project to assess U.S. research doctorate programs.

As in previous efforts during 1983 and 1995, the new study is designed to help universities improve the quality of their doctorate programs through benchmarking.

The project also provides potential students and the public with accessible, readily available information on doctoral programs nationwide; and enhances the nation's overall research capacity, the council said.

The council, part of the National Academies, is a private, non-profit institution operating under a Congressional charter. Organized in 1916, the council is the principal operating agency of both the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering.

The council said its latest study will be a marked departure from earlier projects. It will proceed primarily through on-line questionnaires to universities, programs, faculty and students in some fields. It will also gather information about quantitative variables that are related important factors such as scholarly productivity, demographic characteristics of students and faculty, and characteristics of each doctoral program.

Assessment data will be available in 2007.

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