

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A STUDY OF GENDER EQUITY IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES IN NEW BRUNSWICK RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

I. INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1999, Executive Dean Richard Foley of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) in New Brunswick and Area Deans Patricia Roos and Michael Beals began a discussion of the status of women in the FAS. They agreed to undertake a study to evaluate the status of faculty women with respect to salaries, hires, start-up funds, promotion rates, research support, leadership opportunities and general climate. During calendar year 2000, data for the study was compiled, and interviews with 20 senior faculty members were conducted. On November 27, 2000, acting FAS Dean Richard Falk created an ad hoc Committee on the Status of Women to consider what these data showed about the situation of women faculty in FAS, and what steps might be taken to address any problem areas.

The Committee consisted of 10 senior faculty members including present and former deans and present and former department chairpersons representing Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Life and Mathematical/Physical Sciences: Prof. Gail Ashley, Department of Geological Sciences; Prof. Mary Hartman, Director, Institute for Women's Leadership; Prof. Angelique Haugerud, Department of Anthropology; Prof. Mary Hawkesworth, Departments of Political Science and Women's Studies; Prof. Mark Killingsworth, Department of Economics; Prof. Noemie Koller, Department of Physics and Astronomy (Committee Chairperson); Prof. Michael McKeon, Department of English; Prof. Wilma Olson, Department of Chemistry; Dean Barbara Shailor, Douglass College, Department of Classics; and Prof. Wise Young, Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience; assisted by Prof. Patricia Roos, Department of Sociology and Prof. Michael Beals, FAS and Department of Mathematics).

After examining the data, the Committee (renamed the FAS Gender Equity Committee) concluded that a deeper and wider analysis of all FAS faculty women at all ranks was in order. It therefore developed a new web-based survey in February 2001. The survey was sent to all 190 tenured and tenure-track women who had been in residence in FY 1999-2000. A total of 81 usable responses was received, constituting a good return rate for such a survey. Respondents were representative of the FAS faculty population of women in terms of both rank and disciplinary group. The Committee also considered more recent FAS personnel information as well as data on the gender distribution of doctoral degree recipients from the National Research Council.

The Committee's findings concerning gender equity in the FAS and its recommendations are outlined in the next two sections, presenting the material in Sections VIII and IX of the full report.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The status of women at Rutgers University is exemplary in many respects.

- * Rutgers ranks among the top three public AAU institutions in the percentage of women faculty.¹
- * It also ranks well among public AAU institutions in faculty salaries: it is fifth from the top in salaries for full professors, first for associate professors, and ninth for assistant professors.²
- * Within the FAS (which is home to about 46% of the Rutgers-New Brunswick faculty) women constitute 17.3% of the faculty at the most senior ranks (PI and PII, calculated from Table 4 in the full report), a percentage that exceeds the comparable national average of 15% for public AAU institutions.³

The FAS deans have been committed to creating a supportive environment where all faculty members can carry out their teaching, research, and service responsibilities with equal access to opportunities and rewards.

- * Significant recent progress has occurred in hiring women and in maintaining salary equity. During the past three decades, the FAS has increased the proportion of women among new faculty hires from an average of 26.3% in the 1970s to 35.8% in the 1990s.⁴
- * Indeed, more recent FAS data indicate some notable gains for women at the tenured ranks from the AY 1999-2000 data used in this report. Among women at the associate professor rank, there has been a net gain of 18, attributable primarily to 21 successful promotions and four outside hires (seven were promoted out of the rank, or resigned). These gains increased women's representation among associate professors from 32% to approximately 38%.
- * There has also been an increase of six in the PII rank, attributable to six successful promotions and one faculty hire (one female PII resigned to move to another university). This increased the total representation of women PII from 9% to approximately 12% (see Table 32).⁵
- * In addition, the Administration recruited a new female Executive Dean for the FAS, its first since its inception in 1981.

The Committee commends the FAS deans and the University Administration for these FAS hiring successes.

Many of the Committee's findings reinforce the image of Rutgers as a leader in the higher education community on gender equity issues.

* For example, the Committee found that, in areas of academic base salary, promotion rates to the associate professor rank, and space allocation there exist no major gender inequalities.

* Nearly two-thirds of women faculty responding to the survey found a supportive environment at Rutgers to carry out their academic work (Q8, see Appendix III in the full report). Furthermore, 81% of the respondents reported that they had adequate office space (Q1, Appendix III); 15 of 16 who responded to the lab question said they were satisfied with their laboratory space (Q2); 86% find their teaching load fair (Q5); and 75% find their advising load fair (Q6), when compared to that of other members of their department.

The Committee concluded, however, that despite these successes the FAS has not yet achieved its goal of providing equal opportunity and a supportive environment for its male and female faculty members. Subtle and not so subtle discrimination by sex persists on campus. The most glaring inequities are documented in the preceding chapters and are summarized here:

- Women are seriously underrepresented on the faculty of 9 of the 36 departments. In these departments, the percentage of women on the faculty is less than 60% of the percentage of cumulative doctorates awarded between 1981 and 1998 (calculated from Tables 2 and 7 in the full report).
- Although the male to female ratio at the PI rank is 3.3/1, the male to female ratio at the PII level is 10.3/1 (calculated from Table 4).
- Approximately one-third of the 81 women surveyed indicated they had experienced unwanted sexual comments, attention or advances from colleagues, though the time frame of these occurrences is unknown. More specifically, four (18.2%) assistant professors reported unwanted approaches. This figure is significant because it represents sexual harassment activities as recently as the last five years (Q9, Appendix III).
- The perception of the women surveyed is that men are considered for tenure and promotion earlier in their career than women, that promotion standards are higher for women, and that women's scholarly accomplishments and their

service and teaching contributions are undervalued in comparison with those of male colleagues.

- 66% of the survey respondents believed that faculty women were more likely than their male colleagues to feel personal or professional isolation, and these percentages were higher for senior than for junior faculty (Q12, Appendix III; see also footnote 41).
- Summer salary supplements, research accounts and start-up fund allocations favor male faculty (Tables 21-24).

These failings prevent women from achieving their potential and make it more likely that they will leave the University. Corrective actions are addressed in the following recommendations.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee believes that strong leadership by the Dean can, to a large extent, remedy current gender inequities. The Dean must regularly reaffirm the FAS commitment to gender equity in the promotion process, establish mechanisms within the FAS to promote continuous discussion with department chairpersons of issues of equity, monitor the application of fair promotion procedures, and ensure that women have access to influential positions in FAS departments and the FAS administration.

The recommendations listed below identify strategies to enhance gender equality in the FAS.

A. Hiring

Hiring women at all levels and, in particular, at the higher ranks and in leadership positions is the single most pressing need.

1. Departments should be required to develop strategies, including timetables, to increase the number of women on their faculty to meet the percentages of women receiving doctorates in recent years.
2. Departments should also be required to develop specific plans, including timetables, to promote and recruit women at the PII rank.

3. The upcoming University capital campaign should be used to recruit and retain outstanding women scholars, as well as scholars in under-represented areas and disciplines. The declared initiative for dedicated academic endowments for faculty and academic chairs should be adapted to cluster hiring initiatives of outstanding women.

B. Oversight of departmental policies

The Committee suggests the following decanal strategies for improving gender equity:

1. Highlight the importance of gender issues in the annual orientation of chairpersons.
2. Instruct department chairs that they will be held accountable for strictly enforcing the university's prohibition of sexual harassment.
3. Require department chairpersons to institute and publicize academic mentoring procedures for nontenured faculty. Faculty mentors should meet with nontenured faculty at least yearly to discuss research (current and planned), teaching, and service activities.
4. Foster discussion of equity issues at FAS chairs meetings, as well as between department chairpersons and their faculties.
5. Ensure fair promotion procedures, including gender equity, in preparing promotion packets. Charge Area Deans with the responsibility for monitoring departmental procedures for considering candidates for promotion.
6. Ensure that women candidates are considered for faculty and administrative appointments.
7. Charge department chairs with the responsibility of identifying and strategically supporting women to assume departmental leadership positions, and other administrative appointments.
8. Work with department chairs and other relevant personnel to devise fundraising strategies that promote gender equity in the FAS Capital Campaign.
9. Establish a special fund to encourage departments to invite outstanding female candidates for special lectures and seminars.

C. FAS-wide decanal strategies

Strong leadership in the Dean's office sets the tone for the FAS as a whole. The Committee proposes the following steps:

1. Appoint a standing Gender Equity Review Committee to monitor implementation of these recommendations and to assist the Dean in developing mechanisms to achieve gender equity in the FAS. The Committee's charge should cover issues of race and ethnic discrimination, which merit additional analysis.
2. Ensure that access to discretionary decanal funds (summer salaries, start-ups, and research accounts) be equitably distributed. Gender inequity, in addition to the usual historical market reasons, needs to be considered in the award of merit salary increases.
3. Appoint a permanent mentoring staff (ombudsperson) in the Dean's office charged with listening to faculty concerns, and identifying and resolving conflicts.
4. Update the electronic database prepared for this review to allow continuous monitoring of progress in gender equity. Add new data as needed by the Gender Equity Review Committee.
5. Publicize existing parental leave policies, ensure that all faculty are treated equally in applying for these leaves, and foster a college-wide environment that supports faculty who take such leaves.

D. Collaboration with the University higher administration

The Committee raised some issues that cannot be resolved within the FAS alone. For this reason, the Committee recommends that the Dean consider exploring the following issues with the central administration:

1. Request the central administration to include in the charge to External Review Committees an evaluation of department chairpersons and departmental faculty practices on issues of gender equity.
2. Increase administrative appointments of women in positions of visibility and authority in the University.
3. Create a high quality infant care facility on the New Brunswick-Piscataway campus.

E. Dissemination

The Committee recommends that the Dean make this report available to the FAS chairpersons and faculty for discussion. Chairpersons should be encouraged to discuss the report at faculty meetings, inviting the relevant Area Dean and one or two Committee members as resource people for discussion.

Rutgers has joined a select group of American universities in assessing the environment for faculty women and has already addressed many existing inequities. Continued vigilance and monitoring are necessary, however, to achieve and maintain a truly equal opportunity environment.

FOOTNOTES

1. This ranking is based on 1999 data from the Rutgers University's Office of Institutional Research and Planning. The Committee included in the comparison only the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks (deleting the "other" category).
2. Rutgers Fact Book, pp. 139-141; <http://oirap.rutgers.edu/instchar/factpdf/aau99.pdf>. See also R. B. Slater, "The Gender Pay Gap," The Monthly Forum on Women in Higher Education, December 1995, p 27. The schools noted for paying women higher average salaries than Rutgers are all private institutions: Princeton University, Stanford University, Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, and Southwestern University.
3. The national average is taken from 1999 data on AAU institutions (see footnote 1).
4. Table 3 in the full report documents these trends. Note that only faculty members who were hired from 1986 to the present, and those hired prior to 1986 and still in the FAS in 1986, are included in the FAS database. See note "a" in Table 3.
5. Table 32 in the full report provides additional information on hires, retirements, resignations, and promotions since the spring of 2000, for both faculty men and women. It includes all faculty scheduled to arrive on campus through January 2002.