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FACULTY STUDIES: SUMMARY OF THREE REPORTS

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INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Provost's Office, this report presents executive summaries of three recent reports focusing on issues related to Western's faculty. The three reports are (in order of publishing date, earliest to latest): Western Washington University Gender Equity Salary Study (April, 2001); 1999 Western Washington University Faculty Survey: a Sampling of Findings (August, 2002); and Perceptions of Subtle Gender Discrimination, Hostility, and Sexual Harassment among Senior Women Faculty at Western Washington University (August, 2002). The three full reports were initially discussed at the recent fall Academic Leadership Conference. From those discussions it was felt that a single publication delineating the main points of the reports would be useful in facilitating campus-wide conversations of the findings. Copies of the complete reports are available in electronic form and in hard copy. For the Gender Equity Salary Study please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Resource Planning (650-3087); for the other two reports please contact the Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing (650-3409).

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY GENDER EQUITY SALARY STUDY

Among all 463 full-time Western faculty in 2000-2001, the average (mean) salary was \$55,493 for men and \$47,968 (\$7,527 less) for women. Including only the 412 who were tenured or tenure-track, the figures are \$56,525 and \$50,467 (\$6,058 different). The question is how to understand the causes of the difference by gender. For example, since 1961 (the earliest hire date among Western's current faculty) the national percentage of women among new Ph.D.s has risen from 11% to 45%. Almost inevitably, therefore, the 33% of Western's faculty who are female will be more recent hires and more recent Ph.D.s than the males. How much of the salary gap do factors such as this "explain?"



The factors we are able to test in this study—those for which data were available—include college and department, rank and tenure status, gender, ethnicity, age, handicapped status, veteran status, citizen status, highest degree, data of first employment at Western, date when highest degree was earned, highest degree, date of tenure and date of current rank.

When all these factors (except salary step at first hire) are combined into a single regression model, 84% of the variation in salary is explained. The most powerful explanatory factors are rank, academic unit (in particular, CBE and Computer Science), years since degree, and having the terminal degree. After all these factors are accounted for, the adjusted gender gap falls to \$541, an amount that has a 30% probability of occurring by chance.

Why do these factors explain the gender pay gap? Because women are underrepresented in nearly all the higher paying categories. For example, only 15% of full professors hired before 1980 are female (compared to 53% of lecturers and instructors). And only 17% of faculty in CBE, Western's highest paid unit, are female. The one instance in which women are fully represented in a category that is paid above average (adjusted for all other factors) is Woodring, where pay is modestly higher than expected (as predicted by the model).

Two other analyses add consistency to the picture. First, salary at initial hire is influenced by year of hire, year of highest degree, highest degree, and academic unit—especially CBE. After adjusting for these factors, the gender gap is .5 steps, with a 22% likelihood of occurring by chance—except that one interaction term is also reliable: women CBE hires are estimated to gain a salary bonus 2.8 steps lower than the bonus gained by male CBE hires (when compared to the remainder of the campus).

Second, changes in earnings after hire are explained almost entirely by salary level at hire. In addition, time at Western, rank and unit all influence increases in earnings. There is no statistically reliable gender effect (the adjusted estimate is that women gain \$305 more than men, which is 46% likely to be the result of chance) except for one reliable interaction term: when compared to other academic units, women in the social sciences are estimated to have gained \$1,546 more than the amount predicted by the remainder of the model.

1999 WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY FACULTY SURVEY: A SAMPLING OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In the fall and winter quarters, 1998 and 1999, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) conducted a national survey of college and university faculty. Western also participated in the HERI Faculty Survey, but later, in the spring of 1999. Because it ran behind, Western's data was not included among the 33,785 survey responses; nonetheless, Western did receive normative results, including a breakout of "peer" institutes, defined by HERI researchers non-doctoral granting institutions. When Western findings are compared to national findings, it is with these schools. Also of importance to note: Western researchers had access to a frequency distribution of national data only, which made statistical manipulations such as multivariate analysis impossible for national findings. There were approximately 550 FTE faculty working at Western in the spring of 1999. There were 251 participants in the survey. Of these, 207 were full time. For this report, only responses from these 207 were utilized.

SUMMARIES OF THREE REPORTS

Summary

Demographically, the faculty participants were all full-time, mostly white (91%), and in the majority male (62%). In these ways, they were similar to the faculty at the listed peer institutes. Western faculty were slightly younger than their peers, made slightly less money, but were slightly more likely to list Ph.D. as their terminal degree. Western faculty were much less satisfied with their salary and fringe benefits than their peers.

Western faculty were somewhat more likely to do research than their peers, as well as to publish, whether journal articles, chapters in edited volumes, books, manuals or monographs. Moreover, Western faculty were more likely to have focused their research or writing on women and/or racial minorities.

Western faculty were more likely to use competency grading than their peers, less likely to grade on the curve. Western faculty were more likely to use cooperative learning (small groups) and group projects, less likely to use "extensive" lecturing.

Issues of community service were slightly more important to Western faculty than to their peers. Additionally, Western faculty were more likely to consider it important to enhance students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups. Oppositely, Western faculty were less likely to feel their institution placed a high priority on recruiting more minority students, and on creating a diverse, multi-cultural campus environment.

Western faculty did not appear to feel any particular animosity towards school administrators, but were less likely to feel respected by their immediate peers than faculty at their peer institutes did. Western faculty were also less likely to feel they were rewarded for teaching well. Neither did Western faculty feel that WWU has experienced significant policy changes over the past decade.

The top three stress issues for Western faculty were time pressures, lack of personal time; and institutional procedures and 'red tape'. Yet they were considerably more satisfied with the quality of WWU students than their peers were, and when asked if they were to begin their careers again would they still want to be college professors, most (73%) indicated they would.

Unfortunately, Western's female faculty were less likely than their peers to indicate that the climate for women faculty at their institution was comfortable. Indeed, Western's women faculty were less likely to agree that women faculty are treated fairly, more likely to report they had been sexually harassed, as well as more likely to report that they had felt stress due to subtle discrimination.

PERCEPTIONS OF SUBTLE GENDER DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY, AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG SENIOR WOMEN FACULTY AT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Introduction

In 1999, Western participated in a national survey of faculty. Preliminary analysis of the data revealed that Western's full-time female faculty reported experiencing sexual harassment and feeling subtle discrimination at a higher percentage than did full-time female faculty at peer institutions. While the data was obviously noteworthy, key problems with the national sur-

vey included that: 1) no time frame was given, therefore it was unclear if the problems were long past or recent; and 2) no definitions were given. In particular, were respondents interpreting sexual harassment as gender harassment (the former defined for this study as sexually intimidating or hostile behavior and the latter as poor treatment due to one's gender)?

At the request of the Provost, a survey was constructed, then administered by a local, off-campus firm in a web-based format to all tenured female faculty (N=94). Ultimately, 54 completed surveys were received, a 59% response rate. In addition to multiple choice questions, 52 of the 54 respondents answered open-ended questions.

Subtle Gender Discrimination

The most commonly reported problem was that of a double standard, with 58% reporting recent and prior belief that a double standard exists at Western. Another 20% believed that there *used* to be a double standard, and 22% don't believe there is a double standard at Western.

One of the key research questions motivating this study was whether the problems were the result of past or recent experiences. Of the 54 cases, 57% reported one or more recent events, and 43% reported prior experiences or no experiences only. Recent experiences reported by respondents included: 1) being misunderstood or put down (57%); 2) believing a double standard exists at Western (54%); and 3) receiving less pay for the same work was reported (48%).

Another way to examine these data is to look at the items which, while not the highest in frequency, may be considered the most severe in terms of the extent to which female faculty are experiencing the problem. For example, being ignored when they tried to assert themselves with decision makers was reported by 31% of all respondents, but 77% of those reported experiencing this at the highest extent possible: "extremely" or "very." Being held in low esteem was reported in these upper categories by 26% of all respondents, and the double standard was reported by 33% .

Those who had experienced gender discrimination both prior to five years ago and within the past five years were asked if they felt conditions had gotten better, worse, or remained the same. The good news was that the most commonly experienced problem—"being misunderstood" (mean=2.34)—also showed one of the largest shifts for the better. However, one of the least improved areas—"work being treated with less respect" (mean=1.94)—remained virtually unchanged. And while it was interesting to note that many of the more objective items (promotions, supports, training) all showed improvement, the less observable forms of discrimination remained unchanged—particularly those items representing interpersonal interactions.

Through open-ended prompts, respondents also described the nature of their experiences. Several respondents reported that they have had to work harder for tenure and promotion. According to one respondent, "women are expected to be outstanding for promotion, while men do not have to meet the same standard."

Some respondents said that their pay is lower, despite, as one respondent noted, "...a salary equity study done years ago that identified quite a few women who were underpaid compared to males in similar fields, rank, and experience." Moreover, according to one individual, "there is an unspoken assumption that male creative and scholarly activities are more valid and valued."

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Sexual Harassment and Hostility

The survey asked respondents questions regarding sexual harassment and hostility in the workplace. Specifically, they were asked:

- if they have ever been subjected to sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive treatment from others at Western and if so, how recently;
- whether their experience was an isolated event, a series of multiple events, or an ongoing problem; and
- if they experienced more than one event, whether the treatment was from one person or different people, and the position type (administrators, faculty etc.) of the person who harassed them.

About 53% of Western tenured female reported having had an experience, with almost 30% experiencing an event in the past five years, while 47% reported never having been subjected to sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive treatment. Full professors were no more or less likely than associates to report problems. However, 77% of respondents who began working at Western prior to 1985 reported experiences of hostility or sexual harassment.

Of those who had experienced hostility or sexual harassment (N=26), 15% described the experience as an isolated event. Another 15% described their experience as an ongoing problem, and the balance (69%) described it as more than an isolated event, but not an ongoing problem.

For 15% of respondents, if they experienced multiple events, the source was one person. However nearly two-thirds of those experiencing multiple events reported that different people were involved. These reports suggest that the problems female faculty are experiencing are not necessarily due to a few problematic people affecting many women, but rather that there are several sources of sexual harassment and hostility in most of the cases.

Reports of positions held by those who were the source of the problems showed that other faculty were the key cause. Thirteen of the 25 respondents reported faculty as the source (52%). Administrators were the source of the problems for five more respondents (20%) and students were cited in three cases (12%). *(Note: the term administrators was not defined explicitly in the survey. However, some respondents elaborated on their answers to note that administrators included Department Chairs as well as administrative professionals, deans, and faculty who held joint roles.)*

From the open-ended responses, eleven respondents said they have experienced various forms of intimidating behaviors and hostile threats, and five more individuals reported sexual harassment, even rape.

Female faculty said they have personally experienced:

- being yelled and screamed at;
- receiving anonymous notes with threats and offensive language; and
- being touched, grabbed, shoved and assaulted

Several respondents mentioned a lasting effect resulting from these hostilities—a silencing of their voices, as well as a lingering lack of trust. According to one individual: “...when the person who is doing the harassment is in a high place it is devastating.”

Access to Help

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they knew anyone on campus who they could go to in order to resolve problems of sexual harassment and subtle discrimination. A few (11%) did not answer the question, and others (13%) weren't sure if they knew anybody or not. Of those respondents who answered that they either did or did not know someone to go to for help, most, 72%, did know someone; however, only 27% appeared truly willing to seek help. Many (45%) were, at best, only moderately willing to go for help, with 12% indicating they were "not at all" willing to seek help. On the other hand, over a quarter (28%) said they did *not* know anyone they could go to for help. A third of respondents (33%) reported having sought help from someone on campus. Of those only three cases reported having the problem resolved partially or fully. The vast majority of cases did not see any resolution to the problem.

Respondents were asked how confident they were that the university's administration was willing and able to solve any problems. About a quarter of respondents felt moderately confident in the administration's willingness and ability to resolve significant problems, while about third felt little or no confidence. Those who have never experienced sexual harassment expressed the highest levels of confidence. Those who described their experiences as isolated events were also more likely to express greater confidence in the administration.

Several respondents mention a lack of trust in the administration's willingness and ability to solve the problems. According to one individual: "It has been my experience that Western administrators over the years have given words but not much action to resolve problems."

Other respondents said they have asked for help from a variety of sources—including colleagues in their own department, Human Resources, the Women's Commission (now defunct), and the Equal Opportunity Center. However, in none of these cases was assistance provided. Consequently, one individual believes "...the administration pays lip service to this issue." Another respondent believes that the culture here is one of suppression and denial. "Nothing is wrong," she says, "because nothing can be wrong."

Importantly, several respondents pointed out that gender discrimination intersects with other forms of discrimination. One individual noted that: "It's difficult to distinguish between harassment based on gender and general harassment that just happens to be directed at a female."

Conclusion

Respondents' answers to the survey mirror patterns found in higher education at other institutions, including devaluation of professional contributions, isolation or marginalization, less access to networks and experiences of hostility and aggression. Research also notes that the expected implications of poor working climate is poor retention of female faculty at the senior level which may, in some cases, perpetuate their minority status in departments. Highly imbalanced sex ratios tend to engender more hostility, which in turn perpetuates the likelihood that a hostile and inequitable work environment will persist.

Universities have a mixed record of responding to complaints of sexual harassment and inequities on campus, but have been more consistently responsive to research findings. The fol-

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lowing outlines recommendations based on findings from this survey and typical scenarios that have been implemented at some campuses.

Wide dissemination of results.

One of the most effective first steps taken at other universities has been to distribute the results of research on climate widely to stimulate discussion and inform strategic planning. By making findings available to as many sources as possible, the entire campus can become engaged in discussing and solving the problems.

Establish a high-level task force or committee

Many universities continued to study their climate problems, identify barriers to the advancement of women and develop recommendations to remedy the situations. One Task Force met for two years, backed by funding from the President that was used for programs and to bring in outside speakers, and had an explicit commitment from the President to respond to their recommendations. Ultimately, their findings and follow-through transferred to an existing women's association. Ideally, the committee is formed with a broad scope of responsibilities and substantial authority to act in order for it to be effective.

Provide a means for responding to problems of sexual harassment

One of the strongest findings of this survey was the lack of resources available to female faculty experiencing sexual harassment and hostility at work. There is no procedure listed in the faculty handbook dealing with sexual harassment outside the general grievance procedures, which are not up to the task of handling the difficult and sensitive problem of sexual harassment and hostility. Recommendations from other universities suggest arrangements with an independent organization external to the university to protect the integrity of the process.

Expand the discussion to include staff

Other universities (i.e. Northwestern, University of Virginia) found that problems of subtle discrimination and sexual harassment were not confined to faculty but also affect staff. One respondent to this survey noted that she's seen female staff experience problems like those addressed in the survey, and the concern has also been raised by members of the Staff Employees Council over the past several years. The Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing is developing a similar research project for staff to be executed during the 2002-2003 academic year.

Establish committees at the college level under each dean

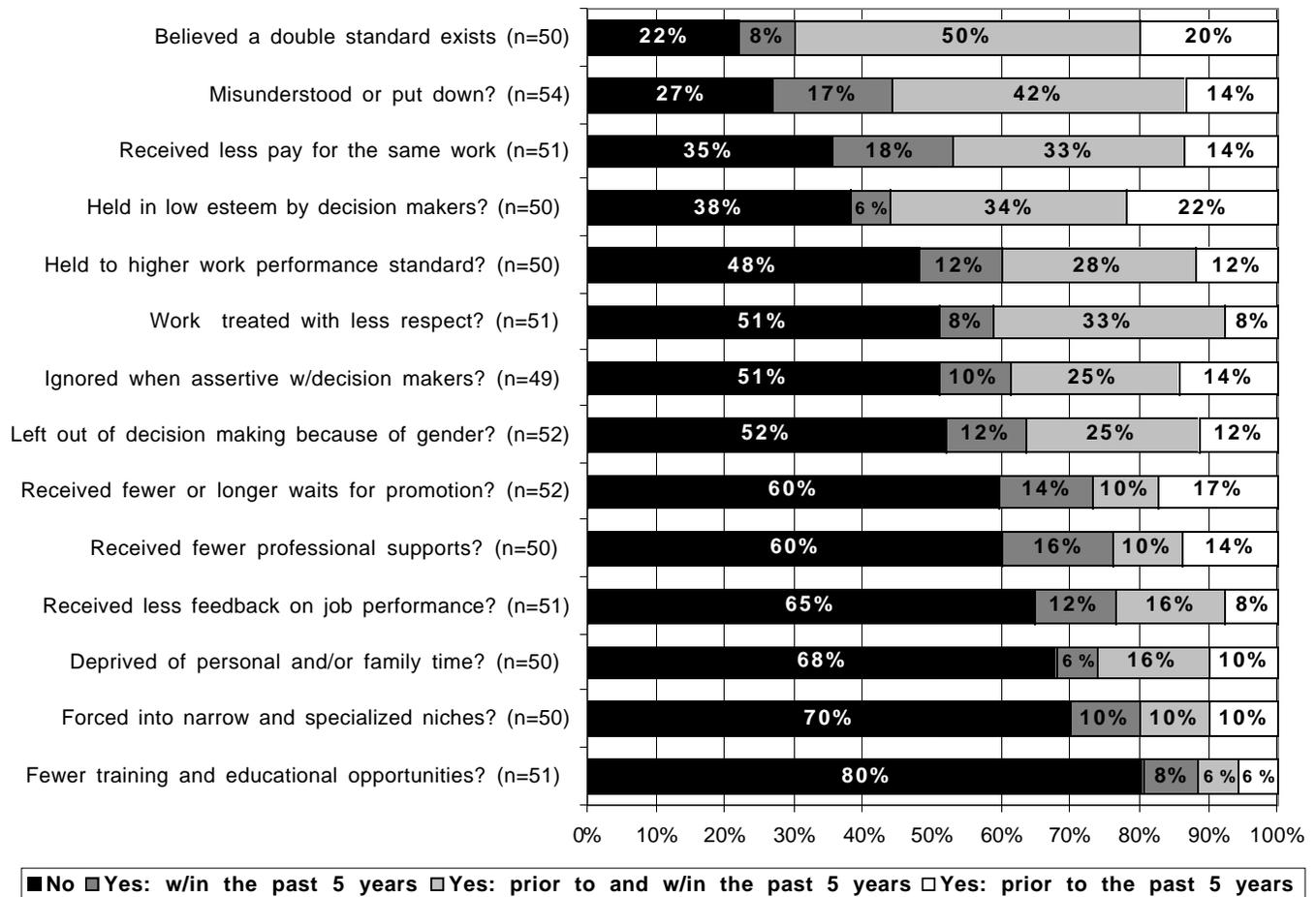
Explicit and publicly-made commitments on the part of department chairs to the support of women's research and work in their units is one method for sending a strong message to women that they will be supported and a direct mechanism for dealing with issues that are unique to particular colleges on campus.

Commit to evaluating change over time.

In order to assess the effectiveness of any attempts to improve the work environment for women on a campus, repeated measures are required. Given the level of the challenge, as much as a 10-year commitment to assessing change may be required. Participating in the national study again and encouraging faculty to respond could be one barometer of the effectiveness of the programs, though locally based evaluation is also important.

The graph below was taken from the third report summarized in this publication: "Perceptions of Subtle Gender Discrimination, Hostility, and Sexual Harassment among Senior Women Faculty at Western Washington University".

Figure 1: Has respondent experienced any of the following and, if so, when?



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