

SSHE REPORT SUMMARY

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The Emerging Presence of Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

An Historical Perspective, 1974 - 1994

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PURPOSE

This study is a five-year extension of the author's 16-year longitudinal study, "The Status of Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education: An Historical Perspective, 1974-1989" (Keetz, 1991). The original study provided important historical background and data which documented the low number and status of female faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (State System) during the time period examined. The study's Call for Action noted the need for additional studies, one of which was to "conduct follow-up studies to this study every five years to ensure that 'progress' is really being made in the hiring and promotion of female faculty" (Keetz, 1991, p. 34). Thus, this study establishes a 21-year information base on full-time faculty and students within the State System and at each of its 14 universities. These data permitted comparisons to be made with the findings of the original 16-year study (Keetz, 1991) and the five-year extension, 1990-91 through 1994-95, about: (1) the number, percentage, and distribution of full-time faculty by rank and sex and how representative State System faculty in 1989-90 and 1994-95 were when compared to faculty at similar Category 11-A and II-B public universities from the same time period; (2) the number and percentage of full-time total faculty at full professor rank by sex; (3) the number and percentage of student full-time teaching equivalent (FTE) by sex and enrollment status; and (4) the ratios of undergraduate student FTE enrollment to full-time faculty by sex.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The review examined State System and faculty union, Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (APSCUF), documents related to faculty in the State System. Women were formally recognized as an equity group in April, 1988 when the State System's Board of Governors approved the "Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Plan: A Prospectus" (Prospectus). Subsequent affirmative action plans within the State System were charged to use the Prospectus (1988) as a guide for the equity groups which were included in it. No explanation or documentation was given to explain the inclusion of women with the other equity groups in the Prospectus (1988). Nor could evidence be found that either group had analyzed or published information about gender equity in the State System's faculty since the publication of the Prospectus (1988), despite the availability of data.

The second State System planning document, "Priorities for Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education during the 1990s" (Priorities, 1990), was more specific about the relatively low number of female faculty which was suggested in the Prospectus (1988). One of its recommendations addressed the recruitment of new faculty and expressed need for greater diversity within the faculty; awareness of the low ration of female faculty to female students and the increasing availability of female doctorates; and strategies for recruiting and retaining female faculty.

In the five-year period from 1990-91 through 1994-95 the State System issued two documents. The first publication, "Emphasis on Values: A Priority for Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education during the 1990s" (Values, 1991), was written to implement the new priorities (Priorities, 1990). Its focus was on the definition of Values Education, the need for an increased emphasis on Values Education, and strategies which could be utilized to foster Values Education within the State System. The strategies are quite comprehensive, but nowhere in the report is the low number and status of female faculty within the State System or the disproportionate ratios of students to faculty by gender mentioned.

The other publication, "Excellence and Equity - A Plan for Building Community in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education" (Equity Plan, 1994) is the State System's second affirmative action plan. The State System reaffirmed its commitment to women which was made in the first affirmative action plan, Prospectus (1988), when it adopted the guidelines developed by the American Council on Education Commission on Women in Higher Education. These guidelines (Appendix C) are to be used as standards against which university policies and procedures are to be developed to redress the need "to increase the number of race/ethnic minority and women teaching faculty and differential grade/rank in initial appointments, promotion, and retention" (Equity Plan, 1994, p. 22). Institutional leadership was asked to establish priorities and time frames

for addressing all these areas (guidelines) over the lifetime of the Equity Plan (1994). Furthermore, "41 continuous assessment" (encompassing, for example, Annual Reports, Equity Symposia, and Program Reviews) was to become part of the State System's commitment to its equity initiatives.

APSCUF has become more responsive to gender equity in the five-year period from 1990-91 through 1994-95. The number of elected female faculty delegates to the Legislative Assembly reached a high of 27 (30%) in 1994-95, a percentage which is slightly lower than the percentage of full-time female faculty (34%) in the State System (Keetz, Elected APSCUF Delegates and Alternates by Sex 1980-81 through 1994-95, 1995). The number of women appointed to state-wide committees has increased; however, female faculty continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions within the organization (1994-95 APSCUF Leadership Directory). Additionally, the Gender Issues Standing Committee was established in 1992, thus providing a means for all faculty to address concerns related to contractual equity issues.

METHOD

Data about the number and rank of State System full-time faculty were obtained from the Division of Data Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education from 1975-76 through 1985-86 and 1987-88 through 1994-95. Similar data were obtained for 1974-75 from the American Association of University Professor's (AAUP) annual report on the economic status of the profession and for 1986-87 from the Central Management Information Center (CMIC) data base. The same data for 1989-90 and 1994-95 were gathered for a sample and national totals of similar Category 11-A and II-B (as defined by AAUP in its annual report on the economic status of the profession) public universities. Comparisons were made on the number and percentage of State System faculty with national totals and selected Category II-A and II-B public universities.

Data about full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the State System from 19974-75 through 1994-95 were obtained from the Division of Data Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education. FTE for students by enrollment status and sex was calculated as the number of full-time students plus one-half the number of part-time students. The percentage of total faculty at professor rank was determined by dividing the number of full professors by the number of total faculty of each sex respectively.

Data about doctorate recipients by gender and broad field from 1964 through 1994 were obtained from the "Summary Report 1994: Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities" (R. O. Simmons & D. H. Thurgood, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1995). These data were used to determine if there was an increase in female doctorates since 1964.

FINDINGS

1. Full-time female faculty continue to be a distinct minority within the State System, concentrated in the lower professorial ranks.
2. Full-time female total faculty numbered 890 (22%) in 1974-75 and 1,552 (34%) in 1994-95, an increase of 662 women. During the same period, the number of full-time male total faculty declined from 3,205 (78%) to 3,006 (66%), a decrease of 199 males.
3. The percentages of full-time female faculty increases at each succeeding lower rank. In 1994-95, for example, female faculty comprised 18 percent of the professors, 32 percent of the associate professors, 48 percent of the assistant professors, and 67 percent of the instructors.
4. The State System has been unable to hire or advance female faculty to the higher professorial ranks as successfully as the California and New Jersey State Systems have.
5. Female undergraduate and graduate FTE enrollment has increased steadily in the 1980s and then stabilized at about 57% (undergraduate) and 65% (graduate) respectively in the 1990s.
6. The ratios of undergraduate student FTE enrollment to full-time faculty by gender are significantly higher for women than for men.
7. There is a disproportionately smaller number of same-sex role models for female students than for male students and of cross-sex role models for male students.
8. There has been a substantial increase in female doctorates nationally in traditional female fields and in traditional male fields since 1964.

Note: Tables 1-4 for each university in Appendix A and Figures 1-9 for each university in Appendix B should be examined carefully to determine the variability of numbers and percentages of full-time faculty by sex from 1974-75 through 1994-95.

A CALL FOR ACTION

1. Efforts to improve the status of female faculty should be communicated throughout the State System so that the entire System is aware and knowledgeable about what has been done, what is being done, and what needs to be done to ensure a gender balanced faculty in all divisions, departments, and professorial ranks at each of the 14 Universities. Informed constituencies are a prerequisite for equity to become a reality in the State System.
2. The Equity Plan's (1994) assessment is comprehensive and has the potential to identify factors, both perceived and real, related to equity issues within the State System. However, the Equity Plan (1994) will achieve its goals only if faculty and staff are informed about and involved in the process and outcomes. For example, most faculty are unaware of the

information contained in the annual reports which were to be submitted by individual campuses beginning February 1, 1995. Was an Equity Symposium held in 1996 as scheduled and its work disseminated within the State System? Nor is the faculty knowledgeable about the comparative analyses the Office of the Chancellor may have completed on data collected to date. How, then, can the assessment plan be monitored, common concerns identified, and lessons learned shared as noted in the Equity Plan (1994, p. 35)?

- 3.** A critical component of the assessment plan as it relates to female faculty are the ACE Commission on Women in Higher Education Guidelines (listed in Appendix C) because they are the "standards against which university policy and procedures should be developed" (Equity Plan, 1994, p.47). However, most faculty, both female and male, are unfamiliar with these Guidelines. The State System should develop an awareness of these Guidelines and how they are being met at individual campuses and throughout the State System.
- 4.** The State System should strengthen its efforts to develop a consensus within the academic community about the rapidly increasing knowledge about gender differences and the importance of same?sex and cross?sex mentors and role models for female and male students and faculty. For example, programs which develop faculty and administrators' awareness of equity issues and identify and destroy stereotypical assumptions about female and male ways of viewing the world should be continued and expanded.
- 5.** The State System's equity planning should utilize the survey of earned doctorates (Simmons & Thurgood, 1995) which is conducted annually for the National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, National Institutes of Health, National Endowment for the Humanities, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. The annual reports identify the availability of women in specific fields and document the increasing number of female doctorate recipients as well as gender differences which may exist in fields and subfields.
- 6.** Individual campuses within the State System should increase their efforts to hire female faculty at the professor and associate professor ranks. Unless this effort is made, female faculty will continue to be disproportionately distributed in the lower professional ranks well into the 21st century.
- 7.** The State System and individual campuses should contact the California and New Jersey State Systems to find out why there is a higher percentage of female faculty at the professor and associate professor ranks in their respective Systems. This information would help the State System (PA) to establish targets and determine what it could do to be as successful in hiring and furthering the professional advancement of female faculty and establish realistic targets which achieve this.
- 8.** The State System and APSCUF should also review the committees which are formed to ensure that female faculty are equitably represented as members and in leadership roles.

9. Subsequent studies should use data collected at each of the 14 campuses to accomplish the following:

- Identify the factors that have contributed to the disproportionate distribution of female faculty in the lower ranks,
- determine whether hiring procedures and policies are proper,
- verify that affirmative action procedures and policies are being followed,
- ascertain the extent to which departmental complements are gender balanced in each rank,
- examine the degree to which departments are involved in affirmative action programs,
- investigate the retention rate of faculty to determine if there are gender differences,
- learn the degree to which female faculty have a voice in the governance structures at their respective universities and in the State System and APSCUF, and
- conduct follow-up studies to this study every five years to ensure that "progress" is really being made in the hiring and promotion of female faculty.

The original study (Keetz, 1991) and its extension (Keetz, 1997) exemplify the importance of longitudinal studies and wide dissemination of information and findings. They inform the State System and its 14 campuses about the history of gender inequality within the System and the progress that has been made to date in improving the Status of women. It is hoped that the Chancellor's Office will support the follow-up studies that are necessary to determine if there are significant differences among female and male faculty as to rank and step hired, retention, and promotion. As Conway (in Bloch, Earthwatch, 1992, p.6) has noted, "It is the terms on which women enter occupations that govern their opportunities. "Only then will we know with certainty that gender parity exists for faculty retention and advancement within the State System.

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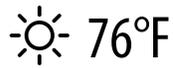
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