The Women's Consortium's REPORT SUMMARY
Status of Women in Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
Report 2005-2020

This summary is based on Perozzi, Kahley, & Asher's (2022) report entitled: Equality in Numbers but not in Rank: A Report on Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education between 2005 and 2020.

Introduction

Extending previous research documenting gender inequities in faculty status in the PASSHE across two decades, the Women's Consortium commissioned an analysis of gender equity in the status, rank, and salary of faculty in the PASSHE, years 2005 and 2020.

The Women's Consortium is a professional network for women in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) established in 1980 to advocate for gender equity and for the advancement of women in the PASSHE. The Women's Consortium has addressed previously documented gender inequities in the PASSHE faculty status with a Leadership Institute for Women Faculty as one strategy to address gender inequities in the representation of women at high faculty ranks and in leadership positions.

In May 2020, the Women's Consortium published a request for proposals to conduct a follow-up study to *The Emerging Presence of Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education: A Historical Perspective, 1974-1994* by Mary Keetz. The objective was to assess PASSHE-wide data to determine whether or not there continued to be a gender gap in faculty rank, salaries, and step levels between 2005 and 2020. A small group of researchers, led by Dr. Jana Asher, within the Statistical Consultation Center at the Department of Mathematics and Statistics of Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania was awarded a grant to complete the follow-up study. Data were obtained directly from the PASSHE governance in August of 2020. The study was completed between August of 2020 and December of 2021.

History

In 1997, *The Emerging Presence of Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education: A Historical Perspective, 1974-1994* by Mary Keetz was published. This longitudinal study was a five-year extension of a previous study done by Keetz titled *The Status of Female Faculty in Pennsylvania's State School System of Higher Education: A Historical Perspective, 1974-1989.* Each study aimed to consider the following: (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 (Keetz, 1997).

The research reported by Mary Keetz challenged the presumption that once women were hired in comparable numbers as men at the assistant professor level, there would eventually be gender equity across all ranks including the full professor level. The findings of Keetz's study showed that within PASSHE, women were a minority among full-time faculty. Keetz did however note increases in full-time female faculty (1974-75-22% to 1994-95-34%). There were documented (but small) increases in the number of women faculty at each rank including at the full professor rank. These small increases occurred during a timeframe when the number of women earning PhDs rose dramatically.

Current Findings (2005 – 2020)

Although the ratio of female to male full professors has improved, significant gender gaps persist at multiple levels.

- There are still more male full professors than female full professors; in the 2019-2020 academic year the ratio was 40% female, 60% male;
- Female faculty are more likely to be in temporary positions and part-time positions across the time period studied;
- Overall, within rank, women still have a lower average starting salary and step than men. However, this does not hold for all years or all schools. The difference in starting salary and rank was least noticeable at the Assistant Professor rank and most noticeable at the Instructor rank;
- Overall, the mean salary for female faculty starting in each rank is lower than the mean salary for male faculty;
- Across the individual academic years, the ratio of temporary to permanent faculty is noticeably higher for female faculty than male faculty in every year, with odds ratios ranging from 1.47 to 1.92. In other words, female faculty are disproportionately represented in temporary positions, and male faculty are disproportionately represented in permanent positions

Limitations

Unfortunately, the scope of this status of women report could not include an examination of race due to limited resources. Ideally, the state system would track race in ways that allow one existing file to be used to more easily track race and gender for use in future research. Even without this data, existing research suggests that representation and pay gaps are likely worse for women with other and multiple marginalized identities (see Beal, 1970; Bowleg, Huang, Brooks, Black, & Burkholder, 2003: King, 1988).

This study is a retrospective study on trends and patterns in female versus male faculty employment across the PASSHE system. The statistical analysis in this report is unable to determine or prove the cause of the differences found between male and female faculty employment patterns. Where a gender bias exists, we cannot determine if that difference is due to systemic bias in the hiring, retention, and promotion practices of the universities in question or more general social and cultural factors that prohibit women from having the same access to conditions that foster professional success, or a combination of both.

Conclusion

Taken together, the data from Tables 10a-d suggests that **female faculty are still at a disadvantage in multiple ways**. Female faculty are more likely to be in part-time positions, temporary positions, and lower rank positions than male faculty overall, within each academic year between 2005/2006 and 2019/2020, and within most institutions.

Although some gaps seem small, they are consistent (some with wide ranges) and are thus a troubling indicator of systemic gender bias. This is exacerbated when we realize that disparities in salary gaps, step level gaps, and permanent versus temporary employment status accrue over time.