BASELINE REPORT FOR THE FCWA CAREER CYCLE OF FEMALE
FACULTY PROJECT
by
The Faculty Council on Women in Academe
29 April 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report compiles data from several recent studies to provide a baseline for the FCWA Career Cycle of Female Faculty Project, which explores the career trajectory of UW women faculty. Stages examined comprise being hired, being promoted and attaining tenure, being promoted to full professor, and assuming leadership roles. Particular focus is given factors that cross career stages and affect the retention and overall success of women faculty: mentoring; family leave, career flexibility, and work-life support; service commitments; and teaching load. The purpose of this summary is to provide a baseline for future analysis on the status of women faculty.

There is much to be proud of in these findings. We find women at the highest levels of the institution, and women are being hired into assistant and acting assistant professor positions in rates similar to men. Moreover, the same proportion of women and men are gaining tenure. In surveys, both men and women see the UW as supportive of work-family flexibility. Perhaps most impressive is how few gender differences arose in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). We see this as a testament to good leadership and the role of institutional initiatives like ADVANCE, whose goal has been “increasing the participation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers.” It is clear that institutional commitments can change perceptions.

At the same time, there are findings that raise concerns. The majority of non-ladder faculty positions are held by women. In a period of financial exigency, this can create a gendered at-risk population. There remain climate challenges for women and faculty of color: Men agree more than women that the tenure and promotion processes at UW are fair and straightforward; women and faculty of color report higher service loads overall; women faculty in general are less satisfied with prospects for career advancement or advancement to date than their male counterparts. And, as we go into a period of reduced resources, work-life issues are already affecting everyone. Almost 40% of all faculty who responded to the 2008 LCVI survey reported being impacted by a lack of childcare during the previous 12 months. A quarter of all faculty respondents indicate being impacted by adult care. In both cases, percentages are higher for women. More women than men indicate experiencing work-family conflict, and more men than women see the environment as supportive. But lest we think that childcare affects only women: more than half of the men responding who had children under the age of 18 indicated experiencing decreased productivity (63%), work-life imbalance (60%), and work-life stress (73%). And many faculty believe that their departments would not be supportive if they used various flexible options. Finally, the discussion of findings and recommendations below flags key areas where our institutional data is inadequate.

Summary of Findings

• A 13-year study (1995-2008) shows women and men hired at similar rates into assistant professor and acting assistant professor positions. The Council had no data available on the pools from which hiring took place nor the disciplines into which women were hired.
The same proportion of male and female junior faculty gain tenure; however, women take slightly longer. Men agree more than women that the tenure and promotion processes at UW are fair and straightforward. More women than men tend to leave before the tenure decision (30% vs. 24%); perhaps because more women leave earlier, more men than women are denied tenure (5% vs. 1%). We need more data on why so many people leave before tenure.

The Council found no data on promotion rates of women to full professor.

Negative factors in women’s decisions to come to the University of Washington (e.g., affordable housing and childcare) can prove to be reasons why the university is unable to retain them. We do not have exit interviews.

Almost 40% of all faculty who responded to the 2008 LCVI survey reported being impacted by a lack of childcare during the previous 12 months, including many faculty without children younger than 18. A quarter of all faculty respondents indicate being impacted by adult care. In both cases, percentages are higher for women.

Women faculty are less satisfied with prospects for career advancement or advancement to date than their male counterparts and indicate lower levels of agreement than men with the proposition that they could move into a leadership position. This gender effect is particularly strong for faculty in professional schools and the School of Medicine.

Overall, fewer women than men report serving on committees with budgetary authority; the difference is largest in the professional and medical schools and is not present in STEM fields. Women in SOM (School of Medicine) also report less hiring authority and fewer committee assignments at university and department levels than do their male colleagues.

Although (outside the professional schools and SOM) women report similar committee service loads to men, some women and faculty of color report higher service loads overall; we have limited data on the range of additional kinds of service and outreach women and faculty of color perform.

Faculty across the career cycle report wanting more mentoring. Overall, women indicate lower levels of satisfaction with mentoring on both professional and work/life issues, with the largest and most significant difference occurring for women in the professional schools. Not satisfied with the mentoring they’ve received, female respondents report working to provide it for others.

Most respondents to the FCWA survey are satisfied with their teaching loads. Of those who are unhappy with their teaching load, the majority are women as well as those in lecturer and instructor ranks (more of whom are women).

The ACE-Sloan survey found that both men and women saw the UW as supportive of work-family flexibility. However, multiple surveys find men are more satisfied than women with our flexible policies, and women report higher levels of work-life conflict. Women are more likely to use flexible policies.

Work-life issues, particularly lack of childcare, can negatively affect the climate and productivity of all faculty and create retention issues for some.
There are significant gaps in the data describing the full pallet of issues facing women faculty. In some cases the data is simply not there (e.g., with respect to promotion to full professor), in others the data lack nuance (e.g., are women being hired in fields where traditionally they have been underrepresented? In what ways are faculty being impacted by elder care?)

**Recommendations**

- Data with respect to these baseline categories should be collected on an ongoing basis, and these results should be updated regularly. This requires research capacity. This report, like the PCWA data would benefit from an administrative home.
- Gaps in data (either because we lack data or nuance concerning what we have) should be addressed in future research. Note that these data largely describe tenure-stream faculty. Richer data on lecturers and other faculty categories should be added to future studies.
- Every effort should be made to increase the availability of quality affordable childcare and elder care.
- The university needs to remedy the discrepancy between the percentage of women in central leadership positions (which we applaud) and those at the college and (especially the) department level by increasing the latter.
- To maximize potential for faculty success in all arenas, professional and work-life mentoring should be provided across career stages.
- The difference in perception of climate documented for women and minority faculty in the LCVI (2005, 2008) and FCWA (2008) surveys needs to be addressed.
- The university needs to prevent or remedy situations in which women and/or minority faculty bear a disproportionate burden of instructional budget cuts (e.g., in terms of teaching load, layoffs of non-tenure-stream faculty, etc.)
- The university should enhance the visibility and consistent implementation of flexible policies.
BASELINE REPORT FOR THE FCWA CAREER CYCLE OF FEMALE FACULTY PROJECT
by
The Faculty Council on Women in Academe
29 April 2009

By their nature, research institutions rely upon evidenced-based policy making. The absence of research findings makes it difficult to address issues central to the wellbeing of the institution. Recent years have seen a series of complementary attempts to understand the experience of female faculty members at the University of Washington. In this context, in 2007 the Faculty Council on Women in Academe (FCWA) launched the Career Cycle of Female Faculty Project, an effort to compile data on the career trajectory of female faculty members. This report details findings from four sources. First is a synthesis of reports by Kate Quinn1 (undertaken at Balance@UW) and co-authors on UW hiring, retention, and work-life policies. Second is the 2007 report of the President’s Advisory Council on Women (PACW). Third are secondary analyses of data collected from the 2005 and 2008 LCVI surveys, including questions FCWA was able to add to the 2008 survey. Finally, we also use results from the Spring 2008 FCWA electronic survey sent to all voting faculty. Statistical analyses were not performed on small samples; statistical analysis is provided only for studies with samples larger than 200 faculty.

For this project, career stages examined comprise being hired, being promoted and attaining tenure, being promoted to full professor, and assuming leadership roles. Particular focus is given factors that cross career stages and affect the retention and overall success of women faculty: mentoring; family leave, career flexibility, and work-life; service commitment; and, teaching load. The purpose of this summary is to provide a baseline for future analysis on the status of women faculty. For further details, please see the referenced reports, which are listed at the end of this document. The appendix lists and expands the acronyms used in this report.

HIRING

Are women faculty being hired into tenure-line appointments?

Yes. Across a 13-year span from 1995-2008, women represent 46% of assistant and acting assistant professor hired at UW into tenure-line appointments (excluding the School of Medicine) (Quinn & Blair, 2008). On average, 68 junior faculty (37 men and 32 women) were hired annually into these tenure-line positions; the proportion of faculty hired each year does not differ statistically by gender. Some 130 faculty were hired as Acting Assistant Professors (15%) and 757 were hired as Assistant Professors (85%). Of the acting assistant faculty hired, 65 were men and 65 were women. There is no statistically significant difference in the proportion of faculty hired into acting assistant professor (vs. assistant professor) positions by gender or race.

---

1 This report is made possible through skilled research over several years by Kate Quinn. We are grateful for the contributions her work has made to the University of Washington.
What do newly hired women faculty indicate are positive and negative factors in their decision to come to UW and what factors do they indicate are important?

On a scale of 1=negative, 2=neutral, and 3=positive, a cohort of newly hired women faculty\(^2\) rated as having the most positive impact on their decision to join UW (out of 20 factors):

- opportunities for interdisciplinary research or teaching (2.7)
- the quality of colleagues/coworkers (2.8)

There were differences in the responses by gender on two factors:

- women rated salary more positively than men
- women rated the prestige of the department/unit lower than men

At the time of being first hired, women rated most negative:

- the availability of affordable housing (1.5)
- the availability of affordable, quality childcare (1.8)

**Observation:** The women surveyed were less concerned than men with institutional prestige and more concerned about the material conditions of employment. As reported below, those issues that concern women at the outset, turn out for some to be reasons to leave.

**Additional data required:** More accurate evaluation of hiring success requires data on the utilization of the Ph.D. pool and whether the successful hires occurred in fields in which women traditionally have been underrepresented (e.g., STEM). As well, additional analysis is needed to explore whether the proportion of faculty of color hired is representative of the population of PhD recipients.

**TENURE AND PROMOTION**

Are women faculty being promoted/tenured?

Yes.

- In a seven-year study of all faculty hired at the rank of assistant professors (1995-96 and 2001-02), excluding the School of Medicine, the same proportion of men and women (57%) were active and tenured by the time of the study (2008). (Quinn, Under Review).
- Of the 283 faculty granted tenure, the number of years to tenure (as of 2008) ranged from 1 year to 9 years, \((M = 5.1, SD = 1.64)\).
  - However, time-to-tenure differs by gender, with women earning tenure in 2 to 9 years \((M = 5.6, SD = 1.6)\) and men earning tenure in 1 to 9 years \((M = 4.8, SD = 1.6)\).
- Of the 465 faculty in the study cohort, 155 faculty (34\%) separated from their tenure-line appointments at the University, including 124 who left prior to review for tenure.
- Some 24\% of men and 30\% of women separated from their tenure-line positions prior to tenure review, and 5\% of men separated after earning tenure compared to 2\% of women.
- Only 1\% of women were denied tenure compared to 5\% of men.
- According to the 2008 LCVI survey, men agree more than women that the tenure and promotion processes at UW are fair and straightforward.

\(^2\) From Quinn, 2008a, reporting data from faculty hired in the 2007-08 academic year (all ranks). \(N=27\): Of 87 faculty (excluding the School of Medicine) identified, 50 responded to the survey (22 men, 27 women, 1 NR) (response rate of 57\%; 50 of 87).
**Observation:** Perhaps in part, because women respondents were less confident of the tenure and promotion process, a higher percentage of women than men left their tenure-line positions prior to review, and a higher percentage of men were denied tenure.

**Remaining questions:** Why do only slightly more than half of our faculty remain and earn tenure within nine years?

**PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR**

Are women faculty being promoted to full professor at similar rates and timescales as men?

*Research has not yet addressed this topic.*

**RETENTION**

What are the challenges to retaining women faculty?

On a scale of 1=reason to leave, 2=neutral, and 3=reason to stay, a cohort of newly separated women faculty rated 10 factors (out of 20) as “reasons to leave.” Five factors scored a 1.5:

- salary
- policies for work-life balance
- teaching load
- climate for work-life balance,
- the availability of affordable housing

Another 5 factors that scored a 1.8:

- retirement
- climate for diversity
- climate in general
- availability of affordable quality childcare
- research start-up support (Quinn, 2008a, 2008b)

**Observations:** This was a single, small cohort. Nonetheless, it is suggestive that factors that gave women pause upon being hired (work-life issues such as childcare and housing) turned out to be reasons for leaving for some. Note also the emergence of diversity climate issues. The LCVI and FCWA surveys confirm climate concerns for women and faculty of color.

**Additional questions:** We need longitudinal retention data, including exit interviews.

**LEADERSHIP ROLES**

Are women faculty filling leadership roles and are they satisfied with their opportunities to advance?

Women are filling leadership roles at some levels. According to PACW report:

- “Women are strongly represented among the UW central administration.” In 2007:
  - Among the Vice President and Vice Provost positions, 5 of 9 Vice Presidents and 6 of 12 Vice Provosts were women; the Provost and the Executive Vice Provost were women.

---

3 Quinn, 2008a identified 24 faculty who had separated from UW in a single year; 12 responded to the survey (8 men, 4 women) (response rate of 50%; 12 of 24).
• Of the four Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of UW Bothell and UW Tacoma, three were women.
• “Women are less well represented among the UW Seattle Deans and Department chairs” In 2007:
  ▪ 8 of 18 deans and 11 of 106 department chairs were women.

Women are not satisfied with their opportunities to advance.
• Women faculty respondents to the FCWA survey are less satisfied with prospects for career advancement or advancement to date than their male counterparts and indicate lower levels of agreement than men with the proposition that they could move into a leadership position (Quinn & Abel, 2009). Gender differences are particularly strong for SOM (School of Medicine) and PROF (professional schools).
  ▪ Sample comment: “Career advancement in School of Medicine (e.g., to Dept Dir) for women is almost impossible…. This is very discouraging.
• Women in SOM and PROF reported serving on fewer department committees and fewer committees with hiring or budgetary authority.
• Similar to the FCWA findings, the 2008 LCVI found that women faculty are less satisfied than men with both their prospects for career advancement and for moving into a leadership position if desired.

Observations: Looking at mid-level leadership positions (chairs and deans), the pipeline for women in leadership positions is constrained, particularly at the level of department chair. Women are less satisfied with both their prospects for advancement and advancement to date.

Remaining Questions: Why are women not better represented in leadership roles across the institution, especially at the departmental level? Will the financial climate have an impact on women’s leadership prospects?
FCWA SURVEY DATA: ISSUES ACROSS CAREER STAGES

In this section we quote FCWA survey responses.

MENTORING

Female respondents indicate lower levels of satisfaction with mentoring both for professional and work-life issues, with the largest and most significant difference occurring for women in the professional schools. At the same time, women report providing higher levels of mentoring to junior faculty on both professional and work-life issues.

The most common themes from the comments are that the mentoring available in the department or college is woefully inadequate and that mentoring must be sought out independently. More women respondents than men commented on the lack of mentoring available to them. Examples of their comments include:

■ “Mentoring (formal and informal) is severely lacking in my department. I’ve asked my chair to help facilitate this type of relationship, but he didn't follow through. The junior faculty hobble along, guiding each other, hoping that collectively we can figure out how to get what we need (at least our collective confusion leads to strong bonds among us!).”

■ “As a new faculty member, but one who is senior, the presumption seems to be that I wouldn't need mentoring on how to work effectively in this institution and balance its unique combination of demands. I would urge more active support for senior as well as junior faculty.”

■ “I've had to seek it out; there is nothing in place to help us find mentors”

Some ‘late career’ respondents indicated that mentoring would have been useful earlier in their careers and that they go out of their way to mentor junior colleagues. More women respondents than men commented on mentoring for work-life issues, including comments such as:

■ “There are only 2 other tenured women with children in my department (>25 faculty); the men with kids have partners who do most of the parenting. There are few colleagues I feel comfortable talking with about work-family balance issues.”

■ “Had I had a mentor at the time I needed to make the family-career decision, I might have been made more aware of the options available”

■ “When I started at the UW, there were only a few female faculty in my department, none of whom had children of their own. I have tried very hard the last few years as we have brought several female faculty members on board to step up as a mentor about balancing career and family. Hopefully, that support is valued. I can always benefit from mentors. Although many of the questions I receive are about parenting, there are also issues unique to women in the workplace.”

Observations: Faculty across the career cycle report wanting more mentoring. Not satisfied with the mentoring they’ve received, female respondents report providing it for others. Note, faculty who were satisfied with professional mentoring, nonetheless hoped for more work-life mentoring.
SERVICE

Outside SOM and PROF (where women report fewer committee assignments), the number and type of committees does not differ by gender, but respondents under 40 are on fewer committees (excluding departmental committees) and spend less time per month in committee work.

The most common theme was that service is unrewarded, suggesting that many faculty are not motivated to do service since it does not affect promotion, salary or tenure, which is seen in comments such as:

- "My department values committee service for merit reviews, but the College at large does not value it as much for promotion and tenure. This is a significant problem in a unit where service requirements are unusually high";
- "Really what counts for merit, promotion and tenure, and everyone knows it, is research and publication. Service is necessary but largely goes unrewarded"; and
- "As far as I can tell, committee work at the UW is a pretty much thankless task. The only reason for doing it is to influence aspects of a department's functioning that might eventually be relevant to ones own teaching/research."

An additional theme that emerged from the data was the feeling that some faculty were disproportionately represented in service roles, including women, minorities and young faculty. These comments were predominately found from women respondents in AHSS (arts, humanities, social sciences) and STEM. Comments include:

- "Service demands appear to be heavier for women and faculty of color"; and
- "I checked disagree for service work providing leadership experience because at this point, I'm not really learning anything from the experience. Also, this is complicated by being a person of color so that in a University of 42 or so black faculty, we're all in demand."

**Observations:** These findings suggest important climate issues. Although, outside the professional schools and SOM, women report similar committee service loads to men, women and faculty of color report being disproportionately burdened given the range of additional kinds of service they perform. We have limited data on noncommittee service and outreach.

**Additional Data Required:** The institution needs a broader range of data on the service contributions of women and faculty of color.

TEACHING

Respondent gender only relates to teaching small undergrad courses (women teach more than men) and clinical courses (women teach fewer than men). Respondent age and marital status have no relationship with teaching load.

The majority of respondents (59 percent) indicated that their teaching load is comparable to their department colleagues,

Most respondents are satisfied with their teaching loads (72 percent) and the courses or type of teaching they do (83 percent). Being female, single, in a professional school, and in a lecturer or instructor rank relate to lower levels of satisfaction with teaching load.

**Observation:** Of those who are unhappy with their teaching load, the majority are women as well as those in lecturer and instructor ranks (more of whom are women).
**Recommendation:** In the current economic context, teaching load is an area that will need to be monitored as faculty are asked to do more with less. The university needs to prevent or remedy situations in which women bear a disproportionate burden of instructional budget cuts.

**FLEXIBLE POLICIES**

**What are faculty perceptions of career flexibility at UW?**

The findings of the ACE-Sloan baseline study indicate that, on average, respondents see the UW as supportive of work-family flexibility for faculty, but that the pressures of a faculty career make work-family balance difficult (Quinn, 2007).

- More women than men indicate experiencing work-family conflict and more men than women see the environment as supportive (Quinn, 2007).

Similar to the ACE-Sloan findings, the 2008 LCVI survey found that women faculty are less satisfied than men with the flexibility to accommodate family or personal needs and that women disagree more than men with the three work-life statements:
  - “UW is supportive of faculty who are attempting to balance their family and career lives.”
  - “Faculty members with young children can thrive professionally at UW.”
  - “Faculty members with elder care responsibilities can thrive professionally at UW” (Quinn, 2008b).

The FCWA survey asked whether faculty believed that their department/unit would be supportive if they used various flexible options, finding that many did not. There were no differences by gender. (Quinn & Abel, 2009).

**What faculty utilize flexible policy options?**

From a study of all assistant professors \( (n=465) \) hired from 1995 – 2001 into tenure-line appointments, excluding the School of medicine, less than a quarter of all faculty (24%) received a tenure clock extension (111 faculty members).

- A higher percentage of women (32%) than men (18%) received extensions. Reasons for receipt differ by gender, with the highest percentage of women recipients (42%) receiving tenure clock extensions for personal or family reasons, and the highest percentage of men recipients (63%) receiving tenure clock extensions for professional reasons (Quinn, Under Review).

From the self-reported data from the FCWA survey, higher proportions of women than men have utilized:
  - The tenure extension policy (12% of women and 4% of men)
  - Partial leave without pay (13% of women and 4% of men)
  - The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (26% of women and 5% of men)
  - Transitional Support Program (3% of women and no men) (Quinn & Abel, 2009).

**What faculty are aware of the flexible policy options at UW?**

- In the 2006 ACE-Sloan faculty survey, 23% of men respondents and 14% of women respondents indicated not knowing of the tenure clock extension policy.
- Similarly, 49% of both men and women respondents indicated not knowing of the part-time tenure option (Quinn, 2007).
Similar to the ACE-Sloan data, the FCWA survey found that higher proportions of women than men are aware of the tenure extension policy (74% of women and 66% of men), but no gender differences exist in awareness of the other flexible policy options.

- Interestingly, fewer respondents to the FCWA survey than the ACE-Sloan survey indicated awareness of the part-time tenure track (75% of men are unaware, as are 73% of women).

The most common themes from the FCWA survey comments provided for Flexible Options are that respondents were not aware of the options, that options are inconsistently implemented across campus, and that respondents appreciated learning of the options and desire additional information. More women than men commented on not being aware of option availability. Examples of comments include:

- “Difficult to get precise information about policies and how they work at departmental level. Information on Academic HR website is not very detailed, dept. interpretations of these vary greatly.”
- “To the best of my knowledge, my college has not informed the faculty as a whole or disseminated information about the above options, so I appreciate learning about these through this survey”
- “Very little information about these policy options are presented to new faculty, and the strain on limited departmental resources presented by these options means that they are not well known even to established [sic] because departments don’t want you to know about them.”
- “I am going to look into two of the programs mentioned above that I am not fully aware of. (Part-time tenure track and Partial leave without pay. As I approach my 60's and have a retired spouse, these options seem appealing to me as a way to continue to contribute yet have flexibility. I feel I am usually well informed, yet these options are not discussed often. Thank you!”

Some comments addressed perceived discrepancies between the supports in place for faculty with young children versus eldercare and general work-life balance. Others, mostly from female respondents, indicated that policy use would be frowned upon or detrimental to one’s career trajectory. Examples include:

- “For pre-tenure faculty, they are strongly frowned upon, and I would be hesitant to use them.”
- “I am unaware of many of the ones listed, and even if I had known about them, I would hesitate to use them because of career repercussions and the comments I already received when I took family and medical leave in my school.”
- “I was advised not to take these options because of probable harm to my career.”

A couple of comments made the case that flexible policies cannot make up for the lack of available childcare at UW. These comments include:

- “Parental teaching release is a step in the right direction, but it doesn't last long and doesn't address long-term commitments that parents have. The childcare situation at UW is ridiculous compared to peer institutions and local large-scale employers. I know many families whose work lives are made extremely complicated due to lack of childcare facilities near UW. I imagine that the women bear the brunt of these difficulties.”
- “The policies are fine: what we really need is reasonable and AVAILABLE child care. It's truly obscene and undermines faculty morale.”

Note: our most surprising finding came from a question FCWA added to the 2008 LCVI survey: A higher number of faculty respondents with no children under the age of 18 were impacted by a lack of childcare during the past year. (A higher proportion of faculty with children under 18 were impacted.)

**Observations:** The ACE-Sloan survey found that both men and women saw the UW as supportive of work-family flexibility. However, multiple surveys find men are more satisfied than women with our flexible polices, and women report higher levels of work-life conflict. Although women use flexible
policies more, the lack of availability of childcare affects a wide range of faculty (men and women, parent and nonparents).

*Additional Data Required:* The university should monitor the effects of the loss of funding for parental leave (something that helps both men and women).

**RESEARCH RESOURCES/MERIT:** No data

*Additional Data Required:* To better understand faculty success and satisfaction requires data on merit-based salary increases and the distribution of research resources.
REFERENCED REPORTS

Quinn, K. (Under Review). Flexible options for faculty: Who uses them and to what effect?

APPENDIX

ACRONYMS

ADVANCE: UW initiative whose goal is “increasing the participation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers.”

AHSS: Arts, humanities, social sciences.

FMLA: Family Medical Leave Act.

LCVI: Leadership, Community, and Values initiative.

PACW: President’s Advisory Committee on Women.

PROF: Professional schools.

SOM: School of Medicine.

STEM: Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.