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TRENDS AND ISSUES

Recruiting and Retaining Female and Minority
Faculty

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the American professoriate ages, it is increasingly important for colleges and universities to recruit more diverse candidates to fill faculty positions. Data show that although the proportions of female and minority faculty have been growing in the last decade, they are still under-represented, especially in higher academic ranks such as full professor and associate professor.

Two TIAA-CREF Institute Fellows discussed issues related to the recruitment and retention of female and minority faculty in a web cast that took place on May 11, 2005. One presenter focused on the under-representation of women in academia. He pointed out that women are particularly under-represented at research universities, caused partly by the difficulty that many female faculty face in combining family and career. The other presenter focused on the under-representation of minority faculty in academia, especially in science and technology fields. He noted that the under-representation of minority faculty in these fields is more of a pipeline issue. Both presenters also discussed examples of institutional policies that are aimed to recruit and retain female and minority faculty.

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INTRODUCTION

The American professoriate is aging. This is partially due to the fact that many faculty members were hired in the 1960s and 1970s to educate the baby boomers. As these faculty members approach retirement age, it is increasingly important for colleges and universities to recruit more female and minority faculty members to reflect the diverse student demographics.

What have been the trends in the employment of female and minority faculty? What can institutions do to attract and retain female and minority faculty? To address these important issues, the TIAA-CREF Institute organized a web conference in conjunction with the American Council on Education (ACE) and the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). The web conference was broadcast live on May 11, 2005. The two presenters were: Ronald G. Ehrenberg, Irving M. Ives Professor of Industrial and Labor Relations and Economics, Director of the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute, and a TIAA-CREF Institute Fellow; Robert J. Jones, Senior Vice President at the University of Minnesota and a TIAA-CREF Institute Fellow. The web conference was moderated by Jennifer Ma, Senior Research Fellow at the TIAA-CREF Institute.

The recording of the event is available through NACUBO's online library at <http://www.nacubo.org/x5698.xml>. This report summarizes the conference, focusing on main issues facing the recruitment and retention of female and minority faculty and policies that have been implemented by some campuses to address these issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the beginning of the web cast, Jennifer Ma provided some background statistics on trends in faculty employment and trends in faculty distribution by gender and race/ethnicity. Using data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the National Postsecondary Study of Faculty (NPSOF), she showed that between 1987 and 2001, the total number of faculty rose by 40.4 percent, which is much larger than the growth rate of the total U.S. civilian labor force during the same time period. However, the total number of full-time faculty grew by only 18.0 percent, suggesting that much of the growth in faculty employment during this period occurred in part-time positions. In 1987, roughly two-thirds of all faculty members were employed full-time. By 2001, only 55.5 percent of all faculty members were employed full time.

Another interesting phenomenon that occurred in the last two decades is the increased use of full-time faculty who are not on tenure track. For example, in 1987, only 7.9 percent of all full-time faculty were not on tenure track. By 1998, the proportion of full-time faculty who were not on tenure track more than doubled to 18.8 percent. During the same time period, the proportion of tenured faculty dropped from 58.4 percent in 1987 to 53.1 percent in 1998.

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Turning to full-time female faculty, data show that between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of faculty who are female went up from 31.8 percent to 38.4 percent. Across all academic ranks, there was an increase in the proportion of full-time female faculty. However, there is an inverse relationship between the academic rank and the proportion of female faculty. In other words, the higher the academic rank, the smaller the proportion of female faculty. For example, while 38.4 percent of all full-time faculty were female in 2001, only 22.7 percent of full-time full professors were female.

Data on minority faculty show a similar trend as that for women. Between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of minority faculty went up from 12.3 percent to 14.9 percent. However, minority faculty are under-represented at higher academic ranks. For example, only 11.1 percent of full professors were minority in 2001, compared to 14.9 percent of all faculty and 17.8 percent of assistant professors.

During the period between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of full-time Hispanic faculty went up from 2.2 percent to 3.0 percent; the proportion of full-time African American faculty went up from 4.7 percent to 5.1 percent; the proportion of full-time Asian faculty went up from 5.1 percent to 6.2 percent; the proportion of full-time American Indian or Alaskan Native faculty stayed the same.

Within each racial group, data show that there is a much higher proportion of African American female faculty than their male counterparts. The same pattern exists for Hispanic and American Indian or Alaskan Native faculty. For Asian faculty, the reverse is true.

THE ISSUE OF RECRUITING AND RETAINING FEMALE FACULTY

Professor Ehrenberg's presentation focused on the under-representation of women in higher education. He started by pointing out that the reasons for the under-representation of female faculty and minority faculty are different. The under-representation of minority faculty is more of a pipeline issue, i.e., there is a shortage of minority new Ph.D.s. The under-representation of female faculty, however, is more of a recruiting and retaining issue as 45.3 percent of all new Ph.D.s awarded to U.S. citizens in 2003 went to women, up from 33.7 percent in 1983.

While women accounted for nearly half of all new Ph.D.s awarded to U.S. citizens in 2003, there are significant variations across disciplines. For example, two out of three new Ph.D.s in the field of education were awarded to women, while only one out of six new Ph.D.s in the field of engineering were awarded to women in the same year. In Professor Ehrenberg's own field of economics, the percentage of new Ph.D.s awarded to women went up slightly from 26.8 percent in 1994 to 27.9 percent in 2004. During the same time period, the percentage of female assistant economics professors went up from 22.9 percent to 26.3 percent; the percentage of female associate economics professors went up from 13.6 percent to 21.2 percent; and the percentage of female full economics professors went up from 6.3 percent to 8.4 percent.

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It is instructive to compare doctorate-granting institutions and liberal arts colleges. As table 1 shows, a much higher percentage of economics faculty at liberal arts colleges are female and this holds true for all academic ranks. For example, 38.9 percent of all assistant economics professors at liberal arts colleges are female, compared to 26.3 percent at doctorate-granting institutions. At the full professor level, the difference is rather striking – 25.0 percent female economics full professors at liberal arts colleges versus only 8.4 percent at doctorate-granting institutions. It is also worth noting that at both doctorate-granting institutions and liberal arts colleges, the percentage of non-tenure-track female economics faculty is larger than the percentage of new female economics Ph.D.s, indicating that female economics Ph.D.s still have ground to cover in achieving higher ranks, despite significant progress.

Table 1. Contrasting Female Faculty Percentages at Ph.D. Granting Economics Departments and Economics Departments at Liberal Arts Colleges, 2004-2005

	Doctorate Granting	Liberal Arts Colleges
Assistant Professor (not tenured, but on tenure track)	26.3	38.9
Associate Professor (tenured)	21.2	30.0
Professor (tenured)	8.4	25.0
All Tenured and Tenure-Track	15.0	27.7
All Not-on-Tenure-Track	32.3	38.8

Source: *Newsletter of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession* (Winter 2005). Tables 2 and 4.

Why are female faculty under-represented at research universities? Professor Ehrenberg mentioned that there may be several reasons for this: 1) perhaps there are gender differences in preferences for teaching versus research, 2) perhaps there are perceptions by female Ph.D.s that research universities are not hospitable for them, 3) perhaps there are perceptions by female Ph.D.s that there is more gender discrimination against female faculty at research universities, 4) there may be actual gender discrimination against female Ph.D.s in the hiring process and against female faculty in salary, tenure, promotion, and resource allocation decisions at research universities, and 5) it is difficult to combine family and career at research universities.

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In the remainder of his presentation, Professor Ehrenberg discussed the difficulties that female faculty at research universities face in combining family and career. He also discussed policies that some institutions had adopted to address this issue, drawing on research by Mary Ann Mason and Mark Goulden of the University of California (Mason and Goulden, 2004).

Family Issues

In Mason and Goulden (2004), the researchers present results based on their analyses of the Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR), a large biennial national longitudinal study that follows about 160,000 Ph.D. recipients. The study focuses on individuals who: 1) received their Ph.D.s between 1978 and 1987, 2) started off in tenure-track positions at universities, and 3) were still working in academia 12 to 14 years later.

The results clearly indicate that there are striking gender differences in faculty family situations. For example,

- Men who had children within five years of receiving their Ph.D.s were 38 percent more likely to have received tenure than their female counterparts;
- While 70 percent of the male faculty members with tenure were married with children, only 44 percent of the female faculty members with tenure were married with children. Moreover, tenured female faculty were twice as likely as tenured male faculty to be single;
- Only one in three women who takes a university job before having a child ever becomes a mother;
- Women with tenure or on tenure-tracks who were married at the time they began their first academic jobs were much more likely than their male counterparts to get divorced or separated;
- In a survey of all tenured and tenure-track faculty at the University of California System, women were twice as likely as men to indicate that they had fewer children than they wanted.

Examples of “Family-Friendly” Institutional Policies

What policies can institutions adopt in order to attract female faculty to research universities? Professor Ehrenberg pointed out that many institutions had policies that were aimed at assisting female faculty with their family issues. The University of California, for example, has long had a set of “family-friendly” programs including: 1) the ability of tenured or tenure-track faculty with newborn or newly-adopted children to request partial or full relief from teaching duties for one semester, 2) the ability of tenure-track faculty to similarly request that their tenure clock be stopped for a year, and 3) paid leave for six weeks and unpaid leave for up to a year for the care of a child or the child of a spouse or a domestic partner.

However, a survey of all faculty members within the University of California showed that very few faculty members were taking advantage of these “family-friendly” programs. This can be attributed to several

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reasons including information on the programs was not known to all faculty, information on eligibility was not always known, and the workplace climate discouraged women from taking advantage of these policies (for example, female faculty may fear that tenure committees would assume that women who had taken leaves to take care of children were not serious about their academic work or would devalue resumes that had gaps in publications because of the time off).

As a result, the University of California system has developed “The UC Family Friendly Edge” with the assistance of the Albert P. Sloan Foundation. The goal of the program is to alter the workplace and faculty culture to accommodate families. In addition to the above-mentioned programs, the UC Family Friendly Edge includes the following policies:

- A flexible part-time option for tenured and tenure-track faculty that can be used for up to five years as life-course needs arise;
- A guarantee to make high-quality child care available at convenient locations (i.e., near work);
- A commitment to assist new faculty members with spousal/partner employment issues;
- A postdoctoral fellowship program to encourage Ph.D.s who have taken time off from their careers for family reasons to reenter academia;
- Educating faculty committees that family-related gaps in resumes should be discounted in hiring and tenure decisions;
- Establishing summer camps and school-break child care for faculty children;
- Establishing emergency backup child care programs;
- Establishing benefits for faculty who want to adopt children.

A key aspect of the UC Family Friendly Edge is to make it known to potential new hires that the university cares about family issues and to make sure that all faculty members at the university including department chairs fully understand the policy.

Other universities are making similar efforts. Princeton University, for example, has recently mandated that all female faculty members with younger children automatically get one-year extension on their tenure clock. By making the extension mandatory, it eliminates the concern that female faculty may have that they would be stigmatized if they requested such leave.

Other “family-friendly” policies include funding for child care when faculty members are presenting papers at conferences, the development of permanent part-time tenure-track positions (the University of Washington), and concern for a wider range of family issues that families face such as serious illness of self or family members, care of the elderly, and support for faculty facing these problems.

THE ISSUE OF RECRUITING AND RETAINING MINORITY FACULTY

Dr. Jones’ presentation focused on issues related to the recruitment and retention of minority faculty. He showed that between 1980 and 2000, minority student enrollment grew from 16 percent of the total

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college enrollment to 28 percent of the total (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 29, 2003). However, colleges and universities have not been able to diversify the professoriate in response to this demographic change in the student population. As mentioned earlier, although there have been significant increases in the proportion of minority faculty, minority faculty are still under-represented, especially at higher academic ranks and in science, engineering, and mathematics fields.

Across academic disciplines, there are significant differences in minority representation. African Americans are more represented in humanities and education fields than in math and engineering fields. While roughly one third of all African American faculty members are in humanities and education fields, only 2 percent are in math, science, and engineering fields.

One explanation for the under-representation of minority faculty in science, engineering, and math is that there are not enough minority doctorate candidates in the pipeline. Data from the National Science Foundation show that in 2000, 79 percent of the Ph.D. recipients in science, engineering, and math are white, 4 percent are African American, 4 percent are Hispanic, 10 percent are Asian, and 1 percent are Native Americans.

The remainder of Dr. Jones' presentation focused on what can be done in order to increase the number of minority doctorate candidates in science, engineering, and math fields. First, he discussed the success story of the Meyerhoff Scholars Program at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), which aims at addressing the pipeline issue. Then he discussed what colleges and universities need to do in order to increase the presence of minority faculty on campus.

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program at the UMBC was founded in 1988 by Freeman Hrabowski with an initial gift from Robert and Jane Meyerhoff. The goal of the program is to increase undergraduate participation of under-represented minorities in science, engineering, and mathematics. The first class, which started in 1989, consisted of 19 African American male students. Female students were included in 1990. In 1996, the program was open to all high-achieving high school students, although African American students remained to be the majority.

The program is intensive and deliberately focuses on student success and advancement towards the Ph.D. To that end, it recruits high-ability students, facilitates student contact with faculty, and provides financial resources. The impact of the Meyerhoff program has been tremendous. According to research by J. Lynn Zimmerman of the UMBC, since 1993, 416 students have graduated and over 300 students are currently participating in the program. The 14-year overall retention rate of the program is more than 95 percent and the average GPA for all current students is 3.53. Moreover, roughly 80 percent of the

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program graduates are currently enrolled in or have completed graduate and/or professional programs including top Ph.D. and M.D. programs. If the program's current Ph.D. graduation rate continues, the UMBC will be leading in the production of black Ph.D.s in science, engineering, and mathematics.

Recruiting and Retaining Minority Faculty

In terms of recruiting minority faculty, Dr. Jones indicated that there are several important factors that institutions need to consider including employing a strategic hiring process that goes beyond following usual procedures. Research by Caroline Turner of Arizona State University suggests that at predominantly white institutions, most faculty hires of persons of color will occur when at least one of the three following conditions is present: 1) a diverse search committee, 2) a job description written expressly to enhance the candidate pool, and 3) an institutional intervention strategy.

At Dr. Jones' own institution, the University of Minnesota, continuing efforts are made to ensure that recurring resources are allocated to recruit faculty of color. Examples: 1) the Faculty and Spousal Bridge Funds were set up specifically for hiring faculty of color and roughly one third of minority faculty at the University of Minnesota have been recruited with these funds. 2) The President's Faculty Multicultural Research Award allocates funds each year to provide resources for faculty of color whose research focuses on the under-representation of people of color in higher education. The award, which mainly provides seed money, has driven much of the success among minority faculty members in achieving tenure and obtaining larger grants for their research. 3) President's Postdoctoral Fellowships for Academic Diversity provide opportunities for minority Ph.D.s to receive postdoctoral training before seeking an academic job. 4) The Visiting Scholars Program is a major way that many minority faculty members in the law school were hired. Through the program, faculty members from other institutions are invited to spend a semester at the University of Minnesota before they make a decision on whether to join the faculty at the University of Minnesota.

In addition, the University of Minnesota places a strong emphasis on faculty development. The university provides reception and orientation for new faculty members, conducts promotion and tenure workshops and grant-writing workshops, and provides faculty developments funds.

The University of Minnesota has been successful in recruiting and retaining faculty of color. Between 1991 and 2002, the proportion of faculty of color grew from 8 percent in 1991 to 13 percent in 2002, mainly through new hires. During this time period, the proportion of new hires that are minority ranges from 12 percent to 27 percent. Data on faculty attrition rate in the last ten years show that there are no significant differences between that of men, women, and faculty of color.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

As the American professoriate ages, it is increasingly important for colleges and universities to recruit more diverse candidates to fill faculty positions. Data show that although the proportions of female and minority faculty have been growing in the last decade, they are still under-represented, especially in higher academic ranks such as full professor and associate professor. Moreover, female faculty are particularly under-represented at research universities and minority faculty are particularly under-represented in science and engineering fields.

The May 11 web cast organized by the TIAA-CREF Institute, the ACE and the NACUBO showed that the reasons for the under-representation of female and minority faculty are different. While the under-representation of female faculty is more of a recruitment issue, the under-representation of minority faculty is more of a pipeline issue.

One of the reasons for the under-representation of female faculty is the difficulties that female faculty face in combining family and career, especially at research universities. To address this issue, many institutions have already introduced “family-friendly” policies in an effort to recruit and retain female faculty.

To increase the presentation of minority faculty, the most effective way would be to increase the Ph.D. production of minority faculty. To that end, institutions need to develop programs that are aimed to encourage minority college students to pursue a degree in science and engineering. In addition, institutions need to have a strong commitment to attracting minority faculty members.

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