

## A Roadmap to Equity

Virginia Valian  
Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center

Outlined here are reasons for attending to equity; the importance of daily life in a department; accountability (of chairs or heads to deans and of deans to the provost); collecting and presenting data; using data to make decisions. Various institutions have developed policies and procedures to increase the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in academia. Some programs target policy changes; others target improvement of individual women's success. Examples are provided of each.

### **Commitment on part of leadership (president (or chancellor), provost, deans, chairs or heads, division directors)**

- publicly articulate how university or sector will benefit through increasing equity and diversity
  - greater innovation with diversity (e.g., Hong & Page, 2004)
  - more and more interdisciplinary teams in the sciences (e.g., Jones, Wuchty, & Uzzi, 2008; Wuchty, Jones, & Uzzi, 2007); work by teams is cited more
  - more recruiting of graduates by multi-national companies
  - better outcomes for undergraduate and graduate students
  - improved applicant pool
- state commitment in person to faculty, staff, and students within one's purview
- publicly and personally commit one's section of the institution to equity and diversity
- publicly announce concrete goals, efforts, and successes
- review tenure and promotion decisions for possible inequities by sex or race
- finance the collection and dissemination of data
- finance efforts to improve equity

### **The department: producing an environment that is fair and is perceived to be fair**

- types of fairness (justice): distributive (also called outcome), procedural, interactional (divided into informational and interpersonal) [see Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001, for review]
- interactional fairness (covering impartiality, respect, concern for others, consistent and truthful explanations of policies, propriety) predicts wide range of outcomes, from productivity to satisfaction
  - *impartiality* within a department includes transparency and equity in assigning responsibilities and awarding benefits (such as resources)
  - *respect and concern for others* is exemplified by, *inter alia*, a) nominating a range of faculty for internal and external prizes and awards, b) inviting a range of speakers for colloquia and conferences, c) encouraging a range of opinions in faculty meetings

- *propriety* includes clearly enunciated expectations about professional deportment on the part of those with more power (e.g., senior faculty) toward those with less power (e.g., junior faculty, graduate students, undergraduates)
- the faculty member's department is the most frequently-encountered location of interactional fairness

### **Accountability of chairs (or heads) to deans**

- choice of (appointed) chair includes review of previous equity and diversity efforts
- evaluation
  - chairs write annual self- and department-appraisal, including efforts toward equity and diversity – about 7-8 pages in length
  - dean and chair meet to discuss chair's performance
  - dean writes 2-3 page evaluation
  - chair's and department's benefits and resources are dependent *in part* on faculty development, which includes equity and diversity
- annual review by dean of faculty salaries by sex
- review by dean of start-up packages by sex

### **Accountability of deans to provost**

- choice of dean includes review of previous equity and diversity efforts
- evaluation
  - deans write annual self- and school-appraisal, including efforts toward equity and diversity – about 7-8 pages in length
  - provost and dean meet to discuss dean's performance
  - provost writes 2-3 page evaluation
  - dean's and school's benefits are dependent in part on faculty development, which includes equity and diversity (only possible when central administration controls some resources)

### **Benchmarks (compiled by institutional research, provost's office, deans' offices, departments)**

- provide data to each department from more central source
  - % female PhDs over last 5 years – nationally and within school
  - % female post-docs, if known
  - department's history
    - number of hires per half-decade, presented separately by sex
    - attrition by sex
    - years in rank by sex
    - service on important committees by sex
    - salary by year of degree and sex
    - start-up packages by sex
    - where known, comparisons with peer institutions
- publish data on university website for each major school or division

- ask department to provide annual equity survey results; provide resources accordingly
  - nominations for prizes and awards by sex
  - receipt of prizes and awards by sex
  - colloquium speakers by sex
  - efforts made to support faculty

### **Recruitment (see VVV handout on recruitment and retention)**

- train search committee chairs in how to run a good search
- provide resources to help search for possible candidates
  - do not wait for applications to come in; search out women and underrepresented minorities
- University of Michigan STRIDE-type teams
- University of California-Irvine equity advisor-type groups
- provide funds to bring more candidates to campus than would normally be authorized
  - model: University of Delaware School of Engineering (Eric Kaler)
    - normally 2-3 candidates authorized to visit for interview
    - if nontraditional candidates, up to 4-5 more authorized
- reject searches that do not meet availability pool

### **Dual careers**

- relocation specialist (salary may be shared among universities)
- membership in HERC (Higher Education Recruitment Consortium)
- membership in consortium with local professional groups
- development of on-campus policy to integrate plans across departments
- dual-career couples are an opportunity for institutions to attract faculty (because couples want to live together)

### **Tenure and promotion**

- transparency with respect to process (e.g., via workshops)
- guidelines on criteria and expectations
- annual reviews of non-tenured and junior faculty specifying areas of strengths and weaknesses and suggesting plan for upcoming year
- uniform letter to external reviewers
- development of skill in reading reviewers' letters
- application of consistent standards

### **Stop-the-clock**

- tenure may be delayed for one or more years for child, elder, or dependent care: many variations of model
- promotion and tenure committees and external reviewers receive clear instructions on how to judge productivity

### **Child care (± lab school) and lactation rooms**

- on-site day care; subsidies for child care; travel funds with subsidy for child care
- lactation rooms are visible sign of inclusion

### **Hiring funds and target of opportunity hires**

- initial funding of women in science or other fields where women are underrepresented
- special funds for superior start-up packages

### **Faculty development**

- sponsorship model: Hunter College Gender Equity Project Sponsorship Program
  - research fund that can be used for RAs, travel, research expenses, release time
  - pairing with sponsor, who is paid \$2500/semester (cash or research funds)
    - senior person in faculty member's field
    - **not** in faculty member's department
    - serves as intellectual sounding board
      - makes detailed comments on grant proposals and papers
    - serves as career facilitator
      - makes suggestions about what conferences to attend
      - helps arrange invitations to conferences
      - helps enlarge faculty member's professional network
  - monthly workshops on topics such as time management, teaching effectively and efficiently, grant writing, responding to negative reviewers' comments, and combining work with a personal life
  - access to senior academics for advice about handling difficult issues
- nominations for prizes and awards (possible model: University of California – Berkeley)
- annual reviews by chair or head for untenured faculty: evaluate research, teaching, and service with recommendations for areas to concentrate on
  - review of reviews by dean
- endowed chairs and similar professorships

### **Education for faculty**

- 'innocent' barriers to diversity
  - Homophily (e.g., Clark & Fossett, 2008)
  - confidence in one's judgment (e.g., Tetlock, 2005)
- how gender works to bias evaluations (e.g., Valian, 1998)
  - presentations to departments along with departmental data

### **Public and departmental events on gender and diversity**

- high-visibility symposia

- high-visibility speakers
- high-visibility women scientists giving scientific and women-in-science talks

## Research

- gender and evaluation
- gender and organizational change
- gender and attitude change

### **Resources for team responsible for improving the representation and advancement of women faculty<sup>1</sup>**

#### staff

- Institutional Research person
  - varies from half-time to full-time
  - provides and analyzes data by department
  - collects and provides data on availability pool for each department
- executive assistant, full-time
- projects manager, full-time
  - coordinates events such as all-day symposia
  - coordinates research projects and pilot programs
    - funding for dependent care travel
    - research-enabling grants (competitive)
    - child care scholarships
  - coordinates workshops for faculty
- HERC person

#### space

- office and meeting room near provost
- rooms for executive assistant, IR-type person, projects manager

#### power

- authorization to look at any data at any time
- full support of provost and president even when faculty and chairs complain
  - meetings with president at least 2 times per term
- ability to turn down searches
- authorization to review tenure and promotion decisions when upper-level committees meet

---

<sup>1</sup> The resource list is based on interviews with Evelyn Hammonds (Harvard University), Nancy Hopkins (MIT), Jean Howard (Columbia University), and Abigail Stewart (University of Michigan), but they do not necessarily represent the views of any of the people consulted or the current situation at any of the universities where these individuals worked at the time of the interviews.

- target of opportunity and dual-career hiring options

### support

- advisory board
  - internal
  - external
- meetings with university counsel on as-needed basis (as often as 2 times per week)
- public verbal commitment to equity and diversity on the part of senior administration

### Partial Resources

Clark, W. A., & Fossett, M. (2008). Understanding the social context of the Schelling segregation model. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *105*(11), 4109-4114.

Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *86*(3), 425-445.

Hong, L. & Page, S. E. (2004). Groups of diverse problem solvers can outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *101*, 16385–16389.

Jones, B. F., Wuchty, S., & Uzzi, B. (2008). Multi-university research teams: Shifting impact, geography, and stratification in science. *Science*, *322*(5905), 1259-1262.

Stewart, A. J., Malley, J. E., & LaVaque-Manty D. (Eds.) (2007). *Transforming science and engineering: Advancing academic women*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Tetlock, P. E. (2005). *Expert political judgment: How good is it? How can we know?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Valian, V. (1998). *Why so slow? The advancement of women*. MIT Press.

Wuchty, S., Jones, B. F., Uzzi, B. (2007). The increasing dominance of teams in production of knowledge. *Science*, *316*, 1036-1039.

[www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity) – see resources therein

[www.hunter.cuny.edu/gendertutorial](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/gendertutorial)