

Gender Equity and Opportunity at UCSD: An Undergraduate Perspective

A Report for Marye Anne Fox, Chancellor and
David Miller, Acting Senior Vice Chancellor and Associate Vice Chancellor

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We are students in Professor Blair-Loy's Sociology C132: Gender and Work course, who have conducted an optional research project on work-life issues in higher education and written this report. As undergraduates, we care greatly about the quality of our UCSD education – including the university's excellence, equity, humanity, and reputation. As sociologists who have studied work and gender, we offer suggestions for policies and programs to enhance gender equity and work-life balance at UCSD. While our report considers faculty and students, our policy prescriptions focus on faculty issues. A more equitable gender ratio among our faculty would positively affect the educational experience of students.

The report begins by discussing two systemic patterns at UCSD: the sex segregation of undergraduates among college majors and the under-representation of women faculty in almost every field on campus. The proportion of women faculty here is lower than the national average and lower than that of all other UC campuses. We discuss how this gender disparity mirrors and reinforces broader social and cultural structures. Finally, we present concrete proposals that would help in the recruitment and retention of the best professors, including the best women professors, in the market. We argue that a more equitable gender ratio among the faculty would enhance the learning experience for students.

Sex Segregation of UCSD Undergraduates among College Majors

A striking aspect of life at UCSD is the sex segregation of the teaching and learning process. Despite a gender balanced undergraduate population overall (52 percent female), our calculations indicate that only six percent of undergraduates are in sex-integrated majors. Most of these integrated majors are tiny, such as Russian and Religious Studies.¹ Thus, undergraduates' specialized education typically takes place in gender-biased settings.

The scarcity of women in the science and engineering fields has garnered the most attention on campus (see *UCSD Guardian* 2004). For example, in the Mechanical Engineering Department only 13 percent of the undergraduates are women. Yet the sex segregation of education characterizes the entire campus. In almost every major, students find their classrooms dominated either by male students (such as in engineering, computer science, or physics) or by female students (e.g., psychology, sociology, communication, and human development), Registrar 2005). The gender disparity in some fields is widening (*UCSD Guardian* 2004).

History warns us that separate is not equal. We doubt that separation of students by any ascriptive characteristic is conducive to equal treatment.

¹ Our calculations are based on the UCSD Office of the Registrar (2005) statistics.

Although each student makes a decision about which major to declare, this choice is channeled by university social structures much more powerful than any individual. Patterns of sex segregation and the exclusion of the minority gender are self-replicating. First year female students may feel unwelcome in a computer science class with a few token women, while male first years will be less comfortable in a communication class dominated by female students.

To the degree that talented potential female scientists and engineers are not being encouraged to enter, continue, and excel in science and technical fields, for example, and gifted potential male psychologists or communication scholars are not nurtured in those specialties, classroom diversity is constricted, individual choice is constrained, and talent is squandered.

Sex Segregation and Gender Inequality among Ladder Rank Faculty

In 2003, only 21 percent of full-time ladder rank faculty at UCSD were women. The under-representation of women plagues almost every department. While this is a problem in many elite universities, UCSD's proportion of women is far lower than the national average and is lowest of any of the UC campuses (UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge 2005). Even a female-dominated student major like Communications has only 53 percent tenured women (*UCSD Guardian* 2004). Moreover, women faculty members have lower average salaries than their male colleagues, even after taking account of differences due to experience and academic discipline. (Please see the Appendix for additional information.)

The paucity of women professors is especially striking in the technical fields on campus, where women constitute only 3 to 15 percent of ladder rank faculty (*UCSD Guardian* 2004) and where women students are rare. In these fields especially, the gender disparity at the faculty and the student levels violates our university's values and goals.

Our Student Affairs' Department pledges to support the university's mission in these ways:

- I. Attract and enroll students of the highest academic capability who are representative of the diversity of the people of California.
- II. Facilitate the retention, academic advancement, and graduation of students.
(<http://www.vcsa.ucsd.edu/mission.html>)

To the extent that talented, potentially strong female scientists and engineers are not being encouraged to enter and excel in these fields, these goals remain unfulfilled.

This scarcity of women in the science and engineering programs makes it more difficult for the university to attract and retain talented female faculty, who may find more appealing jobs in universities with more equitable gender ratios or with better family accommodation policies. Our campus may be losing out to the competition on recruiting and retaining the best talent.

The lack of female professors in science and engineering fields creates an environment where women graduate students and undergraduates have insufficient role models, and thus are less likely to continue in science and engineering majors. Thus, the effects of women faculty's

under-representation infect the classroom by perpetuating cultural biases that these fields are not appropriate for women. The under-representation of female students in these fields helps ensure that gender disparities will continue in the next generation.

Moreover, the paucity of women in the UCSD faculty generally and in science and engineering particularly set the stage for unequal treatment on campus and beyond. These patterns mirror and reinforce broader social structures in U.S. society, including the sex segregation of occupations, the gender pay gap, and gender differences in promotion. In the broader work force, the sex segregation of occupations contributes substantially to the gender wage gap (Padavik & Reskin 2002). We see a chilling reflection of these societal patterns in women's under-representation among ladder-rank faculty and in their lower average salaries, compared to men (see Appendix).

Cultural structures -- patterns of ideologies, values and beliefs that are broadly shared in society -- also mirror and reinforce women's under-representation in these fields. Cultural structures include robust ideologies that men are more competent professionals and excel in scientific and engineering fields compared to women (Padavik and Reskin 2004). When young women and men walk into science and engineering classes overwhelmingly dominated by male students and almost exclusively taught by male professors, these cultural structures are powerfully reinforced.

Another tenacious cultural structure is the belief that women, even if employed, are primarily responsible for home and family. The flip side of this ideology is that the workplace demands and deserves one's total devotion (Blair-Loy 2003), and that one's value at work is equal to the time one puts in at the job (Hochschild 1997). These cultural structures affect the University of California faculty. According to the UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge Survey (2005), women faculty with children spend 18 more hours a week on housework and care-giving yet only 4.4 hours less on professional work than do male professors with children (p. 7).

Further, the survey reports a professor's typical comment: "Female graduate students are telling us over and over again . . . that they are not going to become faculty members because they do not see how they can combine work and family in a way that is reasonable" (p. 5). Given the pervasive ideologies of female care-giving, it is vital that UCSD's policies are structured such that family care-giving is considered possible and legitimate for all faculty, regardless of gender. To this end, we support the availability of the extension of the pre-tenure probationary period for any assistant professor who requests it and its automatic extension for all assistant professors who use family leave or modified active service for purposes of caring for new children (UCSD Family Accommodation Policies and Programs for Ladder-Rank Faculty).

New Policy Proposals

Surveys of department chairs indicate that the quality of life and family considerations play a large role in the recruitment and the retention of UC faculty (UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge Report 2005). According to the UCSD Family Accommodation Policies and Programs for Ladder-Rank Faculty, our campus is "committed to helping faculty balance the needs of career and family and have established policies and programs to create an equitable and productive

academic program.” The current policies need to be strengthened and extended to become more useful tools in meeting this goal. We support the initiatives suggested in the UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge Report. Harvard University has publicly recognized its own shortcomings regarding the equitable representation and treatment of women. We advocate the study of their recently released proposals (see bibliography). We also suggest our own policy proposals.

Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Ensure a fair representation of women serving on and chairing faculty search committees. If such committee work creates an extra burden for women, compensate them with reductions in other service or teaching work. Advertise positions broadly and reduce “old boy networking” to try to increase the number of women in the candidate pool. Advertise and adapt recruitment and retention policies used in the Communication Department, which has a gender-balanced faculty.

Offer university financial assistance for partner placement, relocation, and education, to supplement the referrals currently provided by the Partner Opportunity Program.

Institutionalize more attractive and flexible career options for faculty. In many fields, UCSD salaries lag below national averages while the cost of living is 164 percent of the national average. In the current economic climate, other benefits are increasingly important for recruitment and retention of our most talented faculty. These career options should include enhanced sabbatical opportunities pre-tenure as well as part-time tenure track positions (where full-time research is expected with a reduced or eliminated teaching load, with reduced pay.)

Offer more progressive family accommodation policies. We suggest several proposals.

Expand the on-campus child care options to include infant care. The Early Childhood Education Center will not accept children until they are 11 months old and walking. The International Center Cooperative Nursery School will not accept children younger than toddler age and only accepts toddlers for 6 hours a week! Yet UC parents do professional work for over 50 hours a week on average (UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge 2005, p. 7), and UCSD’s family leave policies only allow for 3 months of active service modified duty for new parents. The gap between the amount of professional work parents perform and the availability of infant care on campus is appalling. We realize that child care and particularly infant care are expensive. We encourage creative use of resources to help contain costs. For example, students from human development, psychology, sociology, and other fields could assist in the child care centers as a service learning or internship experience.

Increase the period of active service modified duty for all parents, whether or not they gave birth to the child. Expand after-school and recreation options for the children of faculty and students. A recreation center on campus, run by the YMCA or similar organization and staffed in part by student interns, could support families at an affordable price.

Expand elder and adult care services beyond the simple provision of referrals that is now available. In our class’s experience, women are disproportionately responsible for family care-giving and this role is especially emphasized among women of color.

Student Recruitment and Support

Many of the heavily male-dominated college majors are impacted, meaning that students declare the major before matriculating. Cultural structures about appropriate male fields limit the number of college applicants declaring science and engineering majors. We propose a high-visibility, well-publicized program in which female professors would visit California high schools and encourage students of both genders to consider entering these fields. Compensate the women faculty for the time and effort these visits would require by reducing their university service and/or teaching loads.

A gender balanced faculty in the classroom will provide positive role models and create a better learning environment for students of both genders.

Thank you for your consideration of our report.

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From Professor Blair-Loy's Sociology C132: Gender and Work course

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UCSD Partner Opportunities Program. <http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/offices/partneropp/>

UCSD Student Affairs Mission Statement and Organizational Goals.
<http://www.vcsa.ucsd.edu/mission.html>.

Appendix: Additional Data

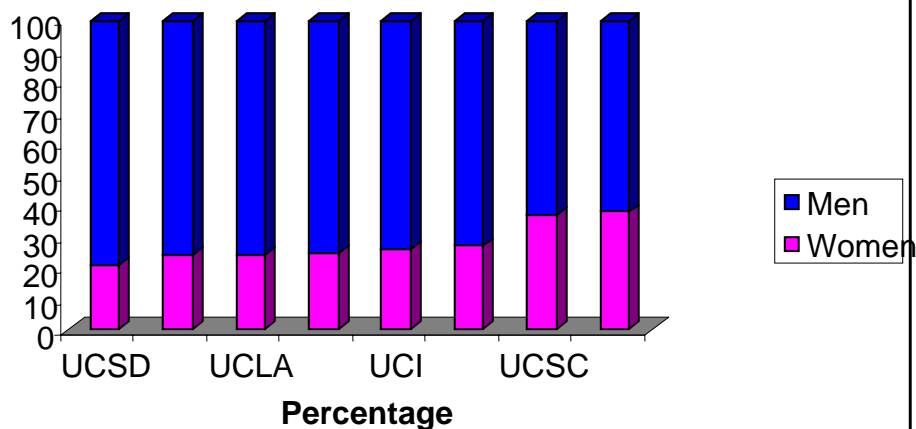
Under-representation of Women Faculty

Women represent 40 to 50 percent of all doctorate and professional degrees yet only 21 to 38 percent of UC faculty. At just 21 percent, UCSD has the smallest proportion of women faculty in the University of California system. See Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2.²

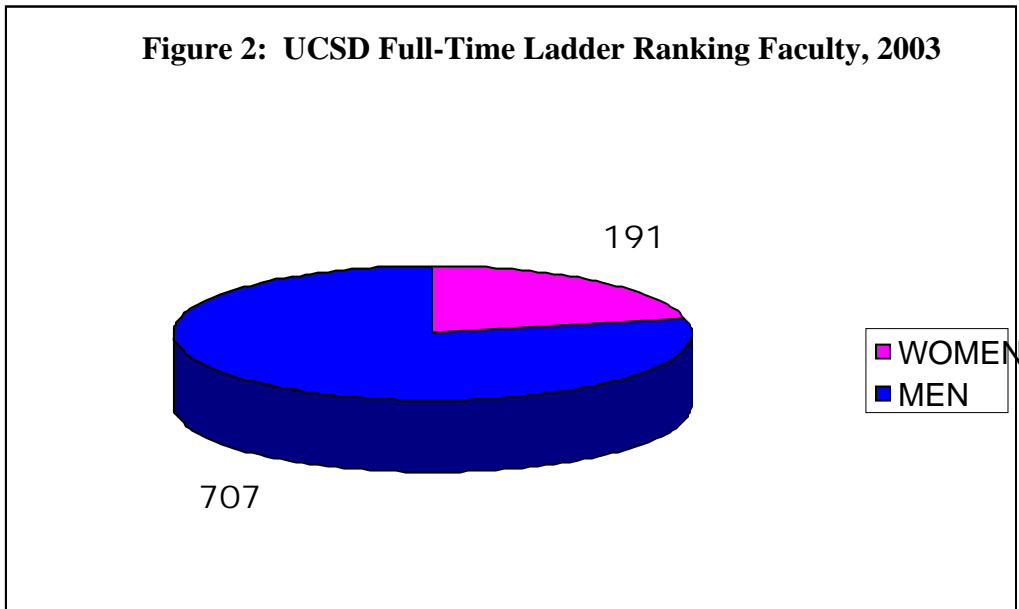
Table 1: UC Full-Time Ladder Ranking Faculty, 2003

	Women	Men	Percent Women
UCSD	191	707	21
UCR	131	412	24
UCLA	395	1226	24
UCB	334	987	25
UCI	231	669	26
UCSB	216	572	27
UCSC	165	286	37
UCSF	92	150	38

Figure 1: Comparison of Women and Men in Full-Time Ladder- Ranking Faculty, 2003



² Source: UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge Report (2005, p. 5).



The gender disparity on the regular campus is also present in the School of Medicine. Women are under-represented among the faculty of the School of Medicine, when compared to the available pool. Women are also under-represented, relative to their overall presence, among search committee members, search committee chairs, the pool of faculty candidates, and the candidate short list.³

Gender Pay Gap among Faculty

After accounting for experience and academic discipline, ladder-rank women received **12.5 percent less**, on average, in annual compensation than their male colleagues in 2002. The gender pay gap is particularly wide among medical faculty. After accounting for experience, School of Medicine women faculty members were paid **23 percent less**, on average, than their male colleagues.⁴

³ Source: Report of the UCSD School of Medicine Task Force on Gender Equity (2002).

⁴ Sources: UCSD Gender Equity Report (2002); Report of the UCSD School of Medicine Task Force on Gender Equity (2002).