



MOVING TOWARD FACULTY GENDER EQUITY AT UC

As in the political and corporate spheres, women have never been proportionately represented in academia. Despite the fact that UC has outpaced many of the higher education institutions in its peer group in the hiring of women faculty over the past few decades, the administration recognizes that much more needs to be done to promote equity and is actively pursuing solutions to this serious issue.

Some good news: UC's track record

UC has steadily increased the number of women faculty over the past few decades and matched or outpaced other major universities in hiring female faculty.

- The overall rate of hiring of women faculty continues to increase for the third consecutive year. The percentage of women among new faculty hires at UC has registered significant increases, rising from 25% in 1999-2000 to 30% in 2000-2001. The proportion of women among new faculty hires continued to increase to 31.2% in 2002.
- Certain campuses have registered dramatic gains: UC Berkeley increased hiring of all women faculty from 27% to 32% and assistant professors from 30% to 37% between 2000-01 and 2001-02. UC Davis hiring rose from 13% female in 1998-99, to 26% in 1999-00, to 32% in 2000-01, to 42% in 2001-02.
- The percentage of overall female faculty at the University of California (24.2 percent) is dramatically higher than at institutions such as MIT (16 percent) and Stanford University (20.3 percent).
- UC has shown a substantial increase in the hiring of women into full professor positions, up from 18.5% of full professor hires in 2000-01 to 27.1% in 2001-02.

Capturing the academic gender gap: A complex problem

Despite this progress, the academic gender gap persists in some of UC's academic departments. Many departments have had exemplary records in female faculty hiring, while others have lagged. The rate of hiring of women faculty varies widely by field. In some fields such as the humanities, UC is hiring at a rate at or above the number of women in the available pool. However in traditionally underrepresented fields such as computer science and engineering, UC hiring is at a much lower rate. There are many factors that contribute to this, but it is important to note that the rate at which UC hires women dropped dramatically from the highs reached in the mid-1990s, since policy changes restricted affirmative action efforts.

- Many of the current tenured UC professors were hired at a time when female Ph.D.s were scarce in some fields. Because of the long span of faculty members' careers, the under-representation of women persists within senior faculty ranks.
- UC hires only small numbers of professors in some of the academic fields most dominated by women, such as clinical psychology and education. UC hires greater numbers of faculty from traditionally male-dominated fields like engineering and technology, to keep pace with the demands of the new economy. The availability of women in such field tends to be lower.
- UC does not have a central hiring office for faculty positions. There are approximately 600 academic departments across the system, each of which individually recruits and selects faculty using a complex and lengthy review process.

Next steps: What UC is doing to solve the problem

Over the past two years, President Richard C. Atkinson has initiated a series of steps to increase female faculty recruitment and retention. In November of 2002, the President's Summit on Faculty Gender Equity was convened so that

female faculty members could develop recommendations that better address gender equity on campus. The following is a snapshot of some of the steps UC has been taking towards this end – including some of the Summit recommendations:

- **Policies and practices to accommodate childbearing, childrearing and other family needs are being strengthened and clarified.** Although UC has the most generous work/life policies of any of its comparison institutions, faculty members expressed concerns that some may be unable to fully benefit from these policies. Policies are being clarified so that every eligible faculty member will be ensured automatic childbearing leave; campuses are centralizing family leave funding so that individual departments are not disadvantaged by faculty who take leave; and faculty are being surveyed to better evaluate UC's work/life policies and promote a greater understanding of these issues at the departmental level.
- **Campus childcare centers have remained a high priority in the past two state budgets,** in order to further provide family-friendly policies and incentives, as women academics may be differentially affected by these policies.
- **Campuses now give faculty members an opportunity to ask for a reevaluation of their career accomplishments** to ensure that they are at the appropriate rank in accordance with the merit system.
- **As faculty hiring is initiated at the departmental level, President Atkinson has asked each campus to monitor and report on the steps they have taken to address gender equity in academic planning.**
- **Recruitment efforts are being strengthened system-wide** and campuses are being encouraged to share information on top-level candidates – in order to better utilize the available pool of female applicants.
- **Campuses are ensuring that women serve on search committees and staff efforts to address equity are evaluated.**
- **Updated affirmative action guidelines were issued by UCOP to clarify existing law and policy** governing faculty hiring and to help faculty and staff develop “best practices” for increasing diversity in accordance with state and federal law.
- **\$2 million per year over the past three years will be used as incentives for campuses to hire faculty who will contribute to the academic diversity of UC** through their research, teaching, or service. The President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program will be significantly expanded to support outstanding scholars at the beginning of their careers.

Individual campuses have also made real progress in developing policies that address faculty gender equity:

- UC Irvine was the recipient of a National Science Foundation grant that allowed the campus to restructure search committees and appoint equity advisors at each school to monitor faculty hiring. The strategy has been very successful so far in recruiting women to the higher ranks of academic leadership: six of the 10 deans at UCI are now women.
- UC Berkeley now requires departments asking for new faculty positions to provide an assessment of their record on hiring of women and minority faculty in the past five years. UCB also developed a comprehensive web-based survey for faculty on career/family issues that will provide important data for evaluating family accommodation policies.
- The Davis campus made an extraordinary effort to re-examine faculty hiring to assess the problem and formulate solutions and also completed a comprehensive study of equity in faculty hiring in March 2002.
- The San Diego campus completed a comprehensive study of gender equity in the past year and has taken steps to address problem areas in faculty recruitment and compensation.
- The Los Angeles campus has appointed Rosina Becerra as Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Diversity and her office has become a positive force for leadership in addressing gender equity on campus. Last year, UCLA's Gender Equity Committee released a report and series of recommendations on the status of female faculty hiring and salaries.