

Diversity and the Environment Webinar Series

Presented by:



Diversity in Higher Education: Creating Equity in Evaluation of Faculty

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2020
12:00 PM-1:00 PM ET**

Webinar Logistics



Everyone should be connected via Audio Broadcast upon entering the webinar. You do not need to call in & you are automatically muted



The presentation will be recorded and posted to the Antioch CCPCR web site within one week



Please submit any questions you have for the presenter in the Q&A section



If you are having trouble with any aspect of the broadcast, use the Chat section to message the Host directly

Moderator

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Presenter

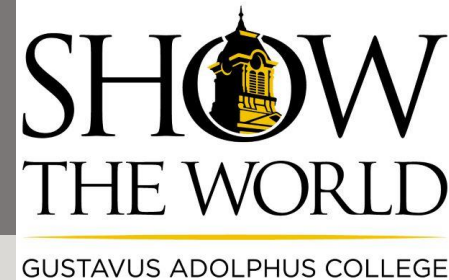
Valerie Banschbach

President-Elect

Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences

Associate Provost & Dean of Sciences & Education

Gustavus Adolphus College



Diversity in Higher
Education:

Creating Equity in
Evaluation of Faculty

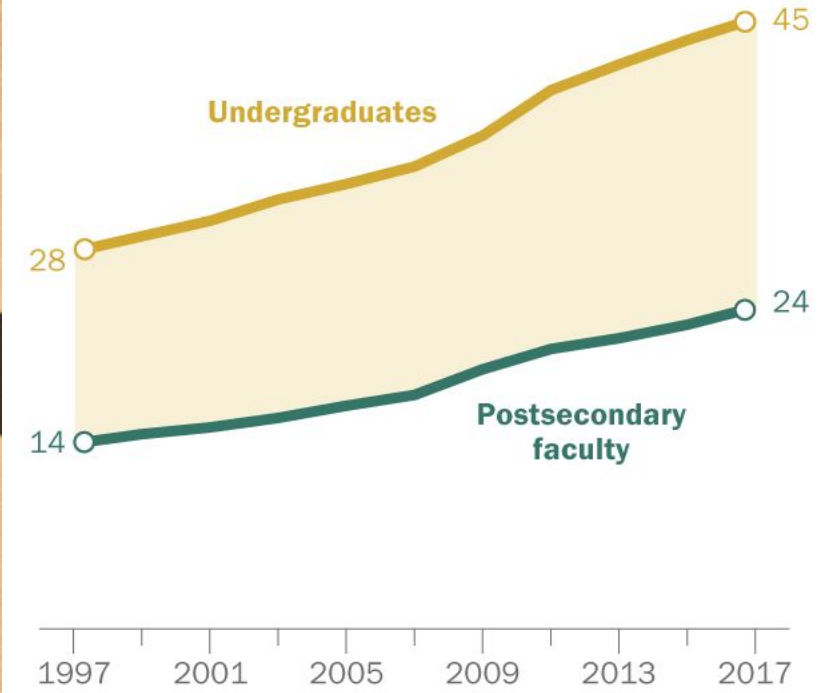


Change won't come without intentionality

- Why is DEI at institutions of Higher Ed important broadly to ESS?
- Peer-reviewed studies show the impacts of bias (cognitive and systemic) at all stages of faculty careers

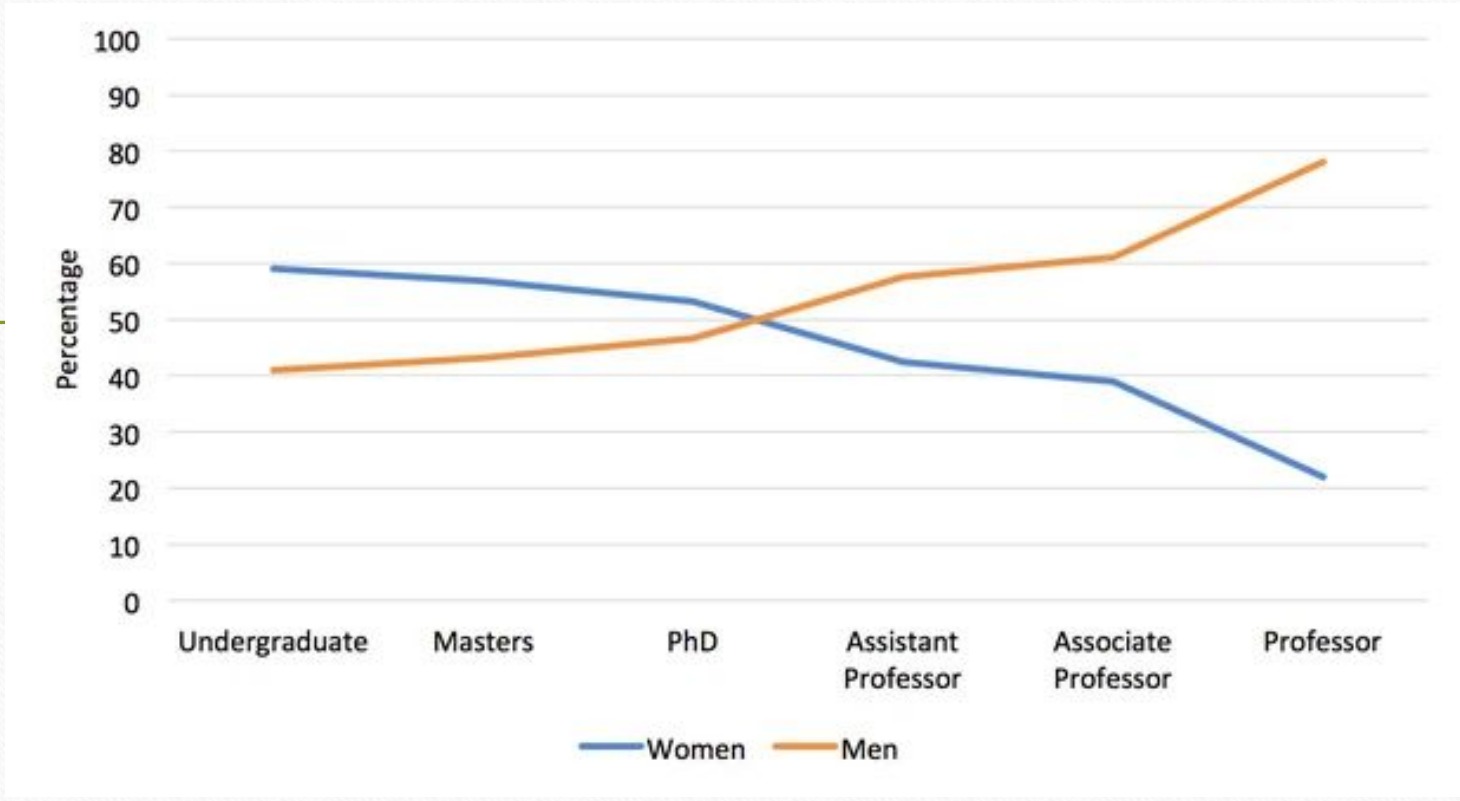
U.S. college students still more likely than faculty to be racial or ethnic minorities

% of undergraduates and postsecondary faculty who are nonwhite



Note: "Nonwhite" includes blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and those of two or more races. Those categorized as "non-resident alien" and "race/ethnicity unknown" are not included in this analysis. Source: National Center for Education Statistics.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/31/us-college-faculty-student-diversity/>



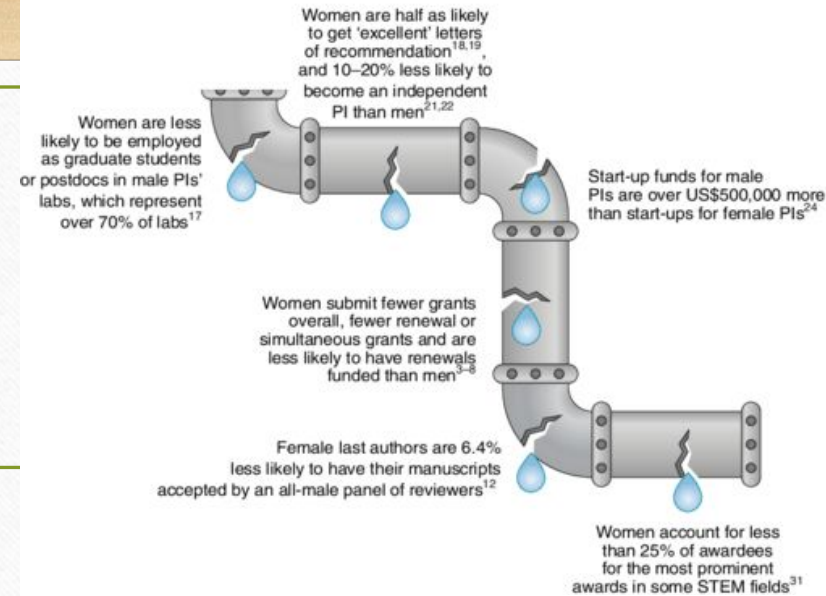
Gender equity in US universities for biological and life sciences, student data from 2014 and academic data from 2015. Data from (National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2017)

From *Inside eLife* (2018): Gender Equity: Addressing recruitment at the departmental level
<https://elifesciences.org/inside-elifesciences/6118bb63/gender-equity-addressing-recruitment-at-the-departmental-level>

What can we do to mitigate biases and remove systemic barriers to success?

- Faculty searches
- Retention of faculty
 - Focus: Evaluation of teaching and literature review on Student Evaluations of Teaching
- Need for students to have a voice and responsible role

Barriers to Progress



How can the entire STEM community address this gender bias problem?



- Collect and publish data on gender representation in all areas of STEM visibility and success
- Set clear and specific goals and guidelines for gender and minority representation in your area of STEM
- Identify and offer effective training in unconscious bias and effective hiring and retention strategies

Grogan, Kathleen. (2018). How the entire scientific community can confront gender bias in the workplace. *Nature Ecology & Evolution*. 10.1038/s41559-018-0747-4.

From Williams and Wade-Golden (2013):

- 1) Pipeline challenges (and use of pipeline challenges as an excuse)
- 2) Need for updated faculty recruitment and retention practices
- 3) Myths and misunderstanding about diversity in higher education
- 4) Decentralized administrative culture of academia
- 5) False argument that diversity is incompatible with academic excellence

Faculty Search Process: Change Recruitment

- Strong intentionality built on long-term relationships
- Consider cohort hire
- Consider cross-institutional collaborations
 - Consortium for Faculty Diversity

<https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/consortium-for-faculty-diversity/>



Faculty Search Process: Interrupt Bias

Include a Diversity Search Advocate on every hiring committee

- Trained tenured faculty, administrator, or staff, outside the hiring department
- Engages in entire process (advertisement to onboarding)
- Asks questions designed to test the thinking of the group
- Brings to surface unexamined norms, assumptions, practices based on anti-bias training
- Intervenes, if needed; supported by hiring authority
- Training available through:
<https://searchadvocate.oregonstate.edu/about/search-advocacy-beyond-osu>

Points adapted from HERC Webinar (2017) on Oregon Search Advocate Program

Retention of Faculty: Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs)

Three-part report, I co-authored with two other tenured, full profs at Roanoke College:

- 1) Account of explicitly biased and/or harassing comments received by faculty members on SETs
- 2) Report on statistical methods that can be used to detect bias, and statistical methods for improved analyses of faculty SET scores
- 3) Literature review of peer-reviewed studies of SETs (my part)

Factors that influence SETs

- Gender and race (larger literature on gender)
- Perceived norm for discipline: role incongruity (e.g., physicists expected to be white men; education faculty expected to be women...)
- Power dynamics
 - Adjuncts and untenured faculty are vulnerable; students are often aware
- Gender and race of students, prevailing institutional and regional cultures



Do learning outcomes and grades correlate with SETs?

- Learning outcome achievement

- Little correlation—widespread finding

- Confirmed in meta-analysis by Uttl, White & Gonzalez (2017, p.22)

- Grades earned by students in course (e.g., Mengel et al. 2017)

- The authors used a “dataset of 19,952 student evaluations of university faculty in a context where students were randomly allocated to female or male instructors...:”

- Grades not correlated with SETs

- Gender of instructor was correlated; women received significantly lower scores

- Bias driven by male students (female students' SETs did not have a gender bias)

Pedagogy and course content should influence SETs...but are they overridden?

Snap judgments and influence of bribes...

- Thirty second-view experiment: Ambady and Rosenthal (1993)
 - Undergraduates viewed <30 second silent video clips of instructors at the start of the semester and rated faculty
 - End of semester student evaluations changed little from initial, video clip ratings (p. 431)
- Cookie experiment: Hessler et al. (2018)
 - Found a statistically significant effect of providing cookies to third-year medical students ($N = 118$) in the class session during which they filled out their evaluations. (p.1064).
 - With cookies, students rated:
 - Instructors as significantly better teachers (than control group)
 - Course materials as significantly better (than control group)
 - Course overall as significantly better (than control group)



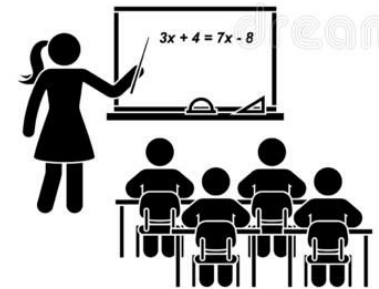
Why do institutions use SETs?

- Numbers have strong appeal in decision-making processes
- Students should be given opportunities to provide feedback
- Universities were initially a construct of white men for white men
 - SETs may have reflected more about teaching with that forced uniformity
- SETs (comments) could play a formative role

Haven't faculty always complained about SETs?

What's the evidence that SETs are biased?

- Large sample size, multivariate statistical analyses
 - Recent examples: Mengel et al. (2017)
- Experimental manipulations meant to control all variables but the one of interest (e.g., gender)
 - Physics lecture experiment with actors playing physics profs (Graves et al., 2017)
 - Online course studies
 - Stick figure video experiment (Arbuckle and Williams, 2003)
- Studies addressing specific ways the system can be manipulated (e.g., bribes)
 - Cookie experiment (Hessler et al., 2018)



Bias in SETs against faculty who are people of color

- Wachtel (1998) in a major review paper of SETs– claimed no research existed on bias against people of color
- Smith (2007) and Smith and Hawken (2011) showed bias against faculty who are black in SETs at Southern, R1 institutions
- Pittman (2010) conducted an interview study of faculty who are women of color.
 - Results “depict white male students as challenging their authority, teaching competency, and scholarly expertise, as well as offering subtle and not-so-subtle threats to their persons and careers” (p.183)
- Aruguete, Slater, & Mwaikinda (2017) studied student ratings of professors based on a description of expertise and a photograph of a black or white professor in casual or formal dress
 - Found that “students rated the black professor less favorably than the white professor” (p.494). Furthermore, this effect was accentuated when the professor who was black wore casual clothing.

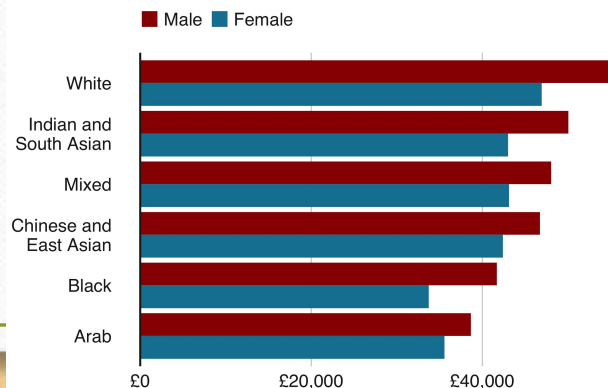
Conclusions

The peer-reviewed literature on SETs indicates:

- Bias against identities that don't fit the student's view of the “norm” for faculty in each field
- SETs work most strongly against those of lower rank, those in adjunct and other contingent positions
- Disadvantages to students: SETs put students in a position of being ‘customers’
- SETs turn individual, implicit & explicit biases into systemic bias with palpable consequences:
lower retention, slower advancement, lower pay (fewer merit raises), fewer awards and recognition for women, people of color, and others from under-represented groups in academia

Black and Arab academics paid a quarter less

Average salaries of Russell Group academic staff



Source: BBC Freedom of Information requests of 22 Russell Group universities

<https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2017/may/26/gender-pay-gap-in-academia-will-take-40-years-to-close>

How can evaluation of teaching be made less biased?

- Minimize the role of SETs in the dossier of evidence related to teaching
- Rely more on peer observations (for direct, non-self-reported evidence)
 - Anti-bias training for faculty is needed
- Emphasize review of the course materials provided by the instructor: syllabi, assignments, teaching philosophy...
- Teach students about implicit bias, discrimination, and discuss effects of bias with the entire community
 - Discuss positive ways students could use their opportunities to deliver feedback about teaching and have a positive impact on their institution's community

Questions for discussion

- In ESS, evaluation of faculty *research* may also be biased. Some faculty report bias against research that focuses on areas of interest to members of historically underrepresented groups. Have you seen examples of this? Solutions?
- Peer review of teaching has been put forth as a superior form of direct evidence of teaching quality. How do we mitigate impacts of biases of faculty peers?
- Does your institution have a system of evaluating teaching that is more equitable? Please share.
- What are some strategies for making institutional change? What strategies will remove some of the burden for making change from those most affected by bias?
- What is your institution doing to try to mitigate impacts of COVID-19 situation on faculty and students with respect to equity and inclusion?

Thank you!

- Thanks to Antioch University and the AESS Diversity Committee for making these webinars possible! Thanks to the speakers in the series!
- Please watch for future announcements about a virtual conference to be held by the Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences



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Questions?



Save the date

Diversity and the Environment Webinar Series

Race and the Environmental Movement: History and Legacies

THURSDAY, JUNE 4th 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

<https://conta.cc/2W2H1Jy>

Presenter: Sarika Tandon

Adjunct Faculty Member, Antioch University New England

Advisory Board Member, Vermont Coalition for Ethnic and Social
Equity in Schools

Advisory Board member, Montpelier Community Justice Center

