TIP #8: ASK HARD QUESTIONS AND TAKE TOUGH STANDS

Regularly question the people who report to you and expect them to provide concrete answers. These include:

- Which women in your unit are most likely to be recruited elsewhere?
- What are you doing to preempt such losses?
- What mechanisms do you use to ensure equitable distribution of resources?
- How do you ensure that searches to fill new positions are broad and inclusive?
- What have you done to recruit more women to your faculty?
- Be ready to take hard positions if the answers are unacceptable. Get the community’s attention and let them know that gender equity is a priority by terminating mandates. Give credit broadly to those who participate in gender equity efforts receive recognition and reinforcement for their work.

TIP #9: INCORPORATE GENDER EQUITY IN CAMPUS PLANNING

Explicitly make gender equity issues a basis on which to evaluate those who report to you, hold your subordinates accountable for decisions that affect gender equity. Make gender equity part of the value statement and strategic plan for your university. Ensure that those who participate in gender equity efforts receive recognition and reinforcement for their work.

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Make it known that you are open to hearing directly from people concerned about gender issues. Respond and take action, if necessary. Even if you don’t believe an allegation or agree with a conclusion about bias, show respect for the person and concern for the situation. Protect those who raise concerns about gender from retaliation for their actions. You cannot create an entirely equitable campus, but you can create a climate that supports open debate without retribution to those of a minority view or class.

REFERENCES AND PHOTO CREDITS

2. This graphics represents the PhD data for 2001-2005 for the same “top 50” institutions at faculty positions in each discipline. Faculty data are from 2002 except Astronomy (2004) and Chemistry (2003). The “Top 50” departments are ranked by NSF according to research expenditures in that discipline. The source of the faculty data is “Nelson Diversity Survey” Donna J. Nelson, Diversity in Science Association, Norman, OK, 2004; http://cheminfo.chem.ou.edu/~djn/diversity/top50.html. The source of the PhD data is NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates/Doctorate Records File. WebCASPAR, http://webcaspar.nsf.gov. Cicer: Gabriela Casar, DVM, PhD Asst. Prof. Animal Sciences, by University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007. Junying Yu, PhD. Sr Research Fellow, Cellular Dynamics International (formerly of the UW-Madison Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center); by University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007. Working father: ©stockphoto.com/Edward Bock Laura Kiersling, PhD. Holistic Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Member, and Editor-in-Chief, ACS Chemical Biology; by University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2007. Molly Barnes, MD, MS, Jan Manchester Birdick. Professor of Women’s Health, Department of Medicine and Women’s Health Research Center & Jo Handelsman, PhD. Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor and Chair, Biochemistry, NAS Member; by Michael Fortier Rothbart/University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2006. Preparation of this document was made possible by grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF#0125566 and #0619979). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation. Copyright ©2005, 2009 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Written by Jo Handelsman, Jennifer Sheridan, Eric Ross, and Molly Casar.

Advancing Women in Science and Engineering: Advice to the Top

Top 10 Tips for Academic Leaders to Accelerate the Advancement of Women in Science and Engineering

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Women have made substantial advances in the sciences, engineering, and medicine in the past 30 years. The number and proportion of women who receive bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in science and engineering has grown substantially. Despite these advances, academic institutions are not fully utilizing the pool of women scientists they produce. The difference between the proportions of women who earn PhDs and those who hold faculty positions at top universities is clear (see below). The underrepresentation of women in faculty and leadership positions does not result from lack of talent or ability, but rather from unconscious biases or assumptions and from institutional structures, policies, practices, cultures, and climates that have differential influences on men and women. Consequently, institutional change and increased awareness of the bias and assumptions women face can have a significant impact on the advancement of women in science, engineering, and medicine.1

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- Hiring more women does not mean sacrificing quality.
- Society and our universities need women who combine outstanding science and family life.
- Unconscious biases and assumptions are universal and need to be countered in all evaluations of women.
- The campus has a zero tolerance for illegal actions such as sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation against those who raise these issues.

Study the research that supports each of these assertions and use the data to convince colleagues that in an evidence-driven decision-making environment, you must address areas in which the evidence indicates that the university could improve to better serve all members of the community.

ABOUT GENDER ISSUES
- Prof.
- Assoc. Prof.
- Asst. Prof.
- Postdoc
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Percent Female PhDs and Faculty

Top 50 Departments in Selected Disciplines

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**TIP #6: INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF OUTSTANDING WOMEN SCIENTISTS**

Use opportunities in speeches, interactions with the press, and discussions with other faculty to highlight the accomplishments of women scientists. Appoint women to important committees and positions. Ensure that your campus press covers women’s accomplishments. Research shows that people respond more negatively to self-promotion by women than by men, so you may need to work harder to find out about women’s accomplishments. Keep a list of women scientists who combine outstanding science and family life. Encourage them to stay in the field.

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Women and society need women who combine outstanding science and family life. Unconscious biases and assumptions are universal and need to be countered in all evaluations of women.

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**TIP #9: BETTER THE IMPACT OF PORTFOLIO STAFF**

Support the promotion of women to positions of power and prestige by ensuring that women are presented as leaders, scientists, researchers, and powerful intellectuals – not exclusively as students, followers, teachers, nurturers, and nice people. This helps avoid reinforcing implicit assumptions that men occupy positions of high authority while women occupy subordinate positions.
addressing gender equity will likely initiate FORCES

TIP #7: SUPPORT COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Committees or task forces charged with addressing gender equity will likely initiate most of the institutional change on your campus. Maximize their effectiveness by staying in close contact with them, providing resources, supporting proposed initiatives, and taking ownership of their recommendations. Use these bodies to generate strategies and solutions, but don’t expect them to take the lead on implementation. Give credit to the task forces for the ideas they share with you and expect them to provide concrete answers. These include:

- Which women in your unit are most likely to be recruited elsewhere?
- What are you doing to preclude such losses?
- What mechanisms do you use to ensure equitable distribution of resources?
- How do you ensure that searches to fill new positions are broad and inclusive?
- What have you done to recruit more women to your faculty?

Be ready to take hard positions if the answers are unacceptable. Get the community’s attention and let them know that gender equity is a priority by terminating those who raise concerns about gender equity. Make it known that you are open to hearing directly from people concerned about gender issues. Respond and take action, if necessary. Even if you don’t believe an allegation or agree with a conclusion about bias, show respect for the person and concern for the situation. Protect those who raise concerns about gender equity and retaliation for their actions. You cannot create an entirely equitable campus, but you can create a climate that supports open debate without retaliation for their actions. Protect those who participate in gender equity efforts receive recognition and reinforcement for their work.

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