

Report of the Committee on Women Faculty:

Faculty Senate Committee on Women Faculty Summary by Kathryn B. Adams

**Resource Equity at Case Western Reserve University:** Results of Faculty Focus Groups (March, 2003) and **University Climate and Community Survey** (Oct., 2004)

**Relevant issues** brought out in either study:

- Disproportionate number of women in instructor positions; intersection of rank and gender.
- The tenure system favors men or women without family responsibilities. Women with children express feeling that others view them as less dedicated or serious about their work because the “gold standard” for an academic is unlimited, unfettered time put into the work.
- Informal negotiations appear to favor men. Rules and procedures aren’t always equally applied to male and female faculty at various stages in the hiring or work process. This is seen as more of a problem because Case is a private institution.
- Women are sometimes judged more critically; seen as less mature, less “ready” for promotions, including tenure and Full Professor.
- Salaries, research support and protected time, support staff, travel money are all resources that some female faculty feel they have gotten in lesser amounts and proportions than their male colleagues.
- Women tend to shoulder a heavier advising and committee load than male colleagues at equal ranks.
- Women in general feel less positively about their academic unit head’s leadership and their own share of resources and supports.
- Women faculty are less satisfied with their Case job experience overall than men faculty.

**Suggestions** to help the climate for women faculty members from either study:

- 1) Work with the Diversity Office in the role of an ombudsman for the campus to deal with gender issues and particularly, perceived inequities as people present them.
- 2) Dissemination and discussion of the findings of this report within every School and department, which will formulate a response for their units.
- 3) Encouragement of mentoring by senior women of junior women within schools and departments, perhaps by making formal arrangements.
- 4) Make the hiring and negotiation process more transparent by having clear procedures and guidelines that are followed equitably.
- 5) Pay attention to the allocation of academic assignments, resources, and supports within academic units to assure that these are being allocated based on merit and need, not because models of male authority and competency are more highly valued than those of females.
- 6) Overall faculty development—competitive salaries, family-friendly tenure trajectories, support and mentoring—will help female and male faculty.
- 7) Provide formal training within departments and to administrators across the campus on sexism and leadership on gender issues.