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Race and Gender Bias in Higher Education: Could Faculty Course Evaluations Impede Further Progress Toward Parity?

Therese A. Huston[1]

Colleges and universities are making uneven progress towards reaching gender and racial equity. Although great strides have been made to increase the proportion of female to male students at the undergraduate level, less progress has been made in balancing the proportion of female to male faculty. Likewise, certain racial and ethnic groups have increased in numbers across college and university campuses, but other groups have made little headway compared to their growth in the general population. One could consider the glass half full: after all, a greater number of women and minorities in certain areas is good news. However, when one looks closely and compares the areas where women and minorities have made progress to the areas where inequities remain, one discovers the biases that perpetuate those lingering inequities. In other words, with closer scrutiny, the glass begins to look much emptier.

This paper addresses three dimensions of race and gender bias in the postsecondary classroom. The first section asks the question: "Who are the students?" and examines the race and gender balance in both admission and graduation rates. The second section concerns "Who does the teaching?" and looks at the progress that has been made and that, disappointingly, still needs to be made to reach parity across race and gender among university faculty. The third section addresses a more subtle question: "How is teaching evaluated?" While the first half of the paper spotlights bias in the classroom through the relatively obvious questions of demographics, the second half of the paper uncovers how one aspect of the standard process for evaluating teaching, namely faculty course evaluations, has a relatively hidden source of bias against female faculty in male-dominated disciplines

and faculty of color in all disciplines. This bias in the faculty course evaluations is particularly problematic because it may perpetuate the first two problems of underrepresented graduates and faculty. If colleges and universities wish to make further progress toward reaching parity across racial and gender lines, then changes need to be made, both locally within individual departments and more globally across colleges and universities, to reduce the biasing effects of faculty course evaluations.

WHO ARE THE STUDENTS?

We shall begin with the good news. One area in which equity has been reached if not surpassed is the area of gender equity among undergraduate students. Over a thirty-year period from 1970 to 2000, women went from being the minority of the enrolled undergraduate students to being the majority of the students, moving from 42 percent to 56 percent of the undergraduate population.[2] This trend is expected to continue and the gap is expected to grow slightly. By the year 2013, it is projected that women will make up 57 percent of the undergraduate population, with 10.4 million women at colleges or universities.[3]

Furthermore, female students outnumber male students across most ethnic and racial groups. Although the percentage of white undergraduate women is comparable to the number of white undergraduate men (54 percent of traditionally-aged undergraduates are female and 46 percent of are male),[4] women outnumber men in most other racial and ethnic groups. For example, women comprised 70 percent of the American Indian students, 63 percent of traditionally aged African American undergraduates, and 55 percent of the Hispanic students for undergraduates enrolled in the 1995-96 academic year. [5]

Women are not only entering college in higher numbers than their male counterparts; they are also more likely to graduate.[6] In 1980, 50 percent of the bachelor's degrees were awarded to women and this number increased to 57 percent by 2001.[7] This represents an increase from 465,000 female

graduates to 742,000 female graduates with bachelor's degrees.[8] From a social justice perspective, the most impressive fact might be that women have earned the majority of bachelor's degrees in every racial and ethnic category since 1991.[9] For whites, the proportion of degrees awarded to females increased from 45.8 percent to 54.9 percent from 1977 to 1996;[10] for Asian or Pacific Islander students, the proportion of degrees awarded to females increased from 44.6 percent to 52.5 percent during the same period.[11]

As alluded to earlier, however, not all of the news is so encouraging. The first piece of disappointing news is that despite the great strides that have been made in the proportion of female undergraduate students to male undergraduate students, there is still a lack of gender equity in some graduate programs, particularly for professional programs such as business and law school. Men still receive the majority of doctoral and professional degrees when averaged across academic disciplines: men received approximately 60 percent of these terminal degrees as of 1997.[12] Law schools have made more progress on this front than business schools. While men received 58.9 percent of the master's degrees conferred in business in 2003, they received only 52 percent of the J.D. or LL.B degrees.[13]

The second piece of disappointing demographic news is that students of color[14] lag far behind their white peers in terms of graduation rates.[15] While half of the white students who began their undergraduate studies in 1989-90 had either graduated or were still enrolled in 1994, only one-third of the undergraduate African American and Hispanic students had the same success rate.[16] The fact that African American and Hispanic students attend colleges and universities at much lower rates than their white peers makes this discrepancy in graduation rates rather alarming; in the 2003-04 school year, African Americans represented 11 percent of all undergraduate students and Hispanics represented 10.8 percent.[17] In other words, fewer

students of color begin an undergraduate degree and even fewer of them complete it.

WHO DOES THE TEACHING?

There is also some good news for college and university faculty: the basic number of women and minority faculty in the classroom has increased. Part of the increase is explained by the increase in available candidates. The percentage of doctorates being granted to women more than doubled between 1975 and 2001, which resulted in women receiving 21.3 percent of all Ph.Ds awarded in 1974-75 compared to 44.9 percent in 2000 to 2001.[18] Likewise, the proportion of doctorates being granted to students of color has also increased; the share of Ph.Ds awarded to Hispanics from 1975 to 2000 has grown from roughly 1 percent to 4 percent and the share of PhDs to African Americans has grown from roughly 3.5 percent to 6 percent during the same period.[19] This increase in proportion of doctorates awarded to women and people of color has led to an increase in number of faculty in both of these groups, although these gains have not been uniform across racial groups.[20]

The fact that there has been a growing pool of academically qualified women and people of color over the past twenty-five years raises the next important equity question: are women and faculty of color gaining access to the same opportunities as their white, male colleagues? Discouragingly, the answer is no. Despite the growing number of qualified candidates, women and minority faculty have had proportionately fewer opportunities than white men in three key areas of academia: (a) type of institutions, (b) the rank and tenure process, and (c) salary.

First, with respect to the type of institution, there are relatively few female faculty or faculty of color at doctoral institutions.[21] Doctoral institutions, which include a variety of state and private universities, offer the most prestigious positions in higher education and typically award master's and professional degrees as well as Ph.Ds. The greatest proportion

of female faculty, however, can be found at two-year institutions, which typically offer associate's degrees and vocational programs.[22] In fact, the overall gains in the proportion of female faculty that were optimistically described in the last paragraph are largely attributed to the growing numbers of women who have been hired at two-year institutions, where women account for 49.2 percent of the faculty, compared to four-year institutions where they account for only 35.8 percent of the faculty.[23] Likewise, African American faculty members are also less likely to hold positions at doctoral institutions than white faculty,[24] and they hold a higher percentage of the fulltime positions at two-year colleges than at doctoral institutions.[25] The community and vocational programs at these two-year schools, where women and African American faculty are more likely to find jobs, play an important role in state and local communities, but they are the least prestigious schools within the academic taxonomy.[26]

A second area of long-standing inequity is the rank and tenure process, where gender and racial inequities mean that women and faculty of color typically hold positions of lower status and less security than their male colleagues. Since the tenure process is relatively unique to academia, it warrants further explanation. Tenure is level of job security and status that some faculty members achieve after the successful completion of a six to eight year probationary period.[27] However, not all faculty are eligible for tenure regardless of the strength of their performance. When a faculty member is hired at a college or university, she is hired into one of two broad categories: she is either hired for a tenure-track position or a non-tenure track position.[28] There are several benefits to tenure-track positions. Typically, once a person receives tenure, she cannot lose her job without cause.[29] In contrast, faculty who have not yet received tenure, or faculty who are not on the tenure track, can lose their jobs for a variety of reasons, such as budget cuts, poor teaching performance, and an inadequate number of publications. In addition to job security, tenure-track or tenured positions have a higher status within the institution and are conferred more benefits,

such as increased academic freedom, private office space, reductions in one's teaching load to conduct research, and better salaries.[30]

The basic gender discrepancy lies in the fact that men receive tenure more often and sooner than women. To provide some baseline data, in the Fall of 1998, 60% of all full-time male faculty had tenure, compared to only 42% of female faculty.[31] The steady growth of women earning PhDs and JDs has not been consistently reflected in the number of women receiving tenure because female faculty are more likely to be hired for part-time, non-tenure track positions.[32] Even for those female faculty who are hired into full-time, tenure track positions, they are 22 percent less likely than their male colleagues to be tenured at a four-year college.[33] One study of economics faculty found that female faculty members were not only significantly less likely to get tenure but for those women who did achieve tenure, it took them on average a year longer than their male colleagues.[34]

Racial and ethnic differences in employment status are also a problem for African American and Hispanic faculty. Whereas 74.9 percent of all full-time white faculty at four-year institutions who are on the tenure-track had received tenure in the Fall of 1992, only 58.7 percent of all African American faculty in the same employment category had tenure, compared to 64.0 percent of all Hispanic faculty, and 77.7 percent of all Asian faculty.[35] One might hope that these low numbers for African American and Hispanic faculty can be explained by the fact that many African American and Hispanic faculty are younger faculty, who are not yet eligible for tenure, but who will become eligible in a few years. However, when the number of years of academic experience is taken into account, African American and Hispanic faculty are still significantly less likely to hold tenured positions than their white colleagues.[36]

The third area in which faculty members continue to face gender and racial inequities is in their wages. Female faculty have earned 9% less than their male colleagues for almost ten years and the wage gap has actually increased since the early 1990's.[37] In 1998, the average base salary for a

male full-time faculty member was $61,680, compared to $48,370 for women, meaning that female faculty earned almost 22 percent less than their male colleagues on average.[38] Male faculty earned more than female faculty across all racial and ethnic groups, ranging from a $6,700 difference between male and female African American faculty to a $13,700 difference between male and female white faculty.[39] Although male faculty earn more across all ethnic groups, there are still salary discrepancies among racial and ethnic groups. In 1998, Asian faculty were paid the highest base salaries averaging $62,800, compared to $57,000 for whites, $54,400 for Hispanics, and $50,400 for African American faculty.[40] Although there may be a number of explanations for these salary differences, one contributing explanation is that Asian American faculty hold a relatively high number of faculty positions within engineering, and engineering is one of the highest paying fields in academia.[41] Significant differences in salary are found more often among male faculty of different races, largely because female faculty are consistently paid less, hold positions of lower academic ranks, etc., so there is smaller salary range for female faculty, regardless of their racial or ethnic group.[42]

One seemingly promising development is that between 1992 and 1998, salaries for female faculty rose significantly, but such increases are primarily explained by increases in the salaries of white female faculty.[43] Of course, male faculty salaries rose across all racial and ethnic groups, and as a result, there was no significant change in the salary gap between men and women for white, African American, Hispanic, or Asian American faculty.[44] In other words, the wage gap continues unabated.

HOW IS TEACHING EVALUATED?

Institutes of higher education have systems and policies in place that are intended to be gender- and race-neutral, but that in fact create environments that are hostile or unsupportive of women and minority faculty.[45] A variety of institutional structures and practices have been drawn into question for

their failure to support faculty needs equally across different gender and racial groups, including mentoring practices and the tenure and promotion review process.[46]

When faculty members are evaluated for reappointment, tenure, or promotion, three factors are typically taken into account: (a) scholarship or research contributions to one's discipline, (b) teaching, and (c) service (to one's department, university, or professional organization).[47] Institutions use different formulas to determine how each of these three factors is weighted. Doctoral institutions, not surprisingly, typically weight scholarship contributions more heavily than teaching, whereas small four-year and two-year colleges typically weigh teaching quality more heavily than the quantity or quality of one's number of publications.[48] A variety of research articles have critiqued how women and faculty of color are disadvantaged in typical evaluations of faculty scholarship,[49] so this paper will focus on biases in the evaluations of teaching.

Faculty course evaluations have become the central method for evaluating teaching in postsecondary institutions.[50] At the end of the term, students complete a standardized form distributed by the college or university that asks a variety of questions, often on a five-point scale from poor to excellent, including generic questions to assess the quality of the course (e.g., "Overall rating of the course") and the quality of the instructor (e.g., "Overall rating of the instructor").[51] Other items might ask students to indicate whether the instructor communicated effectively or whether the course promoted learning, to help the institution assess the value of the course and the instructor.[52]

Although there are many benefits to using faculty course evaluations, research indicates that this evaluation practice tends to leave faculty of color at a disadvantage.[53] Several studies report a main effect on race, such that faculty of color received lower course evaluations than their white peers.[54] On the issue of ethnic discrimination, Hamermesh and Parker reported that students gave lower ratings for courses taught by non-native English

speakers.[55] On the issue of racial discrimination, DiPietro and Faye found that Latina/o faculty received the lowest course evaluations ratings, followed by Asian American faculty, and white faculty received the highest scores.[56] There was an insufficient number of African American faculty in their sample to provide adequate statistical power, so no conclusions can be drawn about the scores of African American faculty relative to their peers.[57] One might hypothesize that faculty of color have lower ratings because they teach less popular courses than their white colleagues or because they teach in academic disciplines that receive lower course evaluation ratings overall. However, when one directly compared the course evaluations among faculty teaching different sections of the same course in the same department, faculty of color receive significantly lower ratings on average than their white colleagues.[58] The standardized course evaluation instrument is not considered to be racially biased,[59] so these recent findings are likely to come as a surprise to many administrators.

Researchers from a number of academic disciplines have also argued that female faculty, regardless of race, receive lower course evaluations than male faculty,[60] while other researchers have reported that male faculty receive lower evaluation scores.[61] Although it is possible to find evidence to indicate that either gender is at a disadvantage, there is a growing consensus among large-scale, carefully controlled, multidisciplinary studies that no statistical difference exists in the average ratings for male and female instructors.[62] One factor that can contribute to lower course evaluations for female faculty, however, is that female instructors are assigned a greater proportion of lower-division, required courses while the male colleagues in their departments teach more upper division, elective seminars.[63] Not surprisingly, course evaluation scores are typically lower for required courses than for electives, in part because both the instructor and the students are generally less motivated about the subject matter in required courses.[64]

Several studies have also found disciplinary differences in how students evaluate male and female faculty. These gender biases appear in fields that are traditionally and currently populated largely by male students and male faculty (i.e., science, mathematics, engineering, economics). Several studies predict lower faculty course evaluations for female faculty in these male-dominated disciplines,[65] in part because students in these fields are likely to judge female faculty against a higher, more stringent set of criteria.[66]

THE INTERACTION OF THESE THREE INEQUITIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

This paper has drawn attention to several areas in which colleges and universities have successfully reduced gender, racial, and ethnic inequities, and several areas in which progress still needs to be made. The lack of student and faculty diversity is well recognized and well publicized problem,[67] and many colleges and universities are working to increase the diversity at their institutions by addressing the two demographic discrepancies outlined in the first half of this paper: (a) they are looking to increase the number of students of color who enroll and graduate with undergraduate or a graduate degrees,[68] and (b) they are also trying, although perhaps less publicly, to increase the number of women and faculty of color who are hired and retained as tenured faculty.[69]

Whereas the lack of student and faculty diversity is a recognized source of gender and racial inequity at many institutions, I suspect that most faculty and administrators are unaware of the bias in students' course evaluations of teaching. The literature is misleading on this issue; one recent review of common misconceptions surrounding faculty course evaluations explicitly states that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that course evaluations are biased against faculty of color.[70] This conclusion is probably based on the fact that until recently, few studies investigated the impact of an instructor's race on course evaluations.[71] Quite simply, this is new information and it will probably take some time

and additional empirical research before it becomes widely accepted and recognized as a problem.

The inequities in student demographics, faculty demographics, and faculty course evaluations are each concerns in their own right, but a cause for even greater concern is that the bias inherent in faculty course evaluations may perpetuate the low numbers of under-represented students and faculty. In this final section of this paper, I will make an argument that biased course evaluations will perpetuate the problem of low numbers of faculty of color and female faculty. A lack of diversity among the faculty in turn perpetuates the lack of diversity among the students.

The Impact of Faculty Diversity on Student Diversity

There are many factors that affect students' success rates, but one factor that particularly affects women and students of color is whether these students encounter faculty who resemble them. Several researchers report that women are more likely to stay enrolled in science, math, economics, and engineering when they encounter female faculty in these otherwise male-dominated disciplines.[72] Likewise, African American students who have encountered several African American faculty during their college careers are more likely to graduate than students who have encountered fewer faculty of their same race.[73]

This is promising news for female and minority students at two-year community colleges because these schools hire and tenure a relatively higher proportion of female and minority faculty compared to their neighboring four-year institutions.[74] In contrast, however, this is disconcerting news for the more prestigious four-year institutions from which many students hope to matriculate. If these four-year colleges and universities hope to graduate more women and minority students, one important building block is to provide students with visible role models in their classrooms.

The Unaddressed Impact of Course Evaluations on Faculty Diversity

What are the factors that promote or deter women and minority faculty from long-term academic jobs at prestigious four-year doctoral institutions? Numerous researchers have identified several factors including mentoring, collegiality, the number of other women and minority faculty within the department, the transparency of the tenure and promotion process, how scholarship is evaluated in the tenure and promotion process, and how service is weighed (typically inadequately) in tenure and promotion reviews.[75] But one relevant factor that is raised least often in the employment prospects of under-represented faculty is the evaluation of teaching.[76]

As described earlier, the evidence that faculty of color receive lower course evaluations than their peers is a relatively recent development and is not widely known.[77] Because faculty course evaluations are often used in making decisions for promotion and tenure, they are a relatively hidden source of bias against faculty of color, one that administrators, department chairs, and hiring or promotion committees are not likely to consider. When a department chair sees that a Hispanic faculty member in her department has lower course evaluation scores than her white colleagues, the department chair may conclude that the instructor is a below-average teacher, rather than concluding that there is a racial bias inherent in the evaluation process.

The threat of racial disparity in faculty course evaluations is much greater than the threat of gender disparity. As reviewed earlier, female faculty, in general, are not at a disadvantage on course evaluations compared to their male peers. There are at least two exceptions, however, in which female faculty are at risk for receiving lower course evaluations than men: (a) large, required, introductory courses,[78] and (b) male-dominated disciplines, such as science, economics, and engineering.[79]

In summary, there is increasing evidence that one of the factors used in faculty hiring and promotion decisions is biased against faculty of color and

female faculty in certain disciplines or for certain types of courses. Changes in the course evaluation process are needed to reduce this unrecognized inequity and to ensure that faculty of color and female faculty in male-dominated fields have equal opportunities for hiring, promotion, and tenure. Changes in the evaluation process are also needed because by increasing the number of faculty of color teaching in their classrooms, institutions are more likely to retain and graduate students of color. Likewise, by increasing the number of female faculty in areas where they are under-represented, institutions are more likely to increase the number of female students graduating with degrees in these fields.

Recommendations for Improving the Evaluation of Teaching

The use of faculty course evaluations in higher education has been a subject of heated debate for over thirty years, and it is not within the scope of this paper to weigh their general merits and limitations.[80] Their use is relatively entrenched in the tenure and promotion evaluation process at many institutions[81] and there are educationally valid reasons for using them.[82] In other words, eliminating faculty course evaluations is not the solution, at least not a tractable or feasible solution at this time. Rather, there are several steps that an institution can take, at the individual department level and at the broader college or university level, to ensure that a greater number of faculty of color and female faculty are hired and retained.

At the department level, a department chair can take two courses of action when making course assignments. First, the department chair can ensure that women are not teaching a disproportionately high number of required, introductory courses. The education literature cites this as a problem for female faculty because they are assigned a percentage of these courses than their male colleagues, which in turn results in lower evaluations scores for these women.[83] A department chair can ensure that

this responsibility is equally distributed across all members of the department.

A department chair can also ensure that faculty of color, particularly female faculty of color, are not teaching a disproportionately higher number of courses that are seen as politically charged. Studies show that when female faculty of color teach classes that are politically charged, such as courses on race or gender, these female faculty of color are seen as having an agenda and the class is seen as more controversial than when white faculty or even male faculty of color teach these classes.[84] This sense of controversy could lead to lower course evaluations.

At the college or university level, two additional steps need to be taken. First, people making decisions about hiring, promotion, and tenure need to be informed that there is increasing evidence that standard course evaluations are biased against faculty of color. Second, colleges and universities should incorporate different methods for evaluating teaching so course evaluations not weighed as the sole or primary means to evaluate teaching. Other methods for evaluating faculty and their courses include peer observations of teaching, peer reviews of course materials, student interviews, self-appraisal, and teaching portfolios.[85]

The last recommendation is a call for further research on racial bias in faculty course evaluations. Since racial bias is a relatively new area of investigation in the course evaluation literature, additional studies are needed to test a variety of research questions. At the most basic level, are findings of racial bias in student evaluations replicated across different types of institutions and across different types of students? For example, are faculty of color in certain academic disciplines more likely to be the subject of racial bias than faculty in other disciplines where students might be less stereotyped in their attitudes and expectations? At a more advanced level, are certain types of student comments indicative of a racial bias? Department chairs and tenure committees would be well-informed to know which kinds of student comments suggest that racial bias is present in

students' ratings of their instructors. Research investigations on these types of questions will help faculty and administrators understand the racial subtext in faculty course evaluations and improve how these evaluations are used in tenure and promotion decisions, decisions which ultimately affect the diversity in our classrooms.

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[2] CATHERINE E. FREEMAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NCES 2005-016, TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL EQUITY OF GIRLS AND WOMEN: 2004, at 70 (2004).

[3] DEBRA E. GERALD & WILLIAM J. HUSSAR, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NCES 2004-013, PROJECTIONS OF EDUCATION STATISTICS TO 2013, at 9 (2003).

[4] JACQUELINE E. KING, GENDER EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: ARE MALE STUDENTS AT A DISADVANTAGE? 2 (2003).

[5] *Id.* at 5, Figure 5.

[6] *See* THOMAS D. SNYDER, VALENA PLISKO, & WILLIAM SONNENBERG, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NCES 2006-005, DIGEST OF EDUCATION STATISTICS: 2004, at Table 262 (2005), *available at* http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d04/tables/dt04_262.asp.

[7] *Id.*, at Table 247.

[8] *Id.*

[9] KING, *supra* note 4, at 8.

[10] SNYDER, PLISKO, & SONNENBERG, *supra* note 6.

[11] *Id.*

[12] SNYDER, PLISKO, & SONNENBERG, *supra* note 6, at Table 257. For some fields, women do receive more masters degrees than men, primarily because of the overwhelming proportion of women seeking masters degrees in education and health professions such as nursing. *See id.* at Table 253.

[13] *Id.* at Table 253.
[14] "Students of color" will be used throughout this paper to refer collectively to racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in college and university classrooms, including African American, Hispanic, and Native American students.
[15] KING, *supra* note 4, at 8.
[16] *Id.* at 6.
[17] DIGEST OF EDUCATION STATISTICS: 2004, *supra* note 7, at Table 182.
[18] FREEMAN, supra note 2, at 82.
[19] Jeffrey A. Groen & Michael J. Rizzo, The Changing Composition of American-Citizen Ph.Ds 30 (May 20, 2003) (paper prepared for the "Science and the University" Conference, Cornell Higher Education Research Institute) (on file with the Seattle Journal for Social Justice).
[20] Cathy A. Trower & Richard P. Chait, *Faculty Diversity: Too Little for too Long*, HARV. MAG., Mar.-Apr. 2002, at 33, 34. In 1998, women represented 36 percent of all full-time faculty, compared with 23 percent in the early 1970s. *Id.* Faculty of color represented 17 percent of all faculty in 1997, compared with only 5 percent in 1972, but almost all of these gains have been made by Asian American faculty. *Id.* The number of African-American faculty has remained remarkably stagnant, changing from only 4.4 percent in 1975 to only 5 percent in 1997. *Id.*
[21] ELLEN M. BRADBURN & ANNA C. SIKORA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NCES 2002-170, GENDER AND RACIAL/ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN SALARY AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTSECONDARY FACULTY: FALL 1998 (2002). *See also* Michael T. Nettles, Laura W. Perna & Ellen M. Bradburn, *Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Status of Minority and Women Faculty in U.S. Colleges and Universities*, 4 EDUC. STAT. Q. 94 (2000). For a general review of gender and race discrepancies of faculty in doctoral institutions, see John C. Smart, *Gender Equity in Academic Rank and Salary*, 14 REV. HIGHER EDUC. 511 (1991).
[22] BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at v.
[23] DIGEST OF EDUCATION STATISTICS: 2004, *supra* note 7, at Table 231.
[24] BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at vi.
[25] EMILY FORREST CATALDI ET AL., U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, NCES 2006-176, 2004 NATIONAL STUDY OF POSTSECONDARY FACULTY: BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS, WORK ACTIVITIES, AND COMPENSATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY AND STAFF: FALL 2003, Tables 4, 5 (2005). *See also* Laura W. Perna, *Sex and Race Differences in Faculty Tenure and Promotion*, 42 RES. IN HIGHER EDUC. 541, 542 (2001).
[26] It should be noted, however, that Asian/Pacific Islander faculty were more likely to work at public doctoral institutions than white faculty, particularly in the natural sciences and engineering. BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at vi. In terms of raw numbers, Hispanic faculty do not differ significantly from white faculty in terms of their distribution across different types of institutions. Many of the statistically significant racial and ethnic discrepancies in the demographics of faculty occur in the comparisons of African American and white faculty. *Id.* at v-vi.

[27] Jared L. Bleak, *The Pre-Tenure Period*, *in* POLICIES ON FACULTY APPOINTMENT: STANDARD PRACTICES AND UNUSUAL ARRANGEMENTS 18 (Cathy A. Trower ed., 2000). Most institutions have a seven-year tenure clock, which means that faculty become eligible for tenure in their seventh year of employment at the institution, but that "clock" differs from institution to institution.
[28] Some faculty are hired "with tenure," but this typically means that the individual was on the tenure-track at their previous institution.
[29] Ralph S. Brown & Jordan E. Kurland, *Academic Tenure and Academic Freedom*, 53 LAW & CONTEMP. PROBS. 325, 325 (1990). *See also* Cathy A. Trower, *The Meaning, Purpose, and Locus of Tenure*, *in* POLICIES ON FACULTY APPOINTMENT, *supra* note 27, at 79.
[30] Judith M. Gappa, *The New Faculty Majority: Somewhat Satisfied, But Not Eligible for Tenure*, 27 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL RES. 77, 77-86 (2000).
[31] BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at 12.
[32] CATALDI, *supra* note 25, at 16-17.
[33] *See* Perna, *supra* note 25, at 550. This statistic was calculated after controlling for differences in race, ethnicity and number of years of employment between the men and women faculty in the sample.
[34] Donna K. Ginther & Shulamit Kahn*, Women in Economics: Moving Up or Falling Off the Academic Career Ladder*?, 18 J. ECON. PERSPECTIVES 193, 199 (2004). One might wonder if it took women longer to achieve tenure because these women were more likely to take parental leave for child-rearing than their male colleagues. The answer is no; in this study, women on the tenure-track were significantly less likely to be married or have children than their male peers.
[35] Perna, *supra* note 25, at 550.
[36] Robert K. Toutkoushian, *The Status of Academic Women in the 1990's: No Longer Outsiders, But Not Yet Equals*, 39 Q. REV. ECON. & FIN. 679*,* 679-698 (1999).
[37] BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at iv. *See also* Piper Fogg, *The Gap That Won't Go Away*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC.*,* Apr. 18, 2003, at 32; JUDITH GLAZER-RAYMO, SHATTERING THE MYTHS: WOMEN IN ACADEME 83 (1999).
[38] BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at 11.
[39] *Id.* at 12.
[40] *See id.*
[41] CATALDI, *supra* note 25, at 14, 35. Differences in academic discipline, however, are unlikely to account for all of the difference. The fact that Asian American faculty hold more of the positions in high paying fields of academia than do African American faculty and Hispanic faculty might explain why Asian American faculty earn more than faculty from the other two under-represented groups, but it does not explain the wage gap between other groups, such as the $7,000 wage gap between white and African American faculty.
[42] *See* BRADBURN & SIKORA, *supra* note 21, at 11-12.
[43] *Cf. id.* at 4.
[44] *Cf. id.*

[45] Perna, *supra* note 25, at 563. *See also* WILLIAM G. TIERNEY & ESTELA MARA BENSIMON, PROMOTION AND TENURE: COMMUNITY AND SOCIALIZATION IN ACADEME (1996).

[46] *See* Perna, *supra* note 25, at 564. *See also* Susan Ambrose et al., *A Qualitative Method for Assessing Faculty Satisfaction,* 46 RES. HIGHER EDUC. 803, 816 (2005). For a broader analysis, see Linda K. Johnsrud, *Women and Minority Faculty Experiences: Defining and Responding to Diverse Realities, in* 53 BUILDING A DIVERSE FACULTY 3 (Joanne Gainen & Robert Boice eds., 1993). It should be noted that this paper will focus on one specific aspect of the reappointment, tenure and promotion review process that often shows predictable patterns of bias, specifically how teaching is evaluated.

[47] Bleak, *supra* note 27, at 19.

[48] Bridget Murray, *The Rules For Earning Tenure are Different at Small Institutions*, 29 APA MONITOR ONLINE (1998), http://www.apa.org/monitor/apr98/tenure.html (last visited Mar. 22, 2006).

[49] Perna, *supra* note 25, at 564; TIERNEY & BENSIMON, *supra* note 45, at 120-23. *See generally* Marcia L. Bellas & Robert K. Toutkoushian, *Faculty Time Allocations and Research Productivity: Gender, Race and Family Effects*, 22 REV. HIGHER EDUC. 367 (1999).

[50] Lawrence M. Aleamoni, *Student Rating Myths Versus Research Facts From 1924 to 1998*, 13 J. PERSONNEL EVALUATION EDUC. 153, 153 (1999).

[51] Michelle DiPietro & Anne Fay, Online Student-Ratings-of-Instruction (SRI) Mechanisms for Maximal Feedback to Instructors, at 22 (presentation at the 30th Annual Meeting of the Professional and Organizational Development Network, 2005) (on file with the author). *See also* Suzanne M. Hobson & Donna M. Talbot, *Understanding Student Evaluations: What All Faculty Should Know*, 49 COLLEGE TEACHING 28, 28-31 (2001). The wording for these two items was taken from a faculty course evaluation form used at one medium-sized private university, but it is representative of the language used on many instruments.

[52] Hobson & Talbot, *supra* note 51, at 29.

[53] Although several studies demonstrate that a racial bias exists, it is not currently possible to pinpoint the source of this bias on faculty course evaluations. When studies report that faculty of color receive lower average ratings, these lower ratings either appear in the generic questions such as, "Overall, how was the quality of the instructor?" or in the cumulative average of all of the questions on the course evaluation instrument. Further research is necessary to identify which questions create racial bias and why.

[54] Jai Ghorpade & James R. Lackritz, *Student Evaluations: Equal Opportunity Concerns,* 7 THOUGHT & ACTION: N.E.A. HIGHER EDUC. J. 61, 68-69 (1991). *See also* DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51, at 25; Daniel S. Hamermesh & Amy Parker, *Beauty in the Classroom: Instructors' Pulchritude and Putative Pedagogical Productivity,* 24 ECON. EDUC. REV. 369, 370 (2005).

[55] Hamermesh & Parker, *supra* note 54, at 371.

[56] DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51. There was a statistically significant main effect of race ($p<.01$), such that faculty of color had lower course evaluations ratings than their white peers. Additional post-hoc tests revealed that the course evaluation scores for Asian

American faculty were significantly higher than the course evaluation scores for Latino/a faculty (p<.05) and likewise, the course evaluation scores for white faculty were significantly higher than the course evaluation scores for Asian American faculty (p<.05).

[57] DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51.

[58] Ghorpade & Lackritz, *supra* note 54, at 68.

[59] John C. Ory, *Faculty Thoughts and Concerns About Student Ratings,* 87 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHING & LEARNING 3, 6 (2001).

[60] Hamermesh & Parker, *supra* note 54, at 371. *See also* JoAnn Miller & Marilyn Chamberlin, *Women are Teachers, Men are Professors: A Study of Student Perceptions,* 28 TEACHING SOC. 283 (2000); Kristi Anderson & Elizabeth D. Miller, *Gender and Student Evaluations of Teaching,* 30 POL. SCI. & POL. 216 (1997).

[61] *See* Paul T. Costa, Jr. et al., *Gender Differences in Personality Traits Across Cultures: Robust and Suprising Findings,* 81 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 322, 322-31 (2001); Diane Kierstad et al., *Sex Role Stereotyping of College Professors: Bias in Students' Ratings of Instructors*, 80 J. EDUC. PSYCHOL. 342 (1988).

[62] *See* John A. Centra & Noreen B. Gaubatz, *Is There Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching?,* 71 J. HIGHER EDUC. 17, 18 (2000); Owen Hicks & Elizabeth Santhanam, *Student Perceptions of Inclusivity in Lecturing at University,* 25 RES. & DEV. IN HIGHER EDUC. 329, 332 (2002).

[63] Jennifer Franklin & Michael Theall, Student Ratings of Instructions and Sex Differences Revisited (Apr. 7, 1994) (paper presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association).

[64] Janet T. Civian & Robert T. Brennan, Student and Course Factors Predicting Satisfaction in Undergraduate Courses at Harvard University (Apr. 8-12, 1996) (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association). *See also* Kenneth A. Feldman, *Course Characteristics and College Students' Ratings of Their Teachers and Courses: What We Know and What We Don't Know,* 9 RES. HIGHER EDUC. 199, 199-242 (1978); DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51.

[65] *See* Sue Street et al., *Gender Role Preferences and Perceptions of University Students, Faculty, and Administrators,* 37 RES. HIGHER EDUC. 615 (1996); ANGELA R. LINSE, STUDENT RATINGS OF WOMEN FACULTY: DATA AND STRATEGIES (2003), http://www.engr.washington.edu/advance/resources/20030513-student_ratings_ds.pdf. *But see* Centra, *supra* note 62, at 24-25.

[66] Susan A. Basow & Nancy T. Silberg, *Student Evaluations of College Professors: Are Female and Male Professors Rated Differently?,* 79 J. EDUC. PSYCHOL. 308, 312-14 (1987). *See also* LINSE, *supra* note 65, at 4.

[67] NADYA FOUAD ET AL., AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, WOMEN IN ACADEME: TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK 2-4 (2000), *available at* http://www.apa.org/pi/wpo/academe.pdf; STEPHEN COLE ET AL., INCREASING FACULTY DIVERSITY: THE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF HIGH-ACHIEVING MINORITY STUDENTS 1, 5-7 (2003); GERALD & HUSSAR, *supra* note 3 (giving a general review of projected student diversity statistics through 2014).

[68] *See* Sylvia Hurtado, et al., *Enhancing Campus Climates for Racial/Ethnic Diversity: Educational Policy and Practice*, 21 REV. HIGHER EDUC. 279, 286-88, 291-92

(describing best practices); Shouping Hu & Edward P. St. John, *Student Persistence in a Public Higher Education Program: Understanding Racial and Ethnic Differences,* 72 J. HIGHER EDUC. 265, 270-81, 281-84 (2001).

[69] *See generally*, Page S. Morahan, et al., *Ensuring the Success of Women Faculty at AMC's: Lessons Learned from the National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health,* 76 ACAD. MED., 19 (2001) (describing different programs at specific institutions that have been developed to retain women faculty and assesses their success).

[70] Ory, *supra* note 59, at 6 (noting that "[a]s for the race of the instructor, we have yet to see evidence of a biasing impact on ratings").

[71] Whereas there are literally dozens of studies examining potential gender biases in faculty course evaluations*, cf.* Aleamoni, *supra* note 50, at 156, there are only a few studies that examine racial bias. Three studies have been cited in this paper that show faculty of color receive significantly lower course evaluations than their white colleagues. Two of these three studies, were published less than four months prior to the writing of this manuscript: DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51, and Hamermesh & Parker, *supra* note 54. The finding that course evaluations are biased against faculty of color is clearly a relatively new finding, too new to be captured in most comprehensive literature reviews on the strengths and weaknesses of faculty course evaluations. The author has spoken personally with several researchers who study the obstacles encountered by faculty of color and few of them know about these empirical findings on course evaluations.

[72] JULIE KUHN EHRHART & BERNICE R. SANDLER, LOOKING FOR MORE THAN A FEW GOOD WOMEN IN TRADITIONALLY MALE FIELDS 7-11 (Association of American Colleges 1987). *See also* Anthony V. Catanese, *Faculty Role Models and Diversifying the Gender and Racial Mix of Undergraduate Economics Majors,* 22 J. ECON. EDUC. 276, 276 (1991); Mark O. Evans, *An Estimate of Race and Gender Role-model Effects in Teaching High School*, 23 J. ECON. EDUC. 209, 209-217 (1992). *But see* COLE ET AL., *supra* note 67, at 164-66, 174.

[73] COLE ET AL., *supra* note 67, at 174. *See also* Walter R. Allen, *The Color of Success: African-American College Student Outcomes at Predominatly White and Historically Black Public Colleges and Universities,* 62 HARV. EDUC. REV. 26 (1992); James E. Davis, *College in Black and White: Campus Environment and Academic Achievement of African American Males*, 63 J. NEGRO EDUC. 620, 620-33 (1995). Note that these statistics showing higher success rates for African American students are confounded by the fact that the data is taken from universities in which the majority of the students in the classes are also students of color. This confound, among others, prevents us from saying that there is a causal link between the presence of African American faculty and African American students' success. Nonetheless, the data is still relevant because it underpins the argument that the presence or absence of other successful people who share a common racial background is related to one's own success within that academic setting.

[74] CATALDI ET AL., *supra* note 25, at 14, 15.

[75] Ambrose et al., *supra* note 46, at 811. *See also* Linda S. Hagedorn, *Conceptualizing Faculty Job Satisfaction: Components, Theories, and Outcomes,* 105 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL RES. 5, 8-9 (2000); Berta V. Laden & Linda S. Hagedorn, *Job Satisfaction Among Faculty of Color in Academe: Individual Survivors or Institutional*

Transformers?, 105 NEW DIRECTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL RES. 57, 62-3 (2000); *See generally* Linda K Johnsrud & Vicki J. Rosser, *Faculty Members' Morale and Their Intention to Leave: A Multilevel Explanation,* 73 J. HIGHER EDUC. 518, 535-36 (2002).

[76] Ghorpade & Lackritz, *supra* note 54, at 61-62, 71-72 (calling for more research and administrative attention to the negative impact of course evaluations on employment opportunities for faculty of color, but for reasons unknown, few investigators have pursued this important line of research until quite recently).

[77] *See, e.g.,* Ory, *supra* note 59, at 6; Ghorpade & Lackritz, *supra* note 51, at 61.

[78] Franklin & Theall, *supra* note 63.

[79] Neal Koblitz, *Are Student Ratings Unfair to Women?,* ASS'N FOR WOMEN MATHEMATICS NEWSL. (Association for Women in Mathematics) Sept.-Oct. 1990, at 1. *See also* LINSE, *supra* note 62, at 4.

[80] *See generally* Sylvia d'Apollonia & Philip C. Abrami, *Navigating Student Ratings of Instruction,* 52 AM. PSYCHLOGIST 1198 (1997) (giving a thorough analysis of the strengths and limitations of faculty course evaluations); Aleamoni, *supra* note 50, at 153-66.

[81] Alenoush Saroyan & Cheryl Amundsen, *Evaluating University Teaching: Time to Take Stock*, 26 ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION HIGHER EDUC. 341, 341-42 (2001); Centra & Gaubatz, *supra* note 62, at 17.

[82] Aleamoni, *supra* note 50, at 153-55; D'Appolonia & Abrami, *supra* note 80, at 1203-05.

[83] Franklin & Theall, *supra* note 63; DiPietro & Fay, *supra* note 51.

[84] Jeannette M. Ludwig & John A. Meacham, *Teaching Controversial Courses: Student Evaluations of Instructors and Content,* 21 EDUC. RES. Q. 27, 33 (1997). A department chair may read these first two recommendations and complain that they contradict one another. If female faculty of color are not teaching introductory survey courses and not teaching politically charged upper level electives, what classes are they teaching? The solution is not to remove faculty from these courses altogether but to examine the curriculum with an eye for gender and race placement of faculty to ensure that faculty are equally represented across all courses and not pigeon-holed into these two categories.

[85] Saroyan & Amundsen, *supra* note 81, at 342, 348-49. *See also* Jere W. Morehead & Peter J. Shedd, *Student Interviews: A Vital Role in the Scholarship of Teaching*, 20 INNOVATIVE HIGHER EDUC. 261, 261-69 (1996); Patricia Hutchings, *The Peer Review of Teaching: Progress, Issues and Prospects,* 20(4) INNOVATIVE HIGHER EDUC., 221, 221-34 (1996).