

June 03, 2019

Undue Burden

Who's doing the heavy lifting in terms of diversity and inclusion work? Underrepresented faculty members -- and that's something that should alarm everyone, according to a new study.

By [Colleen Flaherty](#)



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The term “invisible labor” has been used to describe the unrecognized work underrepresented faculty members are called on to do by virtue of that status: mentoring students who see aspects of themselves in their professors, for example, or otherwise engaging in inclusion and diversity work.

A new study in *Nature: Ecology and Evolution* seeks to make that labor more visible, at least within the fields of ecology and evolutionary biology. The findings have implications for how universities allocate resources for diversity and inclusion and how professors who engage in that work -- particularly those who do the heavy lifting -- are evaluated and valued.

Based on survey responses from 469 faculty members in ecology and evolutionary biology across the U.S., the researchers found that most respondents engaged in diversity and inclusion work. But those who did the most work were significantly more likely to self-identify as nonwhite, nonmale or first-generation college attendee.

“Our survey findings indicate that traditionally marginalized groups are bearing the primary responsibility for creating a more diverse and inclusive culture within ecology and evolutionary biology programs in the U.S.,” the study says. “Non-white, non-male and first-generation faculty disproportionally reported engaging in and contributing to diversity and inclusion. Our results complement other studies that find underrepresented faculty are more likely to incorporate diversity-related content into course materials and contribute more to service than their peers.”

Ninety-two percent of respondents reported engaging in diversity and inclusion activities and felt that their institutions valued those efforts. But the majority (72 percent) also felt that diversity and inclusion work didn’t really matter in tenure decisions. About half of respondents felt they valued diversity work more than their peers did.

Non-white, non-male and first-generation faculty members, as well as those in associate or full professor positions, were consistently more likely to engage in diversity and inclusion activities, the study says. Non-white professors recruited minority faculty members, engaged in outreach to diverse K-12 schools and served on diversity committees more frequently than non-Hispanic white faculty members. First-generation faculty members engaged more frequently in recruitment of minority professors and

undergraduate students and were more likely to publish diversity-focused, peer-reviewed work.

Non-male faculty members organized and attended diversity workshops more frequently than male professors. The single exception to the overall trend is that non-male faculty members were less likely to recruit minority undergraduate students than their male colleagues.

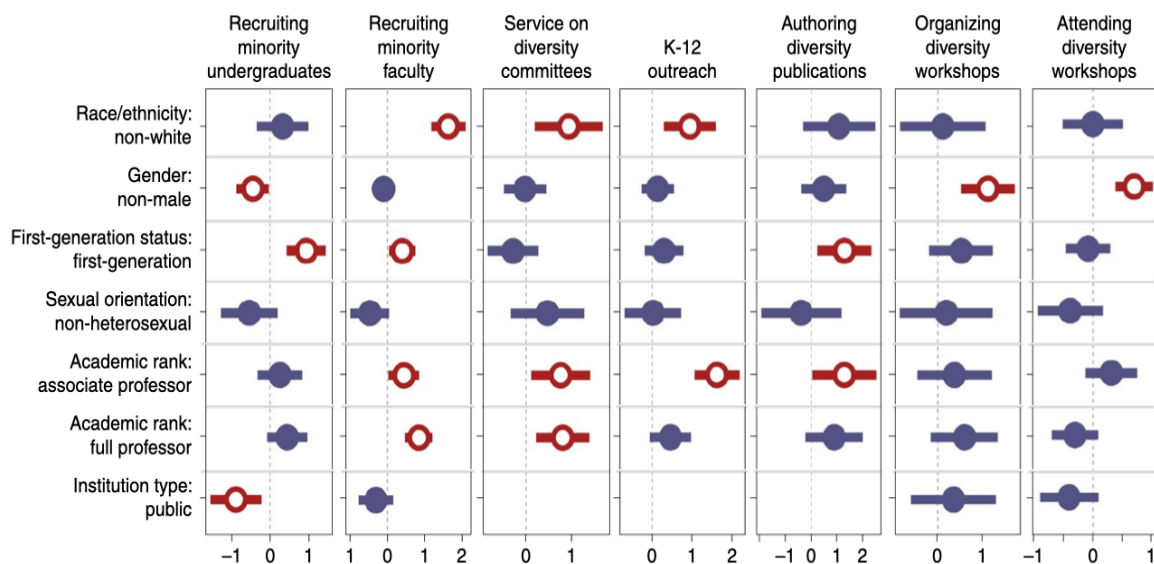


Fig. 1 | Characteristics of faculty that engaged in diversity and inclusion activities. Coefficient estimates and 95% confidence intervals (log scale) are shown for predicted relationships between characteristics of faculty and the frequency in which they engaged in various diversity and inclusion activities per decade ($n=397$). Red open circles indicate where faculty engaged more (coefficient estimates and confidence intervals > 0) or less (coefficient estimates and confidence intervals < 0) frequently than their colleagues in reference categories (that is, non-Hispanic whites, males, non-first-generation faculty, heterosexuals, assistant professors and faculty associated with private institutions). Blue closed circles indicate insignificant relationships (confidence intervals overlap 0).

Source: Jimenez and Lavery

Most survey respondents were white (88 percent) and about half were male (52 percent). Twenty-two percent were first-generation college attendees. About half were full professors and the rest were assistant or associate professors.

Of respondents who actively engaged in diversity work, more than half strongly agreed that they were motivated by the desire to train diverse leaders as role models, increase scientific literacy among diverse groups, improve research and teaching in their fields and

because they felt morally obligated were motivated by the perception that engagement in diversity and inclusion would enhance success with grants or tenure decisions.

The biggest factors limiting faculty engagement were insufficient time and funding, rather than training or knowledge.

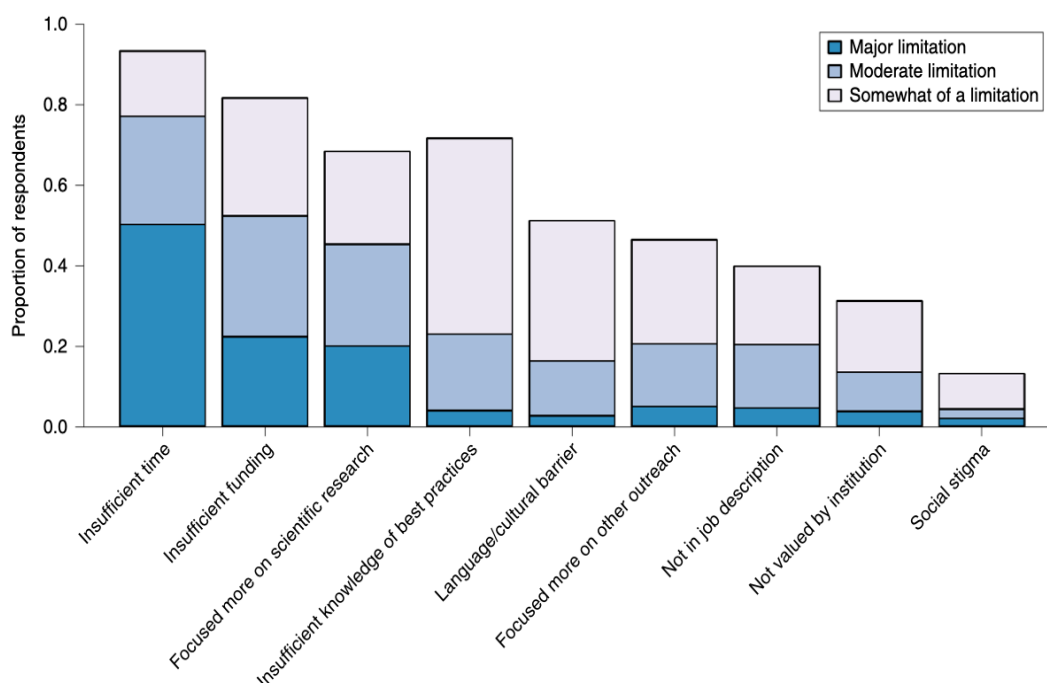


Fig. 2 | Factors limiting faculty participation in activities related to diversity and inclusion. Vertical bars illustrate the proportion of respondents ($n=469$) that listed each factor as a barrier to engaging in diversity and inclusion activities. Respondents indicated whether they viewed each factor as a major limitation, a moderate limitation, somewhat of a limitation or not a limitation. Those who reported these factors as barriers (that is, major, moderate or somewhat of a limitation) to their engagement in diversity and inclusion activities are displayed as proportions on the stacked bar chart. The remaining proportion of respondents indicated that these factors were not a limitation for their engagement in diversity and inclusion activities.

Beyond providing evidence of invisible labor, the authors offer suggestions for institutions working to make faculty work more equitable. Co-author Liba Pejchar, an associate professor in the department of fish, wildlife and conservation biology at Colorado State University, said it's already a best practice to ask candidates for faculty positions to demonstrate commitment to diversity and inclusion in their applications -- often called diversity statements.

Yet once these faculty members are hired, she said, "we never again ask them to affirm how they have met this commitment." Pejchar and her team recommend incorporating

evidence of this “shared responsibility” into annual evaluations, “and possibly even tenure and promotion decisions makes sense if we are truly to transform our field.”

Everyone should be practicing “inclusive pedagogy and taking time to mentor students from diverse backgrounds,” for example, she said.

As for resources, Pejchar said that colleges and universities should allocate sufficient funding to recruit and retain diverse undergraduate and graduate students and train all faculty members in inclusive pedagogy and mentoring. They should also ensure that opportunities, such as conferences and workshops and summer research experiences for students, are “financially available to all, regardless of socioeconomic background.”

Lead authors Miguel Jimenez and Theresa Laverty, who both work in Pejchar’s lab, as a graduate student and postdoctoral researcher, respectively, wrote in a joint email that one of their most encouraging findings was that the “vast majority of our respondents highly valued and engaged in diversity and inclusion activities.” So they’re optimistic that the same is true across the natural sciences and beyond.

“Previous research and commentary have suspected that underrepresented faculty in STEM fields disproportionately engage in diversity and inclusion activities,” they said. “As far as we are aware, our study is the first to quantify this disparity.”

Tricia Matthew, an associate professor of English at Montclair State University who has written about invisible labor in academe, said the study “definitely holds true across the academy,” not just in ecology and evolutionary biology. She said she’s heard as much from faculty members at institutions she’s visited since she published her 2016 book, *Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure*.

“I note who attends the talks, who invites me and what people of color tell me about their colleagues,” she said. One observation that causes her some alarm, given the demands of the tenure track and enduring invisibility of this labor: more and more faculty members

of color are taking on diversity and inclusion work during their first few years as assistant professors.

Still, Matthew understands the impulse. “They can see the problem more clearly and often their instinct is to dive in” and try to “fix it,” Matthew said. They’re “seeking a community that reflects their experiences, and they are more aware of the institutional stumbling blocks to meaningful inclusion and equity.”

Matthew pointed out that the new study’s own statistical analysis notes low numbers of responses for nonwhite participants, and the researchers’ consequent need to collapse data on race and ethnicity into either non-Hispanic white or nonwhite. (Gender data were also collapsed into male and nonmale, and sexual identity data were collapsed into heterosexual or nonheterosexual.) The authors note that their study might suffer from selection bias, meaning that people who are more interested in diversity work may have been more likely to respond to their survey. But if that's the case, they said, then the uneven work trend they observed might even be more extreme.

Written By



Colleen Flaherty

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A sense of belonging matters. That's why academic culture needs to change

16 JAN 2019 • BY [KATIE LANGIN](#)

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Stephen Thomas (left, in hat, leading a workshop) works on diversity issues in STEM. THE MARYLAND CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

For science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) graduate students from underrepresented groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities and women, a sense of belonging—or lack thereof—can have a concrete effect on a crucial career component: their publication records. That's the result of a [study](#) published earlier this month, which sheds light on the reasons behind [previously documented](#) disparities in publishing rates and indicates how institutions' structures and cultures bear part of the responsibility.

Female and minority graduate students published the same number of papers as their white male peers when they felt accepted by their mentors and peers, had clear departmental expectations, and felt prepared for their graduate classes, based on a survey of 341 graduate students pursuing physical science, computer science, mathematics, and engineering degrees at four universities in California. What this tells us, says Aaron Fisher, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, and the lead author of the study, is that the reason some students have lower productivity is because of their experience "being an outsider—being a minority—in an environment that was designed by and for the majority."

The findings put a spotlight on cultural issues in academia that need to be addressed, says Stephen Thomas, the director of the Maryland Center for Health Equity at the University of Maryland in College Park, who works on diversity issues in STEM but wasn't involved in the new study. "I came up at a time when I was the first or only black student in my doctorate program, first

or only [black] assistant professor in the tenure track, first or only tenured black faculty member," Thomas says. "I came through that. But the scholars I'm training now, they don't want to be first. They don't want to go to institutions that don't get it."

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Science Careers spoke with Thomas—who also serves as the associate director of the mentor training core at the National Institutes of Health's National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN)—about his thoughts on the paper's findings and what he thinks can be done to foster better institutional cultures in STEM. The discussion was edited for clarity and length.

Q: What's your general reaction to the paper?

A: I found it quite fascinating that one of the areas that they highlight is psychological distress and how structure and a sense of belonging can be a pathway to success. It might be seen as a self-fulfilling prophecy: If you're already perceived as less than and if you believe that—if you internalize that—then you *will* be less than.

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Q: Why do you think students were more productive, and had a greater feeling of belonging in STEM, when they had clear departmental expectations?

A: I think it helps everybody, but especially minorities and women. Their social networks may not be as connected, so they may be less likely to be "in the know" when there's an expectation that's not written down.

For example, if a Ph.D. program requires that students submit a certain number of papers for publication before they graduate, then that should be explicit. If students know that's an expectation, then they don't feel like they're on the outs and that others have inside information that they don't have.

But it's not enough to simply improve documentation. I think it's far more subtle, far more nuanced, than that. The structure must have a heart. And it has to be accompanied by other efforts to improve institutional culture.

Q: What are other parts of academic culture that you see as problematic?

A: Our young scholars need mentors that are advocates. Unfortunately, I have met many scholars who don't have mentors; they have tormentors. Harassers. Psychological bullies. Some view that as a way to toughen young scholars up. But it's also a form of abuse, in my opinion.



Stephen Thomas THE MARYLAND CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

Many senior scholars came through systems like that; they came through gauntlets. And if they made it through the gauntlet they were good enough. Now, as mentors, many of them operate using that same system, seeing that as the only way to build the next generation. That may well be fine when they're dealing with white males or people who look like them or come from similar backgrounds. But when they're dealing with racial and ethnic minorities and people who are the first generation in their families to graduate from college, that hazing—I'll call it hazing, the gauntlet—is very, very oppressive.

Q: Your work with the NRMN involves doing hands-on mentor training with senior scientists. What's the goal with that?

A: We're training mentors to become more culturally aware. Some say, "I don't need mentor training because I've been doing this for 40 years." But it's needed because senior faculty are now seeing young scholars coming through who don't look like them and who don't look like the Ph.D. cohort when they came through.

I think that many white males feel that they're walking on eggshells when they're dealing with issues of women and minorities. They're afraid they are going to say something that offends someone and they kind of shut down. So when you do this kind of training, you've got to have facilitators who know how to make it OK for people to open up.

Q: What's something that mentors can do to connect with mentees, even if they don't look like them or share the same background?

A: It's important to not be afraid to share your own vulnerabilities. For example, a faculty member told me that when he shared with his students that he had epilepsy—so that they weren't alarmed if something happened in the classroom—the minority students seemed to open up a bit more. They connected with him—not along issues of race, but around the fact that he's had struggles too. He showed the students that just because he's a white male, it doesn't mean he's had a cakewalk.

Many of my faculty colleagues feel uncomfortable disclosing vulnerabilities. Senior faculty have to recognize that one of the ways to change the culture, to break down the preconceived barriers, is to open up and share personal stories and experiences. In the end, for the mentees it doesn't matter if their mentor looks like them. What matters is: Do they care?

Q: What kind of advice do you give young scholars who are from underrepresented groups?

A: I tell them that, yes, there is unfairness; yes, there is bias; yes, there is racism, structural discrimination—all those things are real. But you have to work to make connections with people.

That means that you can't just lock your door and get your papers published—meanwhile, nobody knows you. This comes back to the whole sense of belonging. I belong because Sally down the hall can tell you what I do.

You should also find a peer group that you can open up with about personal struggles. If you're alone, it's easy for feelings of self-doubt to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But if you're in a place where there's a critical mass of people going through what you're going through and you have what I'll call a brave space to talk about what's going on—"I don't feel welcome," for instance—then that can be really helpful.

Q: The article was, in part, about the number of papers students publish. Do you have any advice on that front?

A: Yes, I do. I've noticed that many young scholars are sitting on their work, waiting for perfection. They hold onto their work much too long in an attempt to get it into a high-impact journal. I tell scholars I'm mentoring that you cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. This is a cumulative process; you're building a track record. What's most important is that you get your work out there.

I've also noticed that women and minority scholars are more likely to want to get that full picture and less likely to want to publish little snippets as they go. There's a balance. You don't want to get in a mode of slicing your work too thinly. But there's a reason slicing and dicing works. Each paper needs to tell one story, not six. So, it's important to understand how you can segment your research in ways that help you tell individual stories and keep you productive.

I also highly encourage young scholars to send their publications to the very authors that they have cited, for instance by sending an email that says something along the lines of, "I thought you might find this article important. I cited your work." Then those authors are aware of your work and they begin to cite you. You cannot assume that everyone's doing a comprehensive literature review and that they'll find your work. You have to get your work out there and be your own publicist, in a sense.

Senior people know the game. They cite each other; they build each other's credibility in that way. If you're an outsider trying to break in, you simply may not be aware of ways in which those that have keep having.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Katie Langin

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Katie Langin, Ph.D., is a reporter and editor at *Science* covering issues facing the scientific community and the environment. Her stories delve into policies that affect scientists, career choices by early career researchers, research on the scientific community, and other topics. She also edits personal essays by scientists and news stories about ecology and the environment.

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'Dancing Backwards in High Heels'

Study finds female professors experience more work demands and special favor requests, particularly from academically "entitled" students.

By Colleen Flaherty

Numerous studies have found that female professors shoulder a disproportionate amount of service work compared to their male peers. Research also suggests that students hold female instructors to a different standard than they do male faculty members, especially when it comes to personality. Women are expected to be more nurturing and are perceived harshly when they're not, for example.

Both sets of findings matter because they have negative implications for women's professional success: service is generally the least valued criterion in the tenure and promotion triad of research, teaching and service, and students who view female professors as unfriendly may rate their teaching poorly as a result.

Both lines of inquiry also intersect in a new paper, which says that students request more special favors and friendship behaviors from their female professors than they do of men - resulting in more actual work demands and emotional labor. The paper also suggests that "academically entitled" students more strongly expect that women will grant their favor requests than will male professors, and that they react strongly when women deny those requests.

"If students set higher standards for their female professors, it is more difficult for female professors to meet student expectations, perhaps resulting in poorer course evaluations, and putting more work demands and emotional strain on female professors," lead author Amani El-Alayli, an associate professor of psychology at Eastern Washington University, said Tuesday. "Female professors may consequently be more likely to experience burnout and low job satisfaction than their male counterparts."

All of this could interfere with female professors' likelihood of success within academe, El-Alayli said. If women feel more emotional strain, spend more time dealing with student requests, have more disgruntled students, get lower course evaluations and have less time for research activities or class preparation because of the extra demands placed on them, she added, “then their chance of getting promoted may be reduced.”

The paper, published in *Sex Roles*, is called “Dancing Backwards in High Heels: Female Professors Experience More Work Demands and Special Favor Requests, Particularly From Academically Entitled Students.” (“Dancing backwards” is a reference to a comment once made about Ginger Rogers doing everything her onscreen partner Fred Astaire did, just backward, in high heels.) It is based on two studies conducted by El-Alayli and her co-authors, Ashley A. Hansen-Brown, an assistant professor of psychology at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts, and Michelle Ceynar, a professor of psychology at Pacific Lutheran University.

Asking and Expecting More of Women

The first study examined whether female professors report greater solicitation of standard work demands, special favor requests and friendship behaviors than men. Researchers contacted one male and one female professor from 300 randomly selected U.S. institutions, and the final sample included 88 full survey responses, 41 from men and 47 from women. (Respondents represented diverse set of disciplines, but the vast majority were tenured or tenure track and white.)

Surveyed professors estimated how often students from their most frequently taught course during a typical term showed certain behaviors, from “never” to 19 or more times. Examples of standard work requests included, “Students come to my regular office hours to discuss issues specifically related to the course” and “Students send emails asking questions about class materials.” Favor requests included students dropping by the office without an appointment and expecting to discuss an issue right away, or asking to redo an assignment for a better grade. Friendship behaviors included students discussing their

personal problems, bringing gifts or invitations to student activities. Study 1 participants also completed two assessments of emotional labor, to determine the degree to which their jobs entailed managing their and others' feelings.

As expected, professor gender had a significant effect on all three categories of student behaviors, according to the paper. There was no significant effect of professor gender on self-directed emotional labor (or the work one does to manage their own feelings) but women reported significantly more "other-directed" emotional labor than did men. So women appeared to be asked to manage more feelings and expressions from others than did men.

Indeed, in a more advanced analysis, professor gender significantly predicted special favor requests, which significantly predicted other-directed emotional labor. The direct effect of professor gender on other-directed emotional labor was also statistically significant. Friendship behaviors emerged as a "potential mediator," in that professor gender significantly predicted friendship behaviors, but friendship behaviors didn't significantly predict other-directed emotional labor.

Study 2 looked at whether students -- 121 undergraduates, about half men and half women, who completed a survey for credit in a psychology course at an unnamed U.S. public university -- would be more likely to ask favors of a fictitious female professor than of a male counterpart. It also considered whether student characteristics, such as academic entitlement (the notion they deserve to succeed, irrespective of effort), views of authority based on gender, and modern and old-fashioned sexism, had any impact.

Students, specifically those who pinged high in terms of academic entitlement, not only expected female professors to grant their special favor requests but were more inclined to make the requests, be irritated or disappointed if the professor denied the requests, and persist in asking for favors after being denied, if the professor was female versus male. They were also more likely to conclude, if the professor was female, that a request denial meant that the professor disliked them.

The authors note that the latter study found no evidence of students' explicit sexism, such as aversion to women in authority positions, when it came to making special favor requests. So if students are simply "behaving in an opportunistic manner," the paper says, "then their reactions to female professors regarding special favor scenarios may be driven solely by their communal expectations of them, regardless of their opinions about the legitimacy of their status."

"Dancing Backwards" was inspired by El-Alayli's own experiences with what she called "outrageous requests" to break her own policies or go far out of her way for a vocal minority of students over the years. Especially surprising was when students wouldn't take no for an answer, sometimes for weeks on end. And some had negative emotional responses to having their requests denied, she said, and expressed to El-Alayli their disappointment, irritation or suspicion she didn't like them.

El-Alayli said she was simply following her own course rules, but she always wondered if gender was at play. Her new research suggests that it is, she said, "but not because students have negative views of female professors." Instead, students, probably unintentionally, are "expecting their female professors to take on a motherly role."

Joya Misra, a professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has published numerous studies on gender and service in academe. She suggested the new study could have been strengthened by actual measures of work demands (such as the time diaries used in this [2017 study](#) on gender and faculty workload) instead of survey data -- a limitation "Dancing Backwards" itself acknowledges. Yet Misra said she otherwise "liked the experiment here."

"This helps us really unpack what students are thinking, and how they respond to women versus men faculty," she said. "It makes me feel even more confident that students' expectations are gendered."

What's complicated, however, she said, is that gender may also be operating on faculty members in the form of a "vicious cycle." If female professors are rewarded for being "nice," she said, and punished for acting "masculine" -- for example, too busy -- and their male peers aren't, women in response may act more open, responsive or "maternal" to students. (It's important to note once again that El-Alayli's study did find evidence of that kind of "self-directed" emotional labor -- women acting a certain way because it's expected of them.)

In any case, Misra argued, the root of the problem is that people view women as "helpers" and men as "doers," which she "has a tremendously negative effect on the careers of academic women, who either engage in helping behaviors -- and spend less time on more valued work -- or do not, and are viewed as selfish or not team players, even when their men colleagues are similarly less likely to engage in helping behavior but face no consequences."

Written By



Colleen Flaherty

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April 11, 2017

Relying on Women, Not Rewarding Them

New study suggests female professors outperform men in terms of service -- to their possible professional detriment.

By Colleen Flaherty



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Women shoulder a disproportionately large workload at home in ways that might disadvantage them professionally. But are female professors also “taking care of the academic family” via disproportionate service loads? A new study says yes and adds to a growing body of research suggesting the same.

“We find strong evidence that, on average, women faculty perform more service than male faculty in academia, and that the service differential is driven particularly by participation in internal rather than external service,” the study says. “When we look within departments -- controlling for any type of organizational or cultural factor that is department specific -- we still find large, significant differences in the service loads of women versus men.”

All that matters because service loads “likely have an impact on productivity in other areas of faculty effort such as research and teaching, and these latter activities can lead directly to salary differentials and overall success in academia,” the paper says. “In the urgency to redress not only differences in time use but compensation imbalances, as well, the service imbalance is one that deserves to rise to the forefront of the discussion.”

“Faculty Service Loads and Gender: Are Women Taking Care of the Academic Family?”

published in *Research in Higher Education*, was written by Cassandra M. Guarino, professor of education and public policy at the University of California, Riverside, and Victor M. H. Borden, professor of educational leadership and policy studies at Indiana University at Bloomington. The authors considered data from the 2014 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, a web-based national survey related to the National Survey of Student Engagement. The faculty survey included responses from nearly 19,000 faculty members at 143 colleges and universities, and asked about how faculty members spend their time (in addition to professors’ views on student engagement).

Guarino and Borden limited their analysis of the national survey to responses from tenured or tenure-track faculty members at four-year colleges and universities, or about 40 percent of the sample. The national survey asked only how many hours a week faculty members spent on service, not which kinds of service they did or how departments were run. So the authors supplemented that data with those from much more detailed yearly faculty activity reports from two research-intensive campuses (one flagship and one “urban”) of an unnamed Midwestern university. The latter data set, from 2012, pertained to about 1,400 tenured or tenure-track faculty members. They reported whether their service

was “internal,” performed on campus, or the more visible “external” kinds of service performed off campus for professional associations and other groups or communities.

Women Do More

In a first, basic crack at the data, the authors determined that women in the national sample performed 30 more minutes per week of service than men and 1.5 more service activities per year than men in the local sample, and that the difference was statistically significant in both cases.

To glean more meaningful results and control for a number of factors, they proceeded with a multiple regression analysis. In the national sample, women reported 0.6 hours more service per week than men, controlling for rank, race and discipline. Female full professors, in particular, reported significantly more time spent on service than male full professors -- though full professors of both genders spent the most time on service over all. Faculty members in business and some sciences appeared to spend less time on service than those in the arts and humanities.

Results for the local data mirrored those for the national set. Controlling for rank, race, department and campus, female professors reported performing, on average, 1.4 more service activities per year than their male counterparts.

The difference was driven largely by internal service, the study says, with women performing approximately one more internal service activity annually than men.

Associate professors in the Midwest university sample reported performing more internal service than other ranks, but full professors exceeded them in terms of external service. “There was some evidence to suggest that that Asian female faculty performed more service than Asian male faculty, and that women in various fields performed differently than their male counterparts,” the paper notes. “Women in the public policy faculty performed significantly more service than men on that faculty, and women in law and, to a lesser degree, education performed less.”

Regarding external service, women reportedly perform more service than men in the categories of community service and national service.

Why Does It Happen?

The authors had some specific hypotheses as to why gender differentials in service exist, so they looked at the STEM, social science and liberal arts fields (their categories) separately. One hypothesis related to “proportionality,” or whether women are called on to do more service when there are fewer of them in an academic unit. They also considered the importance of gender in departmental leadership, to see if women with male supervisors do more service.

They found some evidence for both the proportionality and leadership hypotheses, varying by discipline. In STEM, having a female department chair was strongly correlated with female faculty members’ external service, which, the authors say, is driven by service to professional organizations and the international community. Within the social sciences, having a male department chair correlated with women doing more department-based service. Interestingly, in the liberal arts, having female chairs correlated with women doing more service, especially within the department -- “a finding that would go against the hypothesis that women are asked to do more service or less likely to refuse requests by male chairs,” the study says.

Guarino and Borden also explored whether women might have a heightened perception of the presence of an “internal” track into paid administrative roles via internal service. But there was little evidence to suggest that, at least in the limited local data, since women tended to be proportionately or underrepresented in such roles. One final explanation -- a gender difference in self-report bias -- proved difficult to assess.

Over all, the study says that the data sets “corroborate” each other, leaving “little doubt as to the existence of a gender imbalance in faculty service loads,” both in number of activities and amount of time spent on service.

Achieving Balance

Yet in the effort to achieve greater gender equity in academe, it continues, “service has often been overlooked as a factor in the quest for parity,” and “merits close attention.”

The authors assert that service is an area of inequity that can be addressed relatively easily, via careful monitoring of service requests and allocations. Female faculty members, it says, “could be mentored to show more selectivity in their service-related choices and cultivate their ability to say no to requests.” Department chairs and deans, meanwhile, “could be made to be more fully aware of how service assignments are being meted out. A simple increase in overall awareness of this issue may improve overall attitudes toward service loads, remove traces of gender bias from service expectations and enable both women and men to accept or decline service requests with equal ease and impunity.”

Guarino in an interview underscored the concept of awareness, saying that women don’t necessarily know they’re doing or -- as the case may be -- being asked to do more until they see objective proof of service imbalances between male and female faculty members.

“There’s no woman who loves this stuff more than men,” she said of service. “But until we see evidence and we can really help women say no, it’s just going to keep happening.”

Guarino also emphasized institutional accountability for fixing gender service imbalances, saying it’s now virtually nonexistent. “There needs to be more internal monitoring of this,” from the department level to the provost’s office, she said.

Joya Misra, a professor of sociology and public policy at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (and an *Inside Higher Ed* columnist) who has studied the gendered nature of faculty work, said she’s found “dramatic service differentials between men and women,” particularly among associate professors.

Despite the fact that women's service work "is necessary for the institutions to survive," she added, the "daily grind of service and leadership rarely carries the respect and reputational benefits of disciplinary service, while it actively limits women's research time."

As to righting the imbalance, Misra said that it may seem like "women simply need to become more protective of their research time, as men are." Yet they face "grave consequences if they are not perceived as team players," she said, while men usually don't.

Laura Perna, James S. Riepe Professor and executive director of the Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy at the University of Pennsylvania, said the new study sheds critical light on faculty workloads, especially with the suspension of the federally-funded National Study of Postsecondary Faculty in 2004.

More broadly, the study raises important questions about "what it is we are valuing in our reward system," she said. Service, not always rewarded like other kinds of faculty work, "is really oriented toward advancing [an institution's] collective mission."

Written By



Colleen Flaherty

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By Larissa Mercado-Lopez



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Recently, a report published by the educational research non-profit [Campaign for College Opportunity](#) confirmed what many of us already knew — there just aren't enough faculty and leaders of color. Focused on the California State University (CSU), University of California (UC), and California Community College systems (CCC), the recent study, [Left Out: How Exclusion in California's Colleges and Universities Hurts Our Values, Our Students, and Our Economy](#), found that the ratios of students of color to faculty of color are remarkably disproportionate:

- In the CSU system, 75% of Cal State students are students of color and 62% of tenured faculty are white;
- In the UC system, 74% of students are students of color and 70% of tenured faculty are white; and
- In the CCC system, 73% of student are students of color and 61% of tenured faculty are white.

While the report was not shocking to most, it gave further quantitative evidence that there remains work to be done to better recruit, support, and promote faculty of color

In A Report Card on Latina/o Leadership in California's Public Universities: A Trend Analysis of Faculty, Students, and Executives in the CSU and UC Systems, educational researchers José L. Santos and Nancy Acevedo-Gil review the literature on the student success implications of a diverse faculty, noting the vast evidence that Latinx students, in particular, benefit from Latinx professors' mentorship, innovative pedagogies and scholarship, and commitment to social justice. Personally, having professors of color helped me envision possibilities I had never imagined for myself before. As members of institutions of higher learning, we want our students to imagine themselves as knowledge producers, particularly those students whose communities have struggled to access higher education or whose knowledge-ways have been erased through racist policies and curriculum. Yet, while we wish for students to see the possibilities that exist for them as educators, researchers, and policymakers in higher education, we are not successful at showing students those possibilities in our faculty.

In my observations as a lecturer, assistant professor, and associate professor, most of the conversation has focused on diversification through recruitment

or retention through promotion. For example, we may ask ourselves, *Are we posting job ads in the right places? Is our commitment to diversity on our promotional materials? How do we make it understood that we want faculty of color without using that language? Do we have institutional structures in place that explicitly support faculty of color?* Responses to most, if not all, of these questions, have been pursued through indirect efforts, such as crafting vague language on the value of diversity, incentivizing cultural competence training across campus, and providing general support for identity-based faculty and staff organizations.

However, unless a university has been lucky enough to procure a private donation, **resources, institutional spaces, and leadership development opportunities specifically for faculty of color most likely do not exist.** For faculty who are recruited using the language of diversity and inclusion, the lack of infrastructure to actually *support* their work, particularly work with or about marginalized identities, can be frustrating. In his piece in *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, doctoral student Daniel Blake emphasizes the need to move from rhetoric to practice, explaining, “Institutions could market positions in ways that resonate with individuals interested in helping their communities...yet, they must not simply espouse this rhetoric — they must be intentional in ensuring that their practices truly support and encourage such work.” It is the move from words to action that more clearly reveals “commitment to diversity.”

Thus, I’d like to propose that universities support and invest in faculty of color as faculty of color. This is not a novel nor particularly radical idea; after all, we readily invest in serving individual student identities to promote a more “representative” demographic composition. Yet, there is a timidity to initiate programming and resources for faculty that name and appeal to their specific racial and ethnic identities. Universities, instead, tend to take

on a catch-all “All Faculty Matter” approach to supporting faculty: we support ALL faculty, therefore we support faculty of color. The loose use of “diverse faculty” in institutional language thereby becomes an expansive umbrella under which *any* faculty can claim membership. While I recognize that white faculty can experience oppression on the basis of sexuality, gender, disability, etc., disparities on the basis of race and ethnicity are more historically embedded in and *reproduced* by institutions and their hiring and promotion processes.



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Often, faculty of color in search of identity-specific support are pointed to existing structures or asked to create their own spaces. These can look like faculty learning communities, faculty and staff organizations, or centers for cross-cultural student services that can offer resources and collaboration

space to faculty. The university, then, will claim those projects as part of their diversity retention efforts. **The irony is that faculty of color are leading the very efforts that are intended to retain them; hence, the support that these faculty receive from the university is *dependent on their own abilities to sustain those efforts.***

Another diversity misstep that universities will take is nurturing leadership among faculty of color who espouse the ideals of the status quo, thereby obscuring the whiteness of the university. In *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, feminist scholar Sara Ahmed writes that even institutions that are “diversity-led” can obscure institutional racism: Being diverse, she argues, is not the same as doing diversity work. She further posits that diversity has become a comfortable word “that becomes detached from scary words, such as power and inequality,” and that it has lost its “edge of critique” — an edge that prompts us to critique diversity, its representation, and the processes through which it is constructed.

Most faculty of color will readily assert that race and ethnicity, and the many ways in which those identities intersect with their other identities, *do* create experiences of the academy that differ from those of their white colleagues. Importantly, they often bring lived experiences whose visibility they need to negotiate to avoid amplifying their otherness. In an interview, Dr. David Hernández, professor of Latinx studies at Mount Holyoke College, discusses the otherness he experienced and negotiated when among his UCLA colleagues as an assistant professor. He insightfully insists that “[his] PhD didn’t level the playing field.” Even when the experiences of faculty of color prove otherwise, an “All Faculty Matter” approach to diversity and faculty support perpetuates the neoliberalist notion that a PhD is a great equalizer. Ahmed supports this when she disputes the false expectation that “when people of color become professors then the whiteness of the world recedes.”

Indeed, the professoriate is far from the bastion of racial progressiveness that some may believe it to be.

As a first generation Chicana associate professor at a Hispanic-Serving Institution, I was hired to meet a need for underrepresented faculty and to provide expertise in mentorship, curriculum design, and programming that would serve the Chicanx student population. Yet, I sometimes find myself fumbling as I walk the precarious line between being an expert and being connected to the struggles of my first-generation Latinx students. In our meetings, it is clear that I am in search of the very things they search for: empathetic mentors, spaces for speaking my truths, ways to hold the institution accountable for unmet needs, and the recognition that people like us still have to fight to belong in the academy.

Thus, I would like to issue a call to action for universities: Recognize, endorse, and invest in your faculty of color *as faculty of color*. Say our names and name our struggles. Integrate our perspectives. Be open to critique. Create opportunities for growth. Importantly, avoid what professor Eugenia Zuroski calls the “value added” approach to racial difference. In her piece “Holding Patterns: On Academic Knowledge and Lab,” Zuroski describes this approach as “a way of disavowing racial difference as a site of critical knowledge” that “celebrate[s] the presence of nonwhite people until the moment those people share what they understand about how the institution operates.” Valuing faculty of color means changing the language about them from “having diverse perspectives” to “embodying critical knowledges,” and being open to the ways that these faculty might unsettle current power structures. It means taking the risk of being critiqued by white faculty for being exclusionary. Importantly, it means responding to these critiques with the insistence that supporting faculty of color is a form of social and educational justice.

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Inside Academia: Black Professors are Expected to Entertain While Presenting

Advice & News | by Ebony O McGee, Vanderbilt University, from The Conversation
Friday, September 18, 2015



Imagine this scenario: after going through the frustrations of being a high school mathematics teacher, you went back to school for a PhD and landed your dream job.

Today, you are an assistant professor at one of the top education departments within a university system that is poised for amazing growth. You have had a very successful first three years - publishing in journals considered top tier by your department colleagues and serving as a consultant on a couple of large-scale grants.

But as far as your university social life goes, you go out for a few lunches with your departmental colleagues. You feel a bit disconnected. So, you invite a few colleagues over to your house for dinner. You and your partner cook an incredible meal.

Conversation and wine flow, and all seems well.

While you are grabbing dessert, your wife tells your colleagues about your undergraduate days, including being in a hip-hop and dance group. They seem way too interested, asking an exorbitant amount of questions, and laughing wildly. After several minutes you decide to politely change the subject.

Overall, you and your wife call the dinner a success.

A few days later, at the request of your department chair, you give a dynamic presentation about your research during the faculty meeting. The effort in preparing this presentation paid off with lively dialogue afterward.

As you finish up and return to your seat, your two colleagues from dinner announce to the faculty that besides being a stellar researcher, you are a rapper and dancer.

They apparently took a picture of a picture from your house with you and your hip-hop group. It is now on the large projector, the same projector where you finished your presentation.

The rest of the faculty is entertained, fueled by your colleagues' request to you to "bust a move."

The truth is that for many black academics, this is not an imaginary scenario. This is one of the many narratives of presenting while black.

I am a researcher of black students and faculty in STEM fields, and this narrative is part of my experience. Before presentations at conferences, I hear statements from colleagues, such as

All right, it's time to go perform, Let me get ready to shuck and jive, Gotta go put on my Blackface..."

I also know how at these presentation venues, comments and criticism bestowed on black presenters lean more toward their entertainment value than their intellectual value. So, I embarked on [this study](#) to see if other black academics were feeling or responding to this same pressure. My study provides a window into the experience of black faculty members, who are expected to be "entertaining" when presenting academic research to mostly white peers.

Presenting while black

From 2013 to 2014, my colleague, Lasana Kazembe, adjunct professor at DePaul University and I interviewed 33 African-American faculty members from institutions across the country. The results were disappointing, but not particularly surprising.

Their personal experiences provide a unique perspective on "presenting while black."

[My interviews revealed](#) that an overwhelming majority of the participants were advised regularly by white peers to be "more entertaining" when making research presentations, as well as to "lighten up," and "tell more jokes."

Alternatively, some presenters' research was met with shock and awe, as the audience was taken back by the high quality of the research and made their low expectations known with statement such as "I'm pleasantly surprised," "I had no idea you were that bright," and "you must be a genius."

These black professors were interviewed about their participation in a number of presentation contexts, including national conferences, symposia and campus job talks. Study participants [discussed](#) encountering multiple layers of racial stereotyping and bias.

For instance, black faculty were penalized for doing the following: taking a sip of water during the middle of her sentence, not pausing before answering questions from the audience ("she didn't even reflect on the question") and were openly accused of not citing enough by mostly white male researchers.

Accusations were also made of black faculty's presentation styles and behaviors, such as "constantly waving her arms and being wildly animated during her presentation. It was just too much attitude," and being critiqued because "his laugh was too boisterous, too domineering."

Black females additionally noted being subject to their colleagues' preoccupation with their clothing choices and hairstyle, and reported being admonished to play down their "passion" and "smile more."

Impact on health

These experiences seem to have an impact not only on their faculty career trajectories (some faculty are considering leaving or have left academia since the interviews), but also on their emotional and physical health.

Arline T Geronimus, researcher at University of Michigan, along with her colleagues, has documented the [long-term](#) physical, mental, emotional and [psychological effects](#) of racism and of living in a society characterized by white dominance and privilege, a phenomenon she calls ["weathering."](#)

Weathering severely challenges and threatens a person's health and ability to make healthy responses to their environment. This can cause wear and tear, both physical and mental, and lead to a host of psychological and physical ailments, including heart disease, diabetes and accelerated aging.

Hurdles for black faculty

For an academic, presenting research to peers can open doors to departmental collaborations, research funding opportunities and job offers. Faculty members must present effectively and persuasively to stand out from the crowd.

Scholars of color [face additional hurdles](#) for acceptance that [range](#) from [micro-aggressions](#), subtle and stunning racial slights, to outright racism. Faced with racial battle fatigue, many try to change who they are in order to fit in, or simply give up and change careers. During my interviews, black faculty said it was the micro-aggressions, subtle and stunning racial slights, that caused them the most anguish.

The [persistent racialized stigmatization](#) of black faculty is particularly troubling given the [low number](#) (just about 6%, according to 2013 data culled from the National Center for Education Statistics) of black faculty working in higher education.

The stunning [lack of diversity](#) among [higher education](#) faculty presents serious challenges to efforts to level and [democratize the educational playing field](#).

Researchers too need to pay more attention to this issue. Future research needs to center on how to reduce the impact of such racialized experiences so as to improve faculty retention and improve the quality of black academics' well-being.

Blacks have a long history of being objectified for entertainment value, going all the way back to the blackface minstrels, a form of entertainment beginning in the 1810s in which performers used make up to represent a black person. In these performances African Americans were depicted as comical, lazy or dim-witted.

Today the racialized objectification of African Americans may not always be as overt as it was a century ago, but the "black as entertainment" ideology remains alive and well.

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This article was originally published on [The Conversation](#). Read the [original article](#).

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