

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
OF THE 1990 REPORT OF THE  
SENATE COUNCIL AD HOC COMMITTEE OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In fulfilling its charge, the University Senate Council Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women conducted a 22-month investigation of the economic, political and social status of women within the University of Kentucky employee community. The Committee's basic approach was to test the reality of the University's rhetoric about the status of women within its community. Based on that rhetoric, the Committee assumed no significant gender-based differences exist between the work experiences of women and men employees.

To test this assumption, the Committee analyzed institutional data bases and reports, conducted surveys and interviews, reviewed formal policy statements and publications, and documented common practices. All of the data collection and analysis included information on men as well as women. The Committee investigated every phase of the employment at UK. Recruitment, hiring, promotion and reclassification, interactions with colleagues, supervisors and subordinates, access to support services, advancement opportunities, benefits, preparation for retirement were among the areas studied by the Committee. In its investigation the Committee used both objective and perceptual data to document the representation, distribution and roles of women employees within the University and to explore the organizational culture and climate in which they work.

All full-time employees on the Main Campus (the Lexington Campus, Research and Graduate Studies, and Information Systems sectors) and the academic areas of the Medical Center sector were included in the study. Employees in the University Hospital and the Community College System were not included in the investigation because their work situations are so different and because they do not fall within the purview of the University Senate. However, the Committee did receive anecdotal information on women from both these areas. That unsolicited information indicates an investigation on the status of these women employees is warranted.

The findings of the Committee are strikingly consistent across all areas, categories, groups and subjects investigated. Women and men employed at the University of Kentucky work in different worlds because the University is segregated on the basis of gender. Women receive less compensation for their labors than men. The organizational culture is based on gender-specific values and role expectations, and sexism in all its various manifestations is considered acceptable behavior.

The following are but some of the findings that support these conclusions.

### **WOMEN ARE VIRTUALLY ABSENT FROM ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

- Only 2 of 17 college deans are women and both are in traditionally female fields
- 85% of all academic units are chaired by men
- 8 of 10 associate deans for research are men
- No Academic Area Committee is chaired by a woman
- Only 2 of 49 University Research Professorships have been held by women

### **WOMEN ARE TOTALLY ABSENT FROM HIGH-LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS**

- The President's Cabinet has no women members
- All Chancellors and Vice Presidents are male
- The only woman Vice Chancellor is serving in an acting capacity

### **WOMEN ARE CONCENTRATED IN A FEW DISCIPLINES AND JOB CATEGORIES**

- Women constitute the majority of the faculty in 2 of the 3 academic departments in the College of Home Economics
- All faculty in the College of Nursing are women
- 66% of faculty in the Librarian Title Series are women
- More than 9 out of 10 secretarial/clerical workers are women
- 96% of the departments with hourly staff have no male hourly staff employees

### **WOMEN ARE VIRTUALLY ABSENT FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES AND JOB CATEGORIES**

- Only 2 faculty members in the College of Engineering are women
- 89% of the faculty in the Extension Title Series are men
- 20% of all academic departments have NO women faculty
- 2 of every 3 academic departments have fewer than 2 women faculty
- 75% of all executive/administrative/managerial personnel are men
- 98% of skilled crafts workers are men
- 66% of service/maintenance workers are men

### **WOMEN ARE CONCENTRATED IN THE LOWER RANKS OF EVERY EMPLOYEE GROUP**

- 90% of all full professors are men
- 83% of all women faculty are assistant or associate professors
- 90% of all women, -administrative/professional staff hold positions in the bottom half of the personnel classification system
- Almost 50% of all male administrative/professional staff hold positions in the top half of the personnel classification system

- The majority of administrative/professional staff in the lowest 10 employment levels are women
- The majority of administrative/professional staff in the highest 10 employment levels are men
- In 70% of the departments with women and men hourly staff a man holds the highest rank in the employee group
- 3 of every 4 women hourly workers hold jobs in the lowest third of the position ranking system
- Men are twice as likely as women to hold positions in the top two-thirds of the hourly staff position ranking system

### **WOMEN EARN LESS THAN COMPARABLE MALE COLLEAGUES**

- Women associate professors in the Medical Center colleges earn 80¢ for every \$1.00 paid male associate professors
- Women full professors on the Lexington Campus average salaries which are more than \$2000/year less than those of male full professors
- Women administrative and professional staff earn 74¢ for every \$1.00 paid their male colleagues
- Women administrative and professional staff who hold positions in unranked bilateral salary schemes earn 80¢ for every \$1.00 paid their male counterparts
- 2 of every 3 women technical/paraprofessional staff earn less than \$16,000/year while 1 of every 2 of their male counterparts earn \$16,000 or more per year
- 3 of every 4 women in hourly staff positions earn less than men who occupy the same employment grade

### **WOMEN EMPLOYEES ARE TREATED DIFFERENTLY THAN MEN EMPLOYEES**

- Almost 1 in 4 women surveyed, but fewer than 1 in 20 men, have experienced condescending treatment in the UK workplace because of their gender
- Almost 1 in 4 women surveyed, but only 1 in 20 men, have experienced role stereotyping because of their gender
- More than 1 in 10 women surveyed, but fewer than 3 in 100 men, have been excluded from some work activity at UK because of their gender
- Almost 1 in 5 women surveyed, but fewer than 4 in 100 men, have experienced a denial of their authority because of their gender
- Almost 1 in 5 women surveyed have experienced the application of double standards in the UK work place, and 75% of them attribute the experience to their gender as compared to fewer than 1 in 10 men

### **BOTH WOMEN AND MEN WITNESS SEXISM IN THE UK WORK PLACE**

- More than 25% of all women employees and 20% of men employees surveyed have witnessed condescending behavior they attribute to gender

- More than 1 in 3 women employees and almost 1 in 4 men employees surveyed have witnessed behavior based upon role stereotypes and more than 80% of both groups attribute such behavior to gender
- Over 80% of all women employees and 70% of all men employees surveyed who have witnessed overt hostility in the UK work place say its cause is gender
- Almost 1 in 3 women and 1 In 3 men employees surveyed have witnessed prejudicial comments, and over 70% of both groups indicate the prejudice was based on gender
- Over 75% of women employees and 70% of men employees surveyed who have witnessed the application of double standards in the UK work place believe gender was the reason
- Almost 1 in 4 women employees and 1 In 5 men employees surveyed have witnessed tokenism at work on campus and approximately 70% of both groups indicate the tokenism was based on gender

The general findings summarized above and detailed in the Committee's full report show the emptiness of UK's rhetoric of equality. Based on its findings, the Committee has prepared concrete recommendations for the University's administration. Implementation of these recommendations will help narrow the gap between the University's rhetoric and reality of its women employees.

While neither morals nor values can be legislated, they can be taught. It is now incumbent upon the University to begin its own self-education toward gender equality. That education must begin with a mandate from the very highest levels that sexism will no longer be acceptable at the University of Kentucky. That mandate must also be enforced at every level within the University. Without such a mandate and the implementation of the Committee's recommendations the rhetoric of equal employment opportunity and equity will remain devoid of substance for the women who work at the University of Kentucky.