

Women profs still placed in traditional positions

Halifax (CUP) - universities are still hiring women mainly to fill positions in "traditional" female faculties, such as nursing and education, says the chair of the Status of Women committee of the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

"On the surface, it looks as if universities have been hiring more women," said Jane Gordon, a sociology professor at Mount Saint Vincent University. "But they are probably hiring fewer women in mainstream faculties."

In most Nova Scotia universities, the percentage of faculty positions filled by women runs between 14 to 40 per cent. At Mount Saint Vincent, where 85 per cent of students are women, the figure is 60 per cent. But at the Technical University of Nova Scotia, the figure drops to just two per cent.

Paula Chegwiddden, a sociology professor at Acadia University in Wolfville, said only four per cent of Acadia's science professors are female. Chegwiddden said more women are needed in scientific areas

to "provide role models for women. Not having women in the sciences may discourage women going into the sciences."

Gordon is concerned that the number of female faculty at Mount Saint Vincent has declined from 100 per cent 20 years ago to 60 per cent today.

"There are more women being turned out of graduate programs," but not all are being hired as professors, she said.

Gordon said universities seem "to value men's credentials more highly than women's." She said many women often take time off after finishing graduate school, and this may hinder their chances for academic employment.

Gordon suggests that universities "are reluctant to hire older women," preferring to hire "someone fresh out of graduate school who goes directly into the system."

"There is no conscious decision not to hire women," says Chegwiddden. "But people like to hire people like themselves," she said, not-

ing hiring committees are often made up of men.

Although Acadia has had an affirmative action policy for two years, Chegwiddden said it's just "a motherhood statement." There's no way to enforce the hiring of women, she said.

Dalhousie philosophy professor Sue Sherwin said Dal's "very weak" affirmative action policy states that a woman is to be hired only if there is no better qualified male. Sherwin thinks universities should hire well-qualified women even if a male candidate is perceived to have higher qualifications.

What people consider to be 'qualified' is "very subjective," said Sherwin. "A department head may prefer a person because she or he fits into the style of the department. That works against women because departments are usually male dominated."

If hiring committees relied solely on grades and publications, the system would be fairer to women, said Sherwin.

Sherwin also said that most women professors at Dalhousie are in the junior ranks, and very few head departments. "There

are 13 female full professors compared to 237 male full professors, and there is only one woman in senior administration, she said.

Gordon said these figures are similar for most universities across Canada.

"The only way to change these statistics is to hire more women," said Sherwin. But because many universities are suffering budget restraints, it is unlikely women faculty will be hired in great numbers in the near future.

Women faculty also earn less than their male colleagues. On average, women professors make 12 per cent less than men. Gordon says salary disparity "is attributed not to gender, but to the initial salary the professor negotiates with administration."

At the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, differences in initial salary negotiations accounted for "as much as a \$5,000 difference" in the salaries of equally qualified men and women, says college environmental planning professor Jill Grant.

Grant said the wage disparity has been reduced because of a collective agreement reached this fall between administration and faculty. "Now about half as many women as before are being underpaid."

NSCAD professor Wilma Needham thinks men negotiate for bigger salaries because they are more money," Needham said.

Gordon said universities should become more flexible to better meet the needs of female faculty. "Noting that married women professors are still largely responsible for housekeeping and childbearing duties at home, Gordon said universities need to develop more support facilities such as adequate daycare.

She also said women who want to work part-time should be able to do so without being penalized. "Being part-time means you're marginal at a university," says Gordon. Part-time faculty lose benefits and most possibilities of promotion, she said.

Calgary committee plans for Olympic housing worries

CALGARY (CUP) - A committee of University of Calgary and municipal officials is working on plans to accommodate the 900 students who will be in residence when athletes descend on the campus for the 1988 Winter Olympic games.

Theresa Goulet, chair of the Olympic Liaison Committee of the university's alumni association, is confident lodging for more than 400 students will be found with volunteers reached through a mail-out recruitment campaign in the city.

However, planners are not being too confident, following the experience of a similar alumni project

during the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Only one-third of the

projected participants provided space in their homes because unexpected relatives and friends showed up as the Games started.

Besides "no room at the inn" scenarios, organizers are also trying to avoid problems for the 400 to 500 students who

start school January 1988. These students may not find guaranteed accommodation, or could be victims of suddenly escalated rental rates.

"There is a potential for high rates," said Peter

Fraser, university housing manager.

Students' union president Dave Hoff suggests a "buddy system" be established so that no students are left lugging their luggage about Calgary when the Games begin.

"I think students would (provide space) if they knew there was a need and they knew where to go," Hoff said.

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