

# **Standing Still: The Associate Professor Survey**

Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession

Web publication, 27 April 2009

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## Standing Still: The Associate Professor Survey

### INTRODUCTION

We have a serious problem here, and I suspect elsewhere . . . the number of faculty at research institutions who get stuck at the associate professor rank. These are people who published a good first book and then cannot seem to marshal the time and commitment to write a second one. Some of them are male, some female; some are married, some single, some divorced. I don't see a clear pattern, which makes it hard for me, as chair, to work on strategies for helping them.

—A respondent to the questionnaire

“At my university, it seems to me that women, more than men, are held back at the associate professor level,” wrote a respondent to the associate professor survey distributed by the Modern Language Association in 2006. “It would be good to know if the data show this to be true.” The data do indeed show this to be the case.<sup>1</sup> On average, depending on the type of institution in which women are employed, it takes women from one year to three and a half years longer than men to attain the rank of professor. According to the survey, women at the rank of associate professor appear to be standing still in relation to men.

This study of the rank of associate professor by the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession (CSWP) began in 2002 in response to the committee's article in *Profession 2000* detailing the persistent disparities between female and male professors in English and the foreign languages. Put simply, men disproportionately held positions of higher rank than women and moved through the ranks more rapidly than women. This situation seemed inexplicable in the face of the increasing feminization of the disciplines in the humanities. More women were earning advanced degrees. Proportionally, more women were being hired at the rank of assistant professor than men. Why were women taking longer than men to advance in rank? Following the investigation by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the late 1990s into the conditions of academic women's employment—from square footage of laboratories to teaching assignments (*Study*)—the CSWP undertook a wide-ranging study to understand the causes of women's lack of parity at the rank of professor. The committee originally surmised that one cause of women's standing still at the rank of associate professor was their greater “hidden” demands of service, such as working as mentors who assumed extra responsibilities or as administrators of small programs. In

addition, the committee surmised that women were undertaking more of what is characterized as care work at home. Over the course of several years, and an ever-shifting committee membership with different perspectives and ideas, the study evolved through research into the existing literature, deep discussions about institutional differences, the sharing of anecdotes, and the fine-tuning of the survey instrument. Ultimately our research coalesced around an online survey questionnaire developed by the members of the CSWP working with David Laurence, director of the Office of Research and the Association of Departments of English at the MLA.<sup>2</sup>

The quantitative portion of our survey reveals that women report they devote a significantly greater amount of time to child care than do men. But this dramatic difference in terms of time spent does not seem to be the determining factor in undermining career advancement for women. The quantitative portion of our survey also reveals that women do not report they devote significantly more time to a wide spectrum of activities under the rubric of service than do men; rather, we see small differences in the time reported. But over the years the accumulation of these microdifferences may add up to the major inequity that is the substantial difference in time between women and men in attaining the rank of professor. In addition, the results of this survey should be understood in the context of the trends affecting all higher education, but especially the humanities: the casualization of academic labor, the feminization of the humanities, and the defunding of the liberal arts. This report should be read in the context of the *Report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion* as well as a recent report from the American Association of University Professors on contingent academic labor. Our report suggests that the story of women's professional lives is a complex one and that no one cause can explain women's status in the profession.

The survey was designed as a pilot study to test the feasibility and value of collecting systematic information of this kind.<sup>3</sup> In particular, it aimed to document the movement through academic ranks of members of the MLA who had attained the rank of associate professor or professor. Its further purpose was to track and document the experiences of women at the rank of associate professor in order to gain a better understanding of what helps and hinders them in their careers, including progress to tenure, advancement through academic ranks, and workloads. The survey was designed for both women and men in the hope that inclusiveness would provide a better understanding of the situation of the associate professor in general and of the situation of women—as compared with men—at the rank of associate professor in particular.

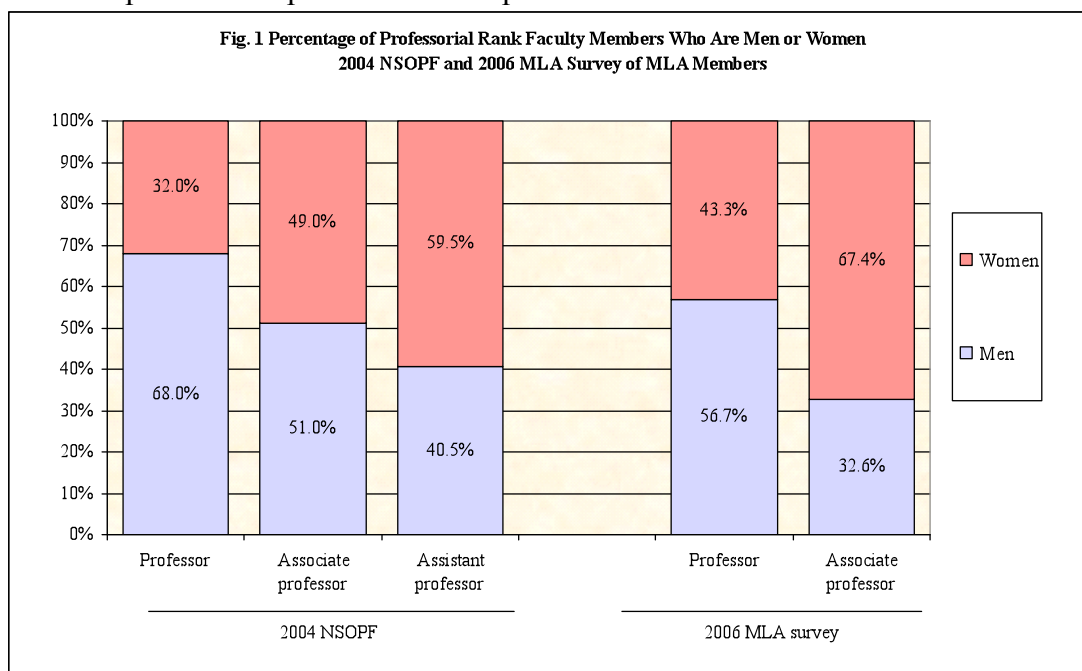
## **Methodology**

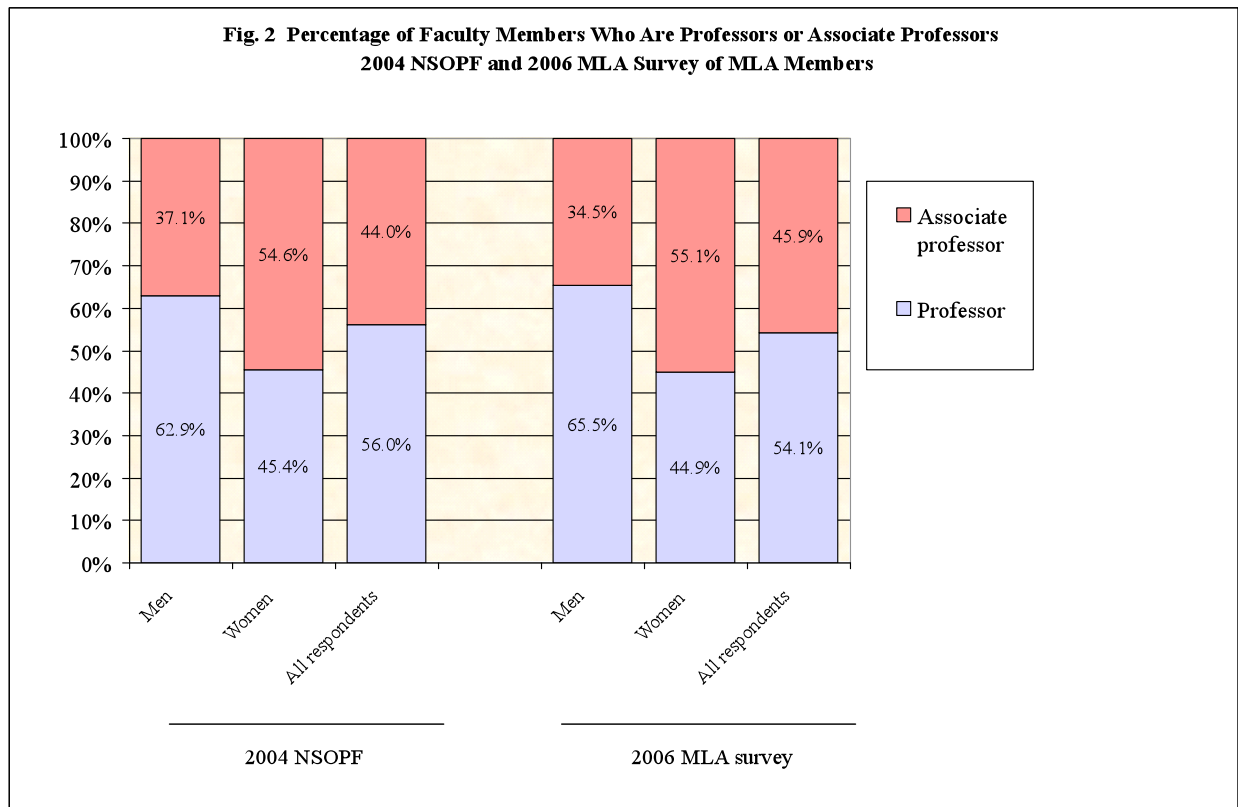
The major portion of the survey was devoted to soliciting quantifiable data that would yield preliminary statistical documentation. In addition, space was provided for answers to six open-text questions. See the appendix for a copy of the survey.

In March 2006 a target population was identified of 7,652 MLA members at the rank of associate and full professor in a college or university in the fifty states and the District of Columbia. From this universe of MLA members, in late spring 2006 the associate professor survey was sent to a random sample of 1,206 members with a completion deadline of 30 June

2006. The sample was stratified to be representative of MLA members at the ranks of associate professor and professor with respect to four characteristics: the proportion of women to men, the proportion of members in English to those in other language departments, the Carnegie classification of the institutions in which members currently teach, and the identification of institutions as public or private, religiously affiliated or not religiously affiliated (the “control and affiliation” of the institutions to which MLA members belong).<sup>4</sup> Usable responses were received from 401 members (220 women and 181 men) ranging in age from thirty-one to seventy-one, the average age being fifty-three.<sup>5</sup> Of the 401 respondents, 375 (93.5%) provided information about the degrees earned. Overwhelmingly, the respondents hold doctorates (370, or 98.7%). The response rate was 33.3%; 35.3% of women and 31.8% of men responded. This response rate is comparable with that of other surveys the MLA has conducted.

Providing an important point of reference for the MLA associate professor survey are data from the 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF), a survey of a nationally representative sample of faculty members drawn from postsecondary institutions in the fifty states and the District of Columbia that are Title IV-participating and public or private not-for-profit institutions. Findings from the 2004 NSOPF show that, in comparison with the profession as a whole, women are overrepresented in the MLA (women make up a greater percentage of MLA members at the ranks of associate professor and professor than they do of the parallel group of faculty members in English and the other languages identified in the 2004 NSOPF; see fig. 1). Within the group of men who responded to the MLA survey, the ratio of associate professors to professors is very close to the ratio of associate professors to professors within the group of men who responded to the 2004 NSOPF survey. The same holds true for women (see fig. 2). The alignment of these two data sets suggests that the MLA associate professor survey provides reliable information about conditions that are characteristic for women in English and the foreign languages who hold the ranks of associate professor or professor in comparison with conditions that are characteristic for men.





### Focal Points

What reasons might be identified for women remaining at the rank of associate professor longer than men? Do women slow down in their careers at this point to turn attention to family? Do women undertake a disproportionate share of service as associate professors? Are more elusive factors involved? To what extent might larger structural reasons play a role in this striking disparity between women and men in achieving the rank of professor? These are some of the questions that framed the discussions of the CSWP surrounding the creation and analysis of the survey and its results.

In presenting the results of the survey, we have divided our commentary into four main sections: (1) findings, which present the conclusions we drew from our analysis of the responses to the survey questions, both quantitative and qualitative; (2) discussion, where we interpret the findings, assessing what they suggest about the conditions for the respondents at both ranks and considering how the answers to the questions about time spent on various activities are suggestive about why women are taking longer at the rank of associate professor than men; (3) recommendations, where we make suggestions about how some of the issues raised by the survey might be addressed at the institutional level; and (4) further implications, which offers some general conclusions about the status of women in the profession.

It is our hope that our report will spur people to think about the issues presented here and pursue further study, as well as implement programs and policies at their colleges and

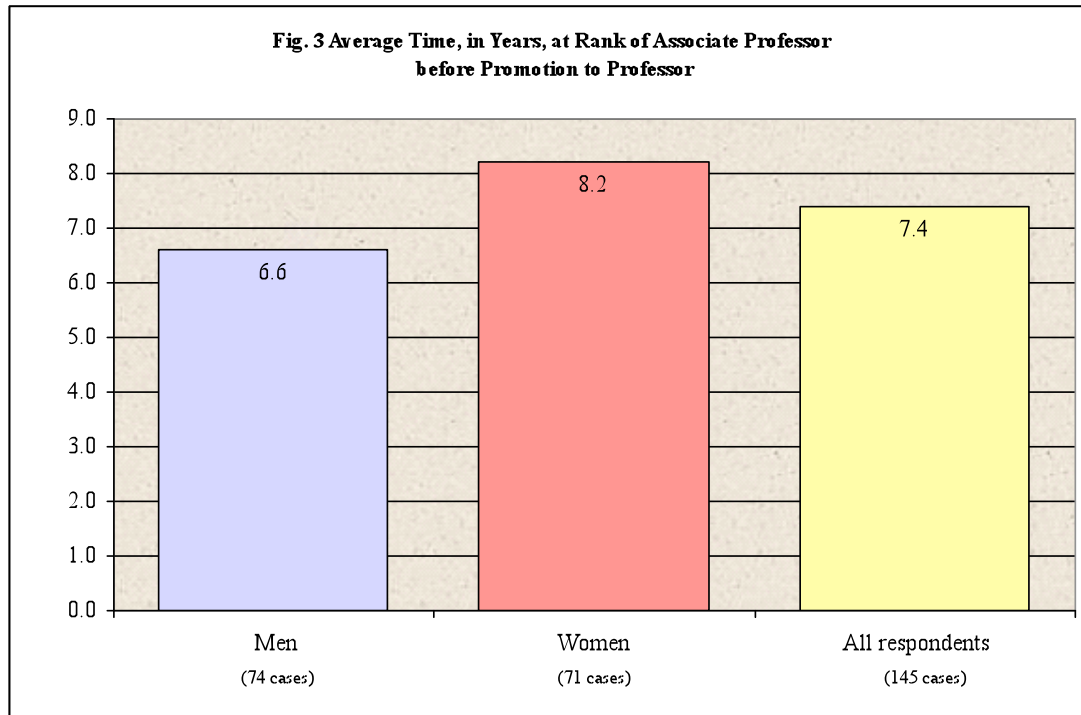
universities that address the question of the associate professor rank and, by extension, the various career paths of faculty members.

## **FINDINGS**

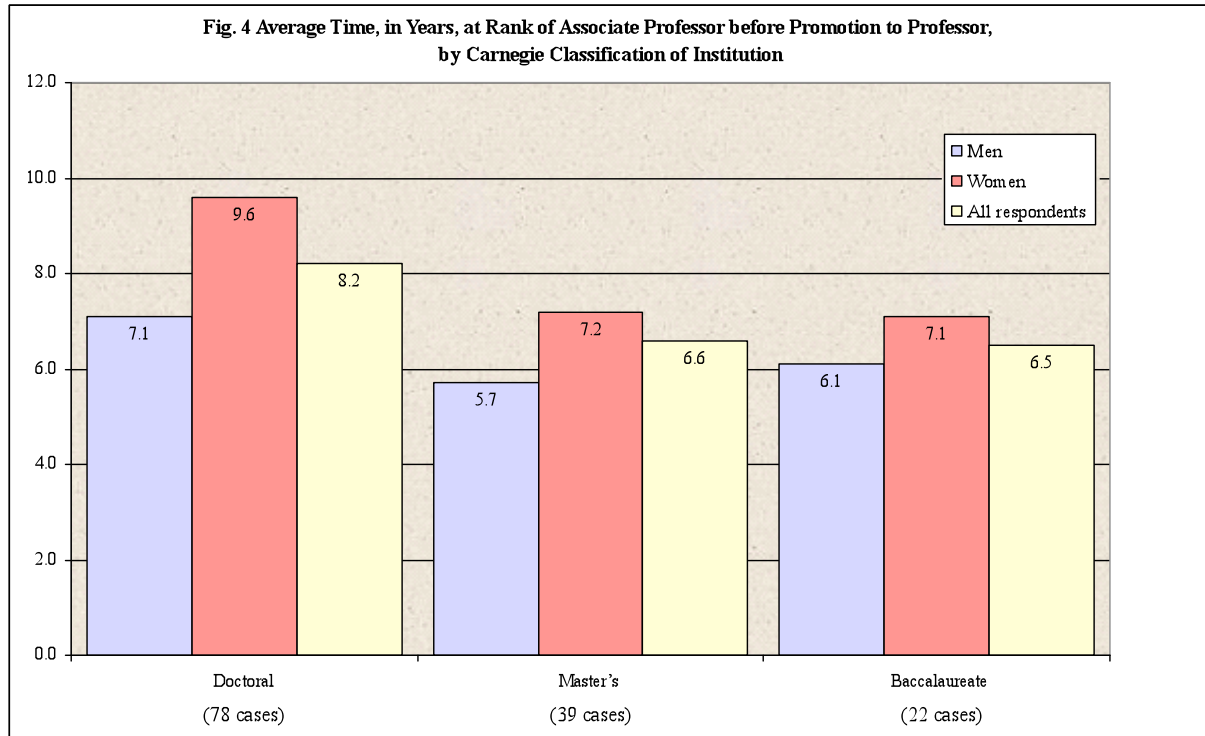
The responses to the survey are marked by internal consistency, and the data respondents provided are fascinating, rich, and suggestive. Given the relatively small number of participants and given that the respondents are members of the MLA (the composition of which is different from the profession as a whole), the results cannot be understood as providing a statistically valid basis for making generalizations about the conditions for women in the modern languages across higher education in the United States. By design the survey was a pilot study of a small sample of MLA members. Even if not nationally representative of the profession as a whole, the data provide a set of illustrations that shed light on a variety of topics and issues of concern and about which little documentation of any kind has been available. The data reveal differing patterns in the career paths and progress of women and men faculty members in the modern languages. The findings, however, cannot be taken as illustrative of two-year institutions because there were so few responses from faculty members at such institutions—only 11 of 401 (we hope that a study of the rank of associate professor at two-year institutions will be undertaken). In addition, the survey does not yield any meaningful data about faculty members of color or about ethnicity because the number of respondents is too small for conclusions to be drawn. Information about how people identified themselves racially and ethnically was provided by 80% of the respondents. Of the respondents who provided this information, 291, or 90%, identified themselves as white; 5 as multiracial—3 as white and American Indian and 2 as white and Hispanic.

### **Number of Years at the Rank of Associate Professor before Promotion**

Of the 401 respondents, 211 had attained the rank of professor, and 145 provided sufficient information to calculate the number of years at the rank of associate professor. On average and across all institutions, the time to promotion for both women and men in this group was 7.4 years. The average time to promotion for women in this group was 8.2 years, 24.2% longer than men, whose average time to promotion was 6.6 years (see fig. 3). On average it takes women from 1 to 3.5 years longer than men to attain the rank of professor, depending on the type of institution in which they are employed. The discrepancy between women and men in terms of their advancement from associate professor to professor is significant.

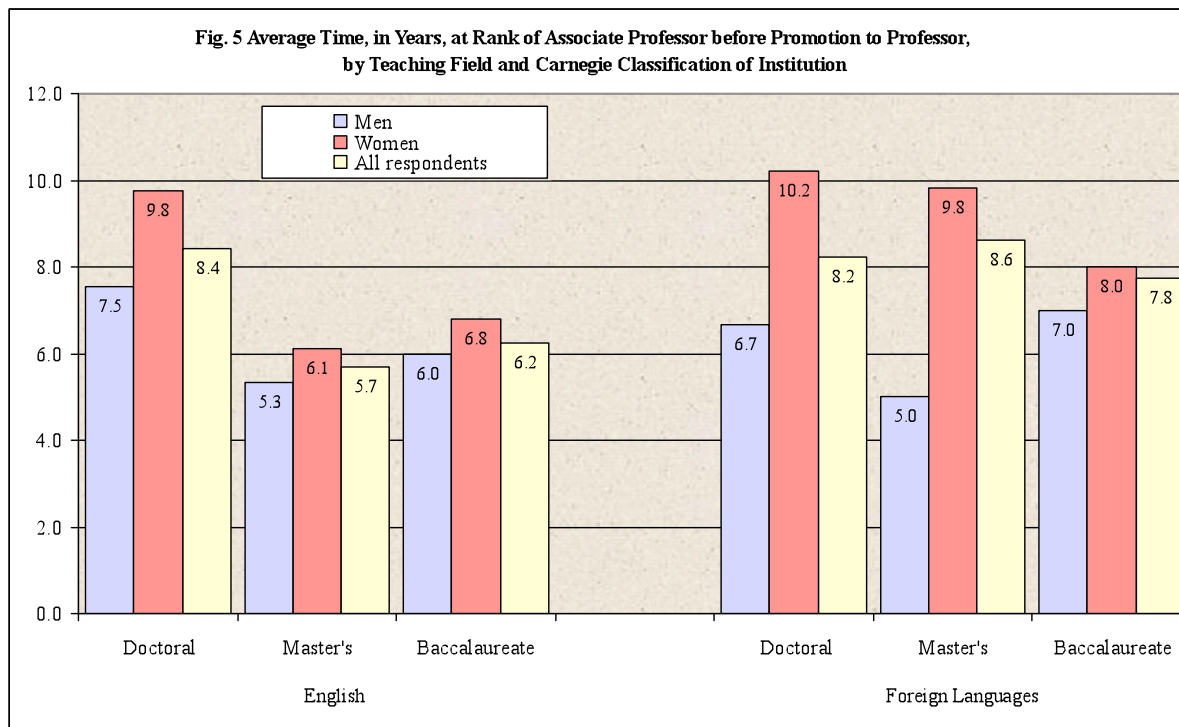


For both women and men, time at the rank of associate professor is longest in Carnegie doctoral institutions; the average time to promotion was 8.2 years, or 10.8% longer than the overall average of 7.4 years. The average time to promotion for women in this group was 9.6 years, compared with 7.1 years for men (see fig. 4). Time is shortest in Carnegie baccalaureate institutions—6.5 years—and in private institutions with a religious affiliation—6.3 years. Respondents in private independent institutions report the longest period of time spent at the rank of associate professor for women and the greatest discrepancy between women and men in length of time before the promotion to professor. The time to promotion for women on average in this group was 9.6 years, compared with 6.1 years for men, a difference of 3.5 years, or 57.4%, longer than for men.



Respondents in the foreign languages report longer times, on average, for promotion from associate professor to professor. For women in English across all institutions surveyed, the average time to promotion was 7.7 years. For women in languages other than English, the average time to promotion was 9.6 years. This discrepancy is mostly due to the fact that, according to the 2004 NSOPF, 43.2% of foreign language faculty members are in Carnegie doctoral institutions whereas only 20.3% of English faculty members are in Carnegie doctoral institutions. Moreover, when we look at the time as associate professor before promotion to professor for doctoral institutions, we find that in English departments it is 7.5 years for men and 9.8 years for women and in foreign language departments 6.7 years for men and 10.2 years for women (see fig. 5). Women at Carnegie doctoral institutions take the longest amount of time to move from associate professor to professor regardless of whether they are in English or in the foreign languages.





The associate professor survey reveals not only that women arrive at the rank of professor significantly later than men but also that the amount of time women spend in the associate professor rank is lengthening. For women promoted in the 1990s the average length of time across all institutions was 7.4 years; for women promoted in 2000 and after, the average time was 8.8 years.

### **Percentage of Faculty Members Remaining at the Rank of Associate Professor**

Of the women and men responding to the survey who were still at the rank of associate professor at the time of the survey, 25.6% have remained at the rank of associate professor nine or more years; the average time spent in the rank was fifteen years.<sup>6</sup> Approximately 75.0% of the women who were promoted to associate professor before 1998 and have remained in that rank for nine or more years are faculty members in Carnegie doctoral institutions.

### **What Energizes and Helps, What Hinders**

Two of the open-ended text questions are particularly relevant to the findings about the length of time as associate professor before promotion. One asked respondents to tell us what professional activities are most vitalizing and energizing and what other kinds of support would be helpful in advancing their professional interests. The other asked what factors most helped or hindered them in advancement from assistant professor to associate professor and from associate professor to professor. The answers to one question frequently illuminated the answers to the other.

### *Teaching and Participating in Conferences*

Respondents noted that research and writing are a source of inspiration. But there were two activities that also emerged as a strong source of professional vitality. The first is teaching: the classroom is seen as a site of professional activity that allows for an important measure of control and intellectual flourishing. The second is academic conferences—especially small, specialized professional gatherings that offer opportunities to establish contacts with colleagues outside one’s university. Of the 319 faculty members who responded to the question about their participation in a range of ten professional activities in fall 2005, 63.9% reported that they had been speakers on a panel at a conference, the second most common activity cited.<sup>7</sup>

### *Time for Research*

We asked what else would be helpful in supporting professional development. Time for research in the form of release time, institutional paid leaves, and fellowships were consistent answers. As a woman holding the rank of professor at a private doctoral institution commented, “MLA should encourage departments to review resources they make available to associate professors. Adequate sabbatical support is essential and as external grant availability shrinks, institutions need to fill in the gap. Competition for external grants is so intense that even the most talented colleagues in my field are repeatedly turned down for outside funding.”

The survey asked respondents to indicate whether they had taken paid or unpaid leave for any of eight purposes, ranging from external fellowships to divorce. Of the 211 respondents who had attained the rank of professor, slightly more than half reported taking leaves. The most common was an external fellowship, which is associated with a half-year shorter average time to promotion to professor for both women and men.

### *Motivation and Collegiality*

A second open-ended text question asked respondents to tell us what helped or hindered them in their advancement from one rank to another. There was a good deal of information provided in this section. Some respondents expressed self-confidence and indicated they had encountered no hindrances to their progress and had moved easily through the ranks. Others credited the wonderful collegiality in their units and the support offered by senior colleagues who nurtured their progress. Some respondents indicated that their own sense of purpose and goal setting and their drive to succeed had impelled their advancement to the rank of professor. Most, however, indicated that they had encountered impediments that either slowed their progress or that appear to have decreased their job satisfaction.

### *Mentoring and Networking*

In terms of helping in advancement through ranks, two factors stood out: (1) mentoring and (2) networking, both with colleagues on one’s own campus outside the department and with colleagues beyond one’s institution. Attending conferences and meetings of professional

associations was also cited as extremely important, and networking often merged with mentoring.

“A strong mentoring system helped me advance to associate professor, as well as the fact that my department supports all forms of scholarly activity and publication—and does not subjectively rank one journal over another,” said a woman at the rank of associate professor who teaches at a public master’s institution. A woman who is a professor at a public doctoral institution wrote, “What helped me most was having a nationwide network of scholars in my field who assisted me in writing, presenting, revising, and submitting my work for publication.” Another woman who is a professor at a public doctoral institution made an important point about the difficulties of being able to provide mentoring in a small department. “In a smaller department such as mine,” she wrote, “mentoring at higher ranks is impossible, because quality mentoring requires an ability to critique the research of one’s colleague in the context of the specialty in which they are working. I believe that conference attendance (i.e., networking in the field of specialization) makes a lot more sense than on-campus mentoring for associates who wish to be promoted to full.”<sup>8</sup> Mentoring is crucial at the level of the institution, but for many people it is also critical outside the institution, both in the community and at the national and international levels.

#### *Lack of Clarity in Criteria for Promotion to Professor*

The lack of clarity in the criteria for promotion was cited as significantly hindering associate professors in their advancement to professor. As a faculty member in a private doctoral institution reported, “The criteria for promotion to full are not very clear here—hence, fewer full than associate overall.” A woman who is an associate professor at a private doctoral institution commented, “I felt I did not have a clear sense of how to proceed or use my time efficiently in the associate rank. I decided to edit an anthology instead of working on my monograph because I thought that would be more important to my field, only to discover that my institution did not count that towards my promotion.” She added that she hopes the survey will be used “to help change attitudes about what constitutes acceptable forms of research, professional work, and the fulfillment of professional responsibilities.”

#### *Increasing Amount of Work*

The continually increasing amount of work was also noted as a hindrance to advancement. A respondent at a private baccalaureate institution observed, “Too much time on committee work, mentoring, evaluating colleagues for tenure and promotion, constant searches for positions. Now, too much time spent on curriculum review and program assessment.” A respondent from a public doctoral institution commented that the pace of academic life has been accelerated by the use of e-mail and the Internet and that, in her case, up to *four hours a day* were consumed by e-mail across a wide variety of activities. Another respondent wrote that she would like to see the MLA advocate for a better balance between teaching and research, on the one hand, and increased bureaucratic requirements, on the other, noting that “over the past years, the amount of time faculty need to spend filling out forms and accounting for our time has grown tremendously.” Overall, the answers to the open-text questions suggest that increasing “paperwork,” committee work of the full range that allows

for faculty governance, and work with students outside the classroom (such as advising and mentoring) are all time-consuming commitments that impede promotion.

### **Workload and Family Obligations: Amount of Time Devoted to Different Activities**

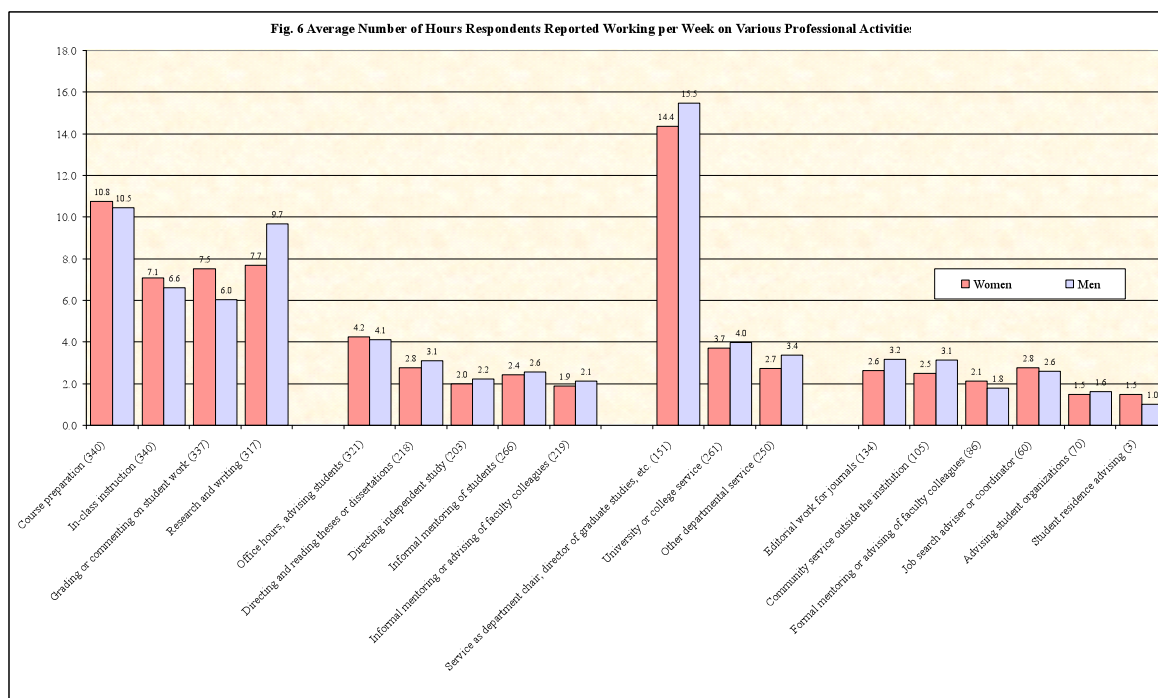
A total of 351 people responded when asked to identify the number of hours they typically devote over the course of a week to eighteen professional activities ranging from course preparation, office hours, and research and writing to administrative service and community service. They were also asked to identify the number of hours a week devoted to three kinds of care work (child care, elder care, and “other family obligations”). While it is not possible to state the average number of hours of the workweek, internal evidence in the survey suggests that most faculty members work between forty-five and sixty hours a week.<sup>9</sup> The reference period for these questions was the 2005 fall term.

#### *Gender and Workload: Service, Research and Writing, and Teaching*

Overall the differences reported between men and women in the amount of time devoted to these eighteen professional activities are small—an hour or less a week. Women on average and across all institutions do not report that they devote significantly more time than do men to service, whether at the level of the department, college or university, or community.

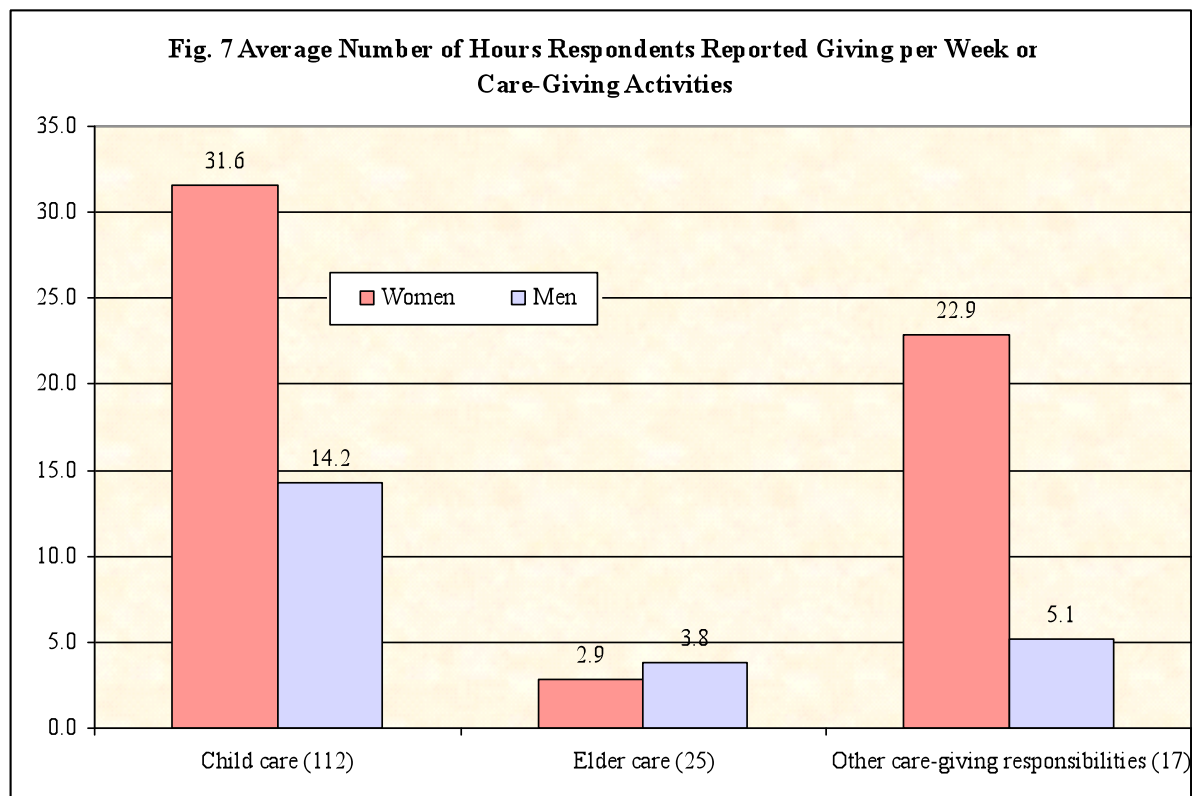
In the open-text answers, however, women were often blunt about the pitfalls of service. As one woman, a professor at a public master’s institution, put it, it is crucial to “warn women of the danger of service commitments. You can get sucked totally into life-changing amounts of time, for which some of your colleagues are NOT planning to reward you.” A woman at the rank of associate professor at a public doctoral institution commented that major obstacles to her for further promotion include “limited time for research and heavy service commitments.” At the same time, it is important to emphasize that both women and men remarked in the open-text questions that they are spending more time on service than in the past.

There are, however, two categories for which women and men reported different amounts of time devoted to professional activities. One is related to research, the other to teaching. Women on average and across all institutions report that they spend less time on research and writing than do men: women at the rank of associate professor and professor devote 7.7 hours a week, and men devote 9.7 hours a week. Women on average and across all institutions report that they spend more time on grading or commenting on student work than do men: women devote 7.5 hours a week, and men devote 6.0 hours a week (see fig. 6). Across three of the Carnegie institutional sectors (doctoral, master’s, and baccalaureate), women at the rank of associate professor consistently report that they devote 10.9 hours a week to course preparation, whereas men report that they devote 9.1 hours a week to course preparation. With regard to grading or commenting on student work, women at the associate professor rank report that they devote 7.4 hours a week, and men report 5.8 hours a week.<sup>10</sup>



### *Family Obligations*

While the differences reported in time spent on professional activities range on average between 1.5 and 2 hours, the difference reported between women and men in time devoted to caring for children is on average 17.4 hours. Women report on average and across all institutions that they devote 31.6 hours a week to child care, a strikingly greater amount of time than do men, who report devoting 14.2 hours a week (see fig. 7). This substantial difference stands out among the findings. Yet the survey also suggests that we cannot attribute the slower pace of women toward the rank of professor to child care alone. Of the 328 respondents to this question, only 38.1%—slightly more than a third—reported having dependent children at home.<sup>11</sup>



In many of the answers to the open-text questions, the demands of child rearing, elder care, and other family obligations were frequently cited as a hindrance to career progress. Conversely, having no obligations to family or others was also frequently cited by both women and men as helping them advance in rank. As one man put it, “Being single and having time to devote myself obsessively to my writing, teaching and service” was the key to success; another person reported that “living alone and throwing myself into my work after a divorce helped meet requirements for promotion.” A woman who is an associate professor at a doctoral institution explained, “The cost of getting ahead professionally has been almost entirely personal. I’m single with no kids; I’ve worked more or less unremittingly for the past six years and my family and friends have not gotten the love and attention from me that they deserve. I’m hoping now that I have the book done I’ll be able to spend more time with them. This desire is not unusual among my similarly situated friends, and doubtless contributes to the ‘stalling out’ at the associate level noted in the cover letter to this survey.” The conscious decision to devote less time to one’s personal life in order to devote more time to work toward promotion can be understood as a family issue.

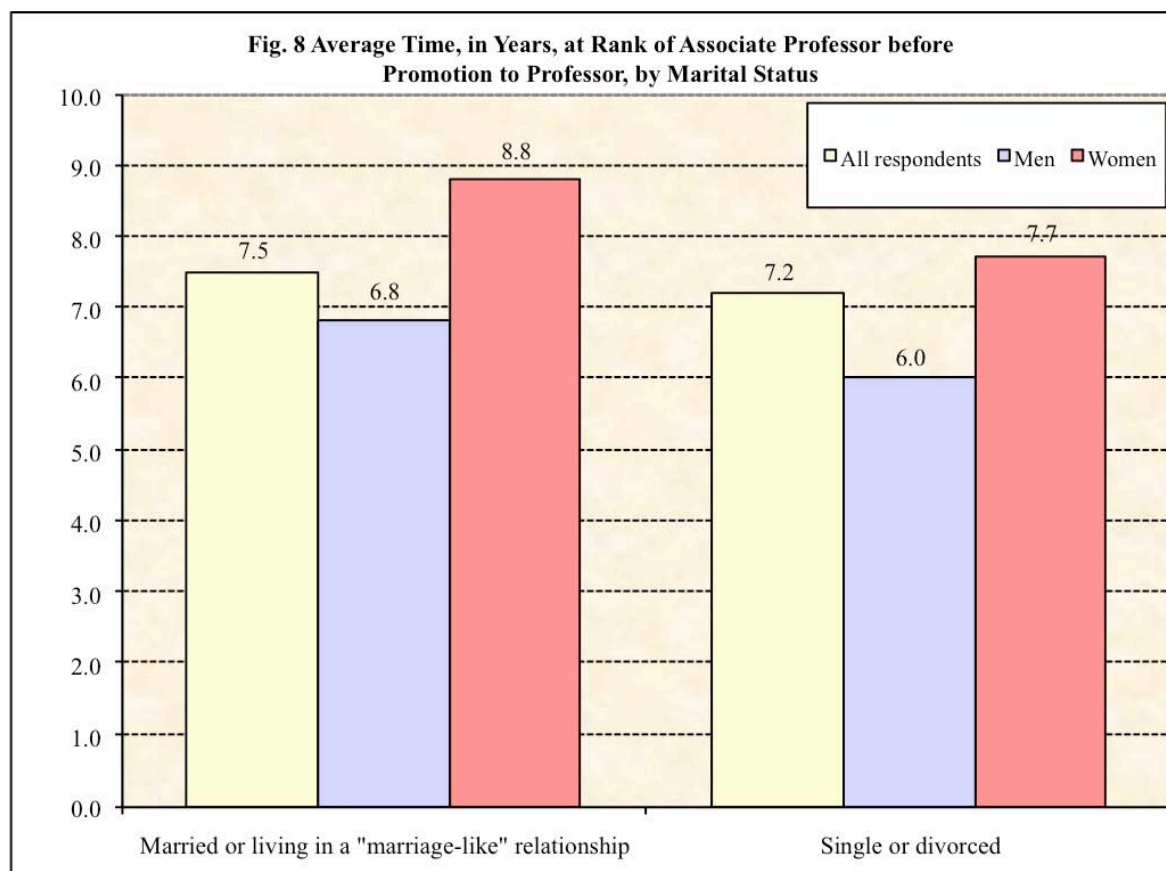
Not surprisingly, a major theme that emerged in the responses to the open-text questions is that faculty would like to see their institutions become more family-friendly and strive for a better work-life balance. As a woman who is an associate professor at a public doctoral institution remarked, “The biggest problem I see in both the professional world in and outside academe is a need for time with family and flexibility if you have small children.” It is crucial to underscore that the demands of family were cited not only by the care givers themselves but also by the members of their departments whose workload increased when

these colleagues retreated from professional demands to take care of their family obligations. A woman who is chair of a department at a doctoral institution noted, “There is also a tendency to think that being single means (1) you have more time to devote to the institution and (2) less need for monetary/time compensation.”

For elder care, men report on average and across all institutions that they devote 3.8 hours a week, more time than the 2.9 hours a week women report. It should be noted, however, that the number of responses to this question was small (16 women and 9 men, only a little more than 5% of the 351 respondents).<sup>12</sup>

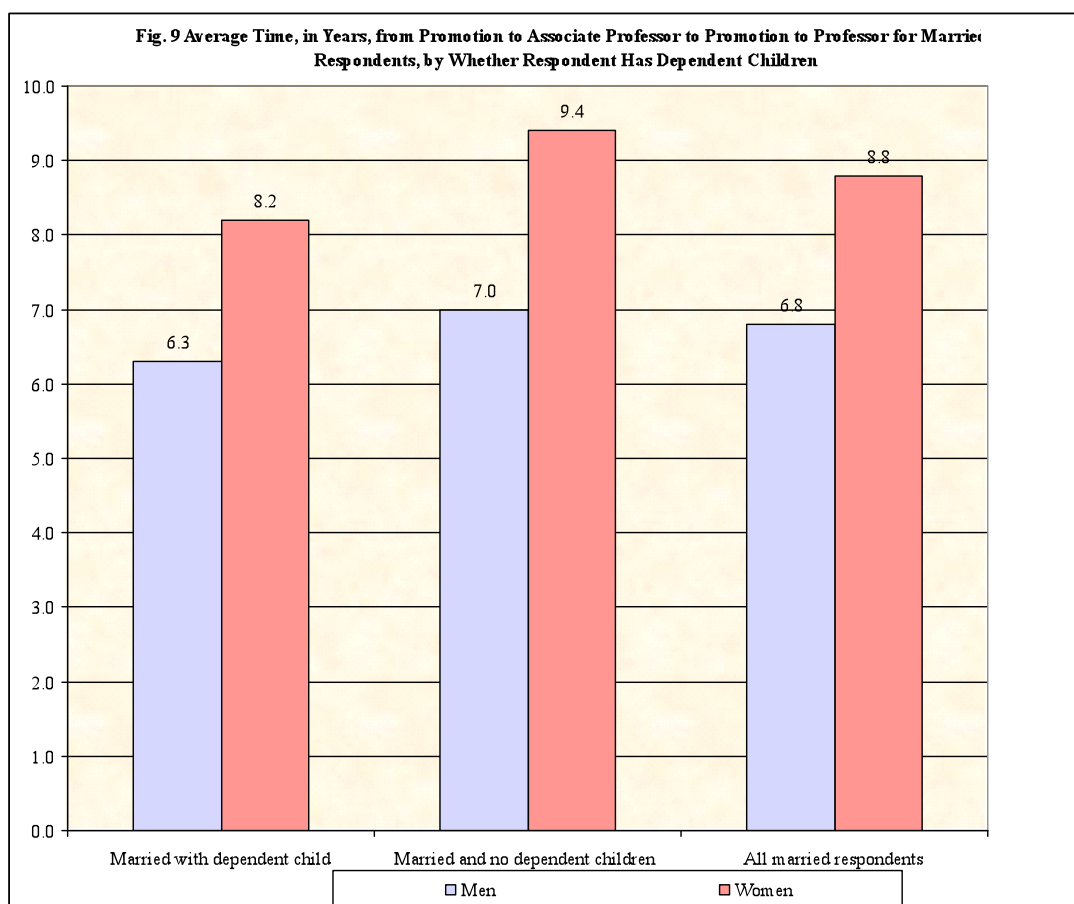
### **Time to Promotion, Marital Status, the Presence or Absence of Dependent Children, and Commuter Relationships**

Data regarding marital status and the presence or absence of dependent children offer interesting, if perhaps tentative, insights into reasons for women’s longer time to promotion from associate professor to professor. Married respondents (including those living in a “marriage-like” relationship), with or without dependent children, report an average time of 7.5 years from promotion to associate professor to promotion to professor, as compared with 7.2 years for single or divorced respondents.<sup>13</sup> Yet the impact here is greater for women than for men. The average time for married women to achieve promotion to professor is 8.8 years, whereas for married men it is 6.8 years (see fig. 8).





Interestingly, despite the increased time reported caring for children, for married women with a dependent child living at home, the average time to promotion to professor was slightly less (8.2 years) than the average for all married women (8.8 years), while for men with dependent children, it was also less (6.3 years) than the average for all married men (6.8 years). By comparison, single or divorced women who do not have dependent children report 7.3 years in the associate professor rank, while single or divorced men report 6.0 years in this rank. However, single or divorced women and men advance through the rank of associate professor more quickly than married women and men without children at home. Within the subset of married faculty members with no dependent children, women report the longest time to promotion—9.4 years—while men report 7.0 years (see fig. 9).



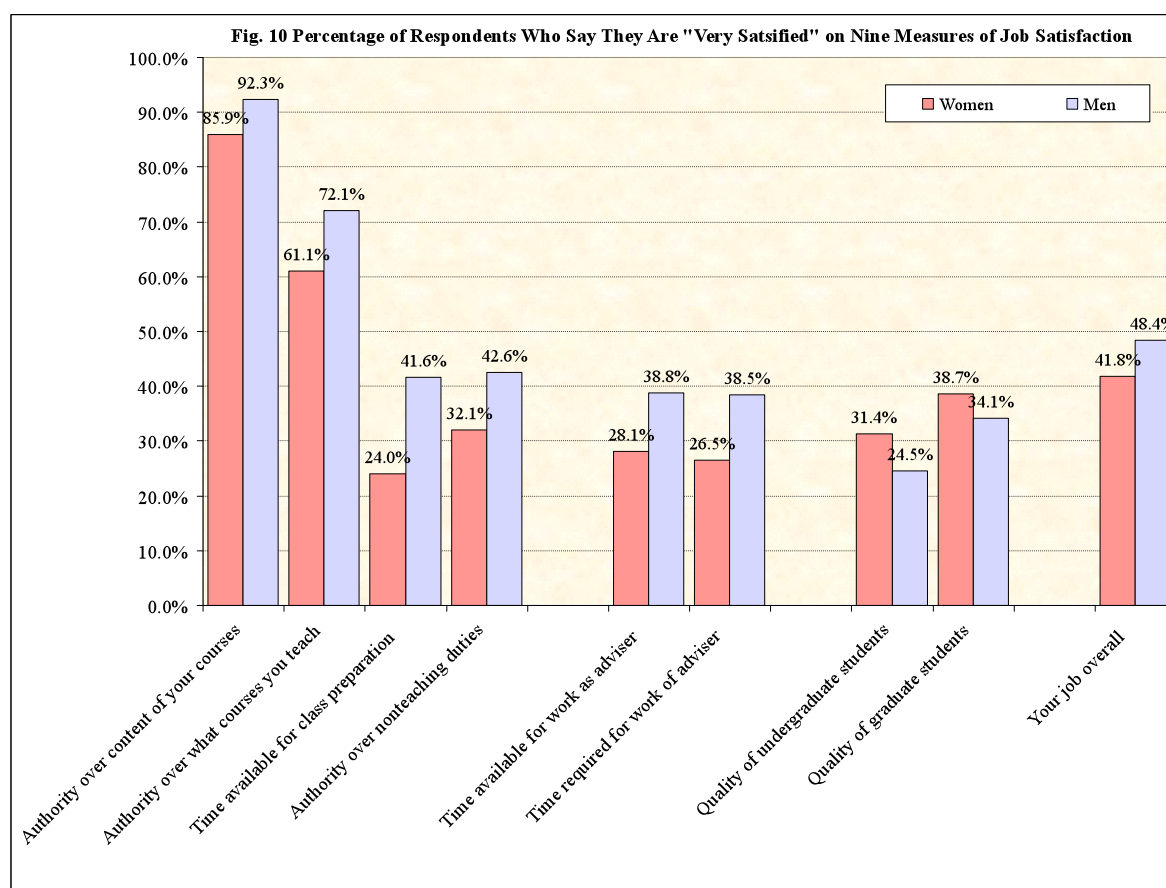
We found the differences between men and women in commuter relationships to be worthy of attention. Women with no dependent children and a spouse employed at another college or university reported the shortest average time to promotion to the rank of professor—6.0 years. By contrast, men with no dependent children and a spouse employed at another college or university reported the longest time to promotion to the rank of professor—9.7 years.<sup>14</sup> Thus the only men who took longer than women to attain the rank of professor were married with wives living and working at other institutions.



Finally, we must note that all these figures account only for the successful cases—those who have attained the rank of professor. Undertaking a study of associate professors in rank for nine years or longer might help us draw more definitive conclusions about the role that family obligations play in an extended time at the rank of associate professor.

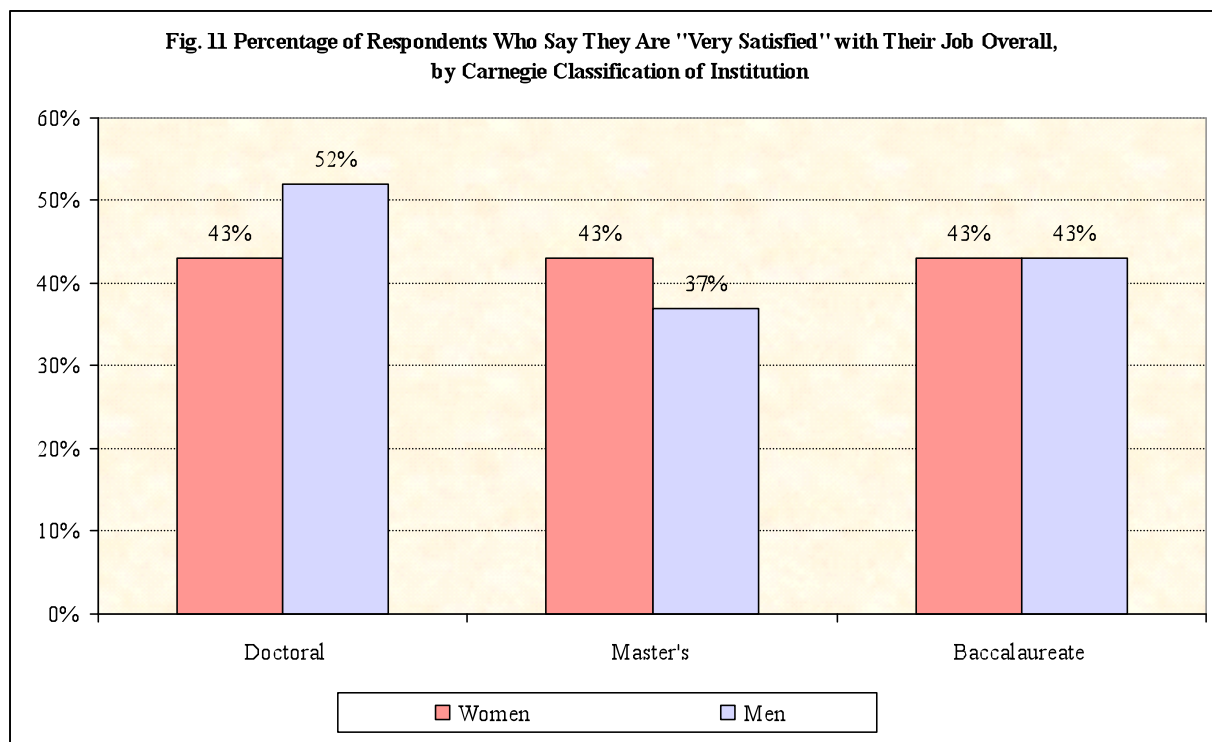
### Job Satisfaction by Gender, Rank, Institution, and Activity

Respondents were asked to indicate on a four-point scale their level of job satisfaction in nineteen categories ranging from various aspects of teaching and their overall workload to their interactions with others in their academic community and their institution's family support policies. Full professors report a higher level of satisfaction in their positions than do associate professors. In almost all cases, men report greater levels of job satisfaction than do women. In general, women at the rank of both associate professor and professor report feeling less authority, autonomy, and control over their work lives than men feel. We found it significant that out of nineteen categories women reported a very high level of satisfaction in only one: having the authority to make decisions about the content and methods in the courses they teach, for which 86% reported being "very satisfied" (see fig. 10).



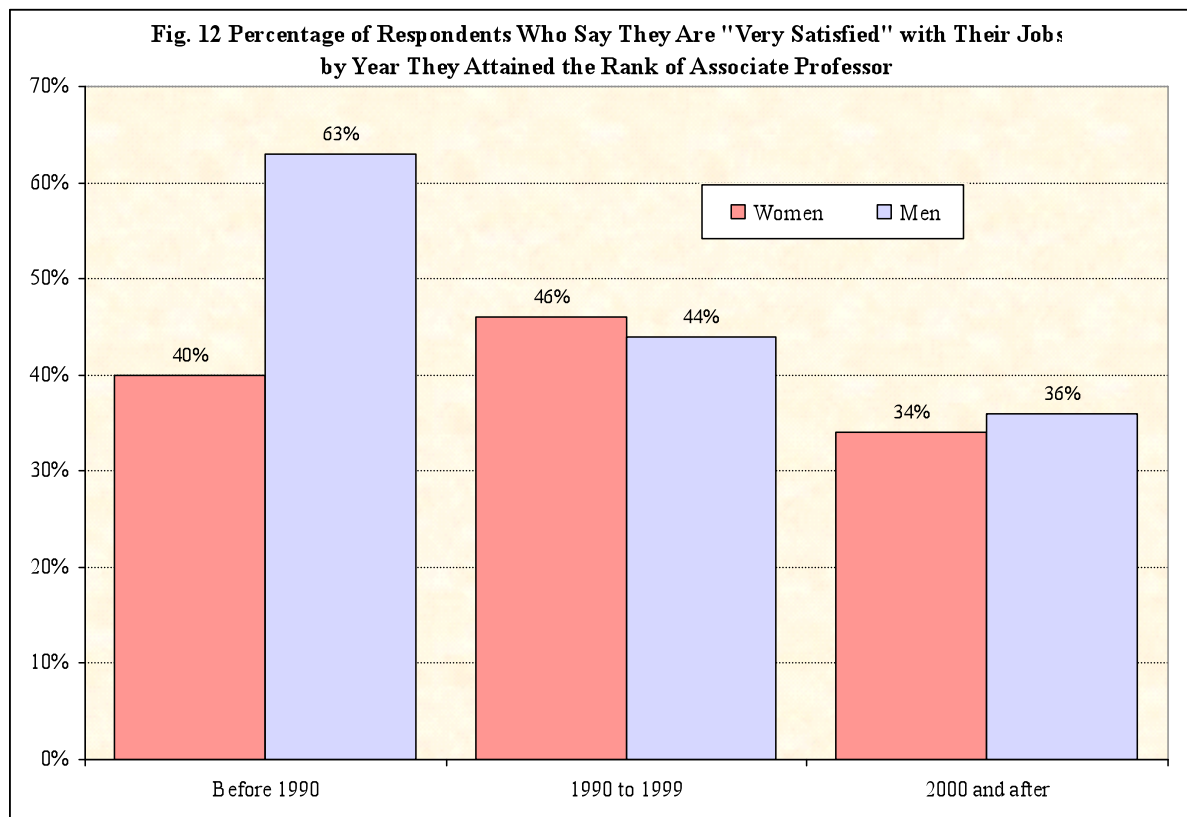
Women who work in Carnegie doctoral institutions report less satisfaction than do men in their position overall; 43% of women report that they are "very satisfied," whereas 52% of

men report they are “very satisfied.” In baccalaureate institutions 43% of both women and men reported that they were “very satisfied” with their position overall (see fig. 11).<sup>15</sup>



Regarding overall job satisfaction, some evidence suggests that the quality of experience for both women and men is higher among those who are older and those who have been in the profession longer. Overall, 64% of those sixty-one or older report that they are “very satisfied” with their jobs as compared with about 40% of those sixty and under; 57% of women and 69% of men sixty-one and older say they are “very satisfied” as compared with 40% of women and 41% of men sixty and under. For those under sixty, the percentage saying they are “very satisfied” remains about 40% for all age groups.

As for the year people attained the rank of associate professor, 53% of respondents who became associate professors before 1990 say they are “very satisfied” with their job as compared with 45% who became associate professors between 1990 and 1999 and 35% in 2000 and after. The gap by gender is widest for those who became associate professors before 1990: 63% of men versus 40% of women in this group report that they are “very satisfied.” Differences in job satisfaction by gender are much less pronounced among those promoted more recently: 46% of the women and 44% of the men promoted to associate professor between 1990 and 1999 are “very satisfied.” Among those promoted in 2000 and after, only 34% of the women and 36% of the men say they are “very satisfied” with the job (see fig. 12).



### **Importance of Different Professional Activities for Earning Tenure and Promotion**

Respondents were asked to assess on a three-point scale the importance of thirty-one professional activities—ranging from publication of monographs to the creation of online courses for distance education—when they were reviewed for tenure and promotion in their current position. Publication of monographs and articles was cited as “highly valued” by 80% to 85% of the respondents; teaching and grants were also cited as “highly valued,” although by a smaller percentage of respondents, 50% to 60%. Scholarly editions and edited collections of essays were cited as “highly valued” by 20% to 40% of the respondents.

The survey reveals considerable differences in the way women and men in different Carnegie institutional sectors feel publication and teaching are valued. In departments in doctoral institutions men are significantly more likely to feel teaching is “highly valued,” and women significantly more likely to feel teaching is “valued” rather than “highly valued.” When assessing how teaching counted when they were evaluated for tenure and promotion, 48.5% of the men in doctoral institutions reported that teaching was “highly valued,” and 46.6% reported it was “valued”; 35.2% of the women reported teaching was “highly valued,” and 60.0% reported it was “valued.” The gap is much smaller for respondents in master’s institutions, where 80.6% of the men and 77.1% of the women reported that teaching was “highly valued.” In baccalaureate institutions the percentages of women and men who reported that teaching was “highly valued” were extraordinarily high: 93.6% of women and 91.7% of men.

The pattern is reversed for the publication of monographs. In Carnegie master's institutions 76.9% of women and in Carnegie baccalaureate institutions 69.2% of women reported that the publication of a monograph was “highly valued” in their evaluation for tenure and promotion, as compared with 63.3% and 59.1% of men.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, the findings have proved to be complex and rich. It remains true, however, that the findings from the survey show consistently longer time to promotion for women than men in every analytic category—single, married, divorced, with children, or without—and that is the central point.

## DISCUSSION

I suspect that there will be subtle differences between what men and women professors have experienced.

—A respondent to the questionnaire

Our analysis shows that nine years at the rank of associate professor suggests an extended time or obstructed time in rank, a period that faculty members and administrators might want to understand as a “boundary year.”<sup>17</sup> At many institutions it is the explicit goal that all tenure-track faculty members will succeed in being promoted to professor. The associate professor survey shows 25.6% of faculty members remaining at the rank of associate professor after nine years in rank, a figure that we believe could be understood to mark a significant institutional failure.

We are sensitive to the fact that some faculty members—both women and men—may make a conscious choice to remain at the rank of associate professor and that to stigmatize the rank may itself create a problem. Institutional leaders need to be aware of these reasons. Their responsibility is to provide a culture that creates a horizon of possibility for their faculty members. As a woman who is an associate professor at a private doctoral institution commented, “Too often the limits and strengths of people at this level are defined as though they were solely the result of personal strengths and failings, when I think that many of the associate level faculty I know are facing similar dilemmas, undervalued administrative work, family care burdens, etc.” It should not automatically be assumed that faculty members at the rank of associate professor are not advancing because of personal inadequacies when the situation may be related to institutional structures, programs, policies, and practices—or the egregious lack of them.

### **Women, Family Obligations, Students, and Time to Promotion**

As the survey unambiguously shows, women spend significantly more time at the rank of associate professor than do men. What factors might account for this difference? For women who have children, it is clear that their care represents a significant amount of their time, dramatically more so than for men. Yet the data from this pilot survey show that for women, caring for children does not lengthen the time as an associate professor before promotion to professor.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, respondents (both women and men) who are married (or living in a “marriage-like” relationship) and who have a dependent child living with them

report shorter times to promotion than married respondents who do not have a dependent child living with them.

While it is clear in terms of the number of years spent in rank that obligations to children do not explain why women remain longer at the rank of associate professor than men, the experience reported by women suggests unequal treatment of women and men. Differences between expectations for women and men with regard to child care continue to persist. “My department colleagues assume that mothers are not as committed to the profession—presumably because of the time needed to parent—yet fathers in my department do not encounter such assessments,” commented a woman, an associate professor at a public doctoral institution, on the politics of parenting in the academy. “The academic mothers I know don’t lower expectations; in fact, they often exceed them.” Generally speaking, women are expected to care for their children, and yet their absence from academic functions to take care of their children is also subtly—and sometimes not so subtly—noticed; men, on the other hand, tend to receive praise for caring for their children. This is an example of a microinequity, subtle discrimination that is usually not intentional and contributes to creating barriers to advancement. “Discriminatory micro-inequities are tiny, damaging characteristics of an environment,” Mary Rowe explains. “They are distinguished by the fact that for all practical purposes one cannot do anything about them; one cannot take them to court or file a grievance” (154).<sup>19</sup>

The obligations of faculty members to their children have repercussions on faculty members who do not have children, perhaps especially on those who are single and are asked to take on the professional responsibilities of persons who are absent. One woman at a private doctoral institution with a religious affiliation remarked, “Unfortunately, academia is like other professions in that a person who is single without children is often assumed to have more time than others, and often receives more requests for committee or campus events than others who have family commitments.”

Although “family obligations” tends to be shorthand for obligations to children, caring for older parents also needs to be taken into account. While few respondents reported significant amounts of time devoted to elder care, some wrote emphatically about this obligation in the open-text questions. We can assume that this responsibility will grow in the future. There has been a dramatic increase in longevity in the United States over the last century, along with the dramatic increase in the percentage of our population that is older.<sup>20</sup> We are living in the midst of a veritable revolution in longevity, and given that women have assumed more of the responsibilities of care for children, we should not be surprised if in the future they assume more of the responsibilities of care for their parents.

In addition, as we have seen, women spend more time with students than do men. Ultimately and overall, when women and men are faced with family and students, women choose to devote significantly more time to both groups than do men.

Finally, it seems clear that family issues should be placed in a larger frame. The broader social and economic context in which we are now working as the result of the pressures of corporatization and globalization creates work-life stress of serious proportions, affecting

working life in the academy. Here we want to emphasize that time to promotion is not the only measure of success; the quality of one's experience must be taken into account as well. A faculty member may proceed apace from associate professor to professor but find the experience demoralizing. It is the responsibility of our institutions of higher education to address this negative experience.<sup>21</sup>

### **Microdifferences**

While the difference in the amount of time that women and men devote to child care is both sizable and unambiguous, the differences in the amount of time that women and men devote to professional activities—including service—are much less so. But overall the accumulation of these small differences may, like compound interest, add up to a significant difference. Cumulatively, these microdifferences over time may result in a major inequity, such as we see in the substantial difference in time between women and men in attaining the rank of professor. Women report on average and across all institutions 7.5 hours a week grading or commenting on student work, while men report on average 6.0 hours a week. Women report on average 7.1 hours a week on in-class instruction, while men report on average 6.6 hours a week. Women report on average devoting 7.7 hours a week to research and writing, while men report on average 9.7 hours a week. What may be slight differences when taken singly may, when taken together, cascade to produce major inequities. The long-term consequences of these small differences demand our attention.

### **Women and Job Satisfaction**

Women and men diverge significantly on the important issue of satisfaction with their workload. Overall, women report greater dissatisfaction than do men with their workload in relation to others in their academic community; only 25% of women across institutions report that they are “very satisfied” with their workload in general, as opposed to 38.4% of men.

Specific differences in terms of dissatisfaction and satisfaction are telling. Women report greater dissatisfaction than do men in terms of their obligations to their students. In terms of teaching, for example, only 24.0% of women across all institutions report that they are “very satisfied” with the time they have available for class preparation, as opposed to 41.6% of men; only 28.1% of women report that they are “very satisfied” with the time available for working with students as an adviser and mentor, as opposed to 38.8% of men (fig. 12).

In terms of time available for keeping current in one's field of research, only 9.5% of women report that they are “very satisfied,” while 17.1% of men report that they are “very satisfied.” Among other possible conclusions, these numbers may indicate that women perceive themselves to be performing below their own expectations, which in turn could contribute to a sense that they are not ready for promotion.

### **Service**

In the answers to the open-text questions, women at times characterized their service as “grunt work,” pointing to the institutional fact that all service is not created equal. For instance, time spent in “nurturing” activities (advising, mentoring students at both graduate

and undergraduate levels) is certainly less valued, or less documentable, than chairing a department or an all-campus committee.

Thus women may perceive that the service they are doing does not represent a clear career path to promotion either to the level of full professor or to positions of greater administrative responsibility in their institution. Women may have different understandings of what “service” represents in terms of a career track than do men. Indeed, across institutions there does not seem to be a clear understanding of a career path—it might better be called a labyrinth—or of expectations in terms of service regarding promotion from associate professor to professor.

There were also striking differences in perception between women and men regarding equity in terms of the amount of service. When asked whether women and minorities perform the same amount of service as white and male faculty members, women and men in Carnegie doctoral, master’s, and baccalaureate institutions gave vastly different answers: over two-thirds of women “strongly disagree” and “disagree” and over two-thirds of men “strongly agree” and “agree.”

Finally, in the answers to the open-text questions, some respondents reported that their service had helped them gain promotions, if, for example, they had served in what are commonly referred to as leadership positions, such as that of chair. In some situations and some institutions, a record of distinguished service helped bolster the promotion file, and this work was clearly valued by evaluating committees.

### **Expectations regarding the Rank of Professor**

Women may have lower expectations than do men of what promotion to professor may bring. One open-ended text question asked respondents at the rank of associate professor to describe how they “imagine a full professor.” Answers evince attitudes relating to the perception of the role and work of the full professor that are noteworthy. As one woman at a public doctoral institution pithily phrased it, “Harried, trying to deal with too many students and teaching responsibilities, with little quality time for quality research.” Many commented that at their institutions full professors are not distinguishable from associate professors. Quite a few people said that full professors experience an increase in committee work. Indeed, some respondents appear to be making a conscious choice not to pursue promotion to full professor because of the sense that there is little financial gain and that thankless service responsibilities will only increase at that rank. As a woman at a private doctoral institution pointed out, “I fear that I will be asked to do even more service at the departmental, college, and university level. I hope that I will have more authority to say no to escalating service requests.” A comment by an associate professor at a master’s institution stood out; she noted that certain gender stereotypes appear to be the norm at her institution. “The typical MALE professor spends nearly all his time on research and teaching and accepts limited service responsibilities, if the service role is seen as adding to his reputation or influence,” she writes. “The typical FEMALE full professor on our campus has a huge service load and was in associate professor rank much longer than the average male faculty member.”

## **Gender, Intensification of Requirements for Promotion, and the Feminization of the Profession**

What conclusions might we draw about gender and time to promotion to the rank of professor from the associate professor survey? As we have seen, women on average remain at the rank of associate professor longer before being promoted to professor than do men. Women devote more time to grading and commenting on student work than do men and devote less time to research and writing than do men. The survey reveals that in Carnegie doctoral institutions (the very sector that is driving the intensification of requirements for promotion and tenure), women and men perceive the value accorded teaching and research quite differently. In doctoral institutions, men are significantly more likely to feel that teaching is “highly valued,” while women are significantly more likely to feel that teaching is only “valued.” This difference in perception may signal for women at the rank of associate professor that their work is not highly valued and thus they are not worthy of promotion to the rank of professor, a feeling compounded by the perception that they do not have enough time to devote to their students. In general, teaching is considered an area of performance that carries less evaluative weight than publication. Yet women find greater job satisfaction in this arena.

While the reasons that women report overall less satisfaction with their positions than do men cannot be pinpointed with accuracy, it may be related to the feminization of the profession in an academic culture that is dominated by other disciplines and professions that have more status and enjoy higher salaries. As the 2004 NSOPF reports, among full-time faculty members at the rank of assistant professor at four-year institutions, women constitute 60.8% of faculty members in English and 57.8% of faculty members in other languages. As the profession has been increasingly populated by women, the humanities in general have been marginalized in academic institutions.

At the same time, during this period the expectations of colleges and universities for publication of research have increased. A woman at the rank of associate professor at a private baccalaureate institution wrote, “Associate professors are trying to reach a bar that keeps rising and seems harder to attain.” As the 2006 MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion emphasizes, the expectations placed on candidates for tenure have been increasing in quantity and expanding in kind across all institutions, even those where responsibilities for teaching are heavy (*Report*). We may speculate that these demands have a ripple effect with regard to expectations for promotion from the rank of associate professor to professor. Together with the feminization of the profession,<sup>22</sup> we might further speculate that the twin forces of the bureaucratization—all faculty members report an increase in “paperwork”—and the corporatization of higher education are contributing to this increase in lack of job satisfaction.

### **Underperformance or Value Added?**

Several women, in their answers to the open-ended question about what helped or hindered them in advancement, offered self-assessments of what they perceived to be their shortcomings in prioritizing their professional activities. One woman at a doctoral institution reported that her progress was “hindered by service commitments” and “helped and hindered



by my own propensity continually to propose new courses or substantially revise existing ones.” Her progress was further hindered, she wrote, “by the unusual time/effort I put into grading written work by both undergraduate and graduate students.” Another respondent indicated that she had “difficulty saying no” and that her advancement in rank was hindered by her “inability to manage my time efficiently” and by “taking on more projects and obligations than I should at a time.” These women expressed the feeling that their contributions—all of which are vital to maintaining an intellectually robust and forward-looking curriculum, to meeting students’ needs, to ensuring faculty governance, to maintaining scholarly visibility, and to serving their profession at large—were in conflict with key standards that enable promotion to full professor, such as the publication of major new research in a monograph.

The activities that many women find the most affirming (teaching and related responsibilities) are central to even the most research-oriented university mission.<sup>23</sup> Without faculty members performing these functions, colleges and universities would not be what they are supposed to be—institutions of higher education. And yet, the pressures brought to bear on faculty members to publish in order to be promoted (even at two-year colleges with heavier teaching loads) produce a situation in which doing the essential work of the university feels like a mistake or even a self-defeating behavior.

Overall, answers to the open-ended questions provide ample evidence that service demands are on the rise, indicating that there is much essential work to be done to support the operations of academic units. Tenured and tenure-track faculty members are called on to meet these obligations for a growing number of students taught by adjunct instructors who, in turn, are not obligated to perform this work. In these circumstances, “just saying no” to such demands can be fraught with serious professional consequences. There are also practical consequences for the departments and, more broadly, institutions that are already struggling with the erosion of faculty strength.

Moreover, a faculty member’s conscious retreat from undervalued or devalued forms of professional activity—including the creation of new courses and other kinds of teaching and mentoring that are often at the heart of institutional mission statements (activities from which, the survey shows, respondents drew substantial professional satisfaction)—is certainly not likely to enhance the quality of instruction and the general educational experience we provide our students. Rather than consider these activities as impediments to professional progress, institutions should encourage an appreciation of these contributions for the significant value they add to the intellectual worth of the institution. In short, standards for promotion should be brought directly into line with the numerous, essential, and vitalizing activities that sustain day-to-day life in colleges and universities.

Similarly, standards for promotion should explicitly recognize many of the activities, grouped under the catchall term “service,” that are necessary to further our professions or enhance partnerships between academic institutions and community organizations. The term “service,” now used to cover a huge spectrum of activities, often does not begin to capture the myriad possible contributions of faculty members, and thoughtful attention should be

given to making distinctions among different kinds of service contributions, such as leadership to the profession and community engagement.

### **Time for Research and Support of Intellectual Communities**

Whether in the form of external fellowships, release time, or institutional paid leaves, dedicated time for research is, not surprisingly, linked with more rapid promotion to the rank of professor. External fellowships from prestigious foundations and agencies—among them the American Council of Learned Societies, the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities—are particularly coveted; they help underwrite humanistic research and bring distinction to both the holder of the fellowship and his or her institution. Colleges and universities cannot, however, rely on external sources of funding to support the scholarship and research of their faculty members in the modern languages. The support at the national level for research in the modern languages relative to that in the sciences, technology, engineering, and medicine, for example, is abysmally low.<sup>24</sup> In 2007, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the largest single source of support for fellowships in the humanities in the United States, awarded only 154 fellowships (supporting full-time research over a period of six to twelve months) across all ranks and all disciplines in the humanities. In 2006-07 the American Council of Learned Societies offered only 65 fellowships across all ranks and all disciplines in the humanities in its central fellowship program.<sup>25</sup>

In addition, we must recognize how vital attendance at professional meetings can be to faculty members, particularly in an era of downsizing and in public institutions in which the drive to defund higher education is proceeding apace. Travel budgets are often favored targets for reducing costs, but chairs and deans need to know that they are cutting off an intellectual and professional lifeline when faculty members are not given the opportunity to engage in dialogue with colleagues in their field of research.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

I would like to see this information shared with university system administrators, provosts, faculty senates/organizations, and professional organizations. It is imperative that decision-makers become aware of the issues that hinder or interfere with academic advancement.

—A respondent to the questionnaire

Faculty members at the rank of associate professor constitute a precious resource that we cannot afford to ignore. We are particularly concerned with the lack of parity of women in our profession with men in the time to promotion from associate professor to professor. We are equally concerned that women in Carnegie doctoral institutions in both English and the foreign languages report on average almost three years longer in the rank of associate professor than the average for women at all types of institutions. Finally, we are exceedingly concerned that women report less satisfaction than do men with their life in the academy

precisely when the profession is continuing to become increasingly feminized. This lack of satisfaction bodes ill for our profession and for higher education in the United States.

We thus recommend that chairs, deans, and other leaders in higher education turn their attention to the rank of associate professor. While systems of mentoring have been put in place for many junior faculty members and while named professorships and chairs are often reserved for full professors, associate professors have typically had few resources—including the valuable resource of concern itself—devoted specifically to them.

The present moment is propitious. The focus of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession coincides with an emerging interest in the rank of associate professor across the country. The American Council of Learned Societies has established the Frederick Burkhardt Fellowships for Recently Tenured Scholars. In 2002 the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation established the Millicent McIntosh Fellowships for scholarly work by recently tenured faculty members at liberal arts colleges. Several universities have turned their attention to this rank. In 2005 a large-scale study by Ohio State University of ways to enhance faculty careers devoted a significant portion of its report to associate professors. In recent years, special programs have been earmarked for associate professors at Emory University; Princeton University; Temple University; the University of California, Irvine; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Iowa; the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and the University of Washington, Seattle. We urge foundations as well as institutions of higher education to build on these efforts.

Specifically, we offer the following recommendations:

1. Colleges and universities should establish clear guidelines and paths for promotion from associate professor to professor in alignment with their institutional mission. With the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion, we recommend that colleges and universities adopt a more expansive conception of scholarship, research, and publication; rethink the dominance of the monograph; and consider work produced and disseminated in new media; we also recommend public scholarship as an important avenue of research.<sup>26</sup>
2. Colleges and universities should offer substantial increases in salary when a faculty member is promoted from associate professor to professor. At institutions of higher education across the country, the increase in salary at promotion is often minimal at best and generally offers little in the way of an incentive to aspire to and strive for promotion.
3. Colleges and universities should create programs for mentoring associate professors. At its best, such mentoring inspires a sense of responsibility across ranks and a sense of intergenerational connection and reciprocity.
4. Colleges and universities should sponsor training and development sessions for their department chairs on key matters:

- the importance of the ongoing development of associate professors, with an emphasis on long-range planning over a period of at least five years and on encouraging the continued scholarly progress of faculty members at the rank of associate professor from the time they are promoted
  - the assessment of the allocation of responsibilities of faculty members to ensure that they are equitably and appropriately distributed across the ranks of probationary and tenured faculty members
  - the monitoring of how long associate professors have been in rank in relation to the mission of the institution. Nine years might be used as a metric for measuring an institution's progress in promoting associate professors.
5. Colleges and universities should devote specific resources, in addition to leaves for research, to support associate professors' scholarship. They have the obligation not only to require and encourage but also to help underwrite the scholarship of faculty members at all ranks and across the span of their careers. Scholarship is a public good and should be supported.
  6. Colleges and universities should establish leadership training explicitly for newly tenured women faculty members in the recognition that promotion to associate professor often entails appointment to leadership positions.
  7. Colleges and universities should examine the language often linked with associate professors who have been in rank for an extended period of years—"stuck," "stalled," "frozen," and "deadwood."<sup>27</sup> The uncritical assumption that a faculty member in this rank for an extended period of years is personally inadequate contributes to an unhealthy atmosphere; this language may contribute to it as well.

## **FURTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The failure of universities and colleges to promote their associate professors to the rank of professor has many implications. One is the all-important and intangible weakening, if not wholesale loss, of morale of associate professors when they have remained in the rank for an extended period of time. As a woman who is an associate professor at a public doctoral institution confessed, "I'm just now reaching the point of feeling rather ashamed of not being promoted, despite being well supported." Another implication is the possible weakening of respect from colleagues and institutional leaders for associate professors' contributions to their departments and their institutions. There is also the loss of the financial gain (whatever its size) represented by promotion, a loss that is compounded over years and can lead to the demoralizing situation of salary compression if not inversion in departments.

There are other ramifications at the institutional level. The institutional repercussions of faculty members, in large numbers, choosing not to pursue promotion from associate professor to professor can produce serious adverse effects for faculty governance. As the large numbers of colleagues who entered the academy in the early 1970s begin retiring (and this group will include many full professors), academic units will be left without a sufficient number of senior colleagues to take the lead in forming an intellectual vision and in gathering the institutional will to project self-governing academic units into the future. In small

departments in particular, intellectual agendas and faculty governance may be compromised when, for lack of leadership at the rank of professor, faculty members from outside the department must be appointed to fulfill the role of chair. In general, the advancement of faculty members through the ranks is critical to the health and continuing development of their colleges and universities. Last but certainly not least, there is the loss to the world of the important scholarship and research that has gone undone.

Several of the respondents to the survey expressed the wish that we address an alarming trend in higher education with respect to the decreasing percentage of tenure-track positions and the concomitant increase of adjunct and part-time faculty positions. Indeed, one respondent—a male faculty member at a public baccalaureate institution—linked the hindrance in advancement of tenure-track faculty members to the overreliance on instructors and part-time faculty members. This turn to adjunct faculty members who are underpaid, have no job security, and do heroic work is, he commented, “the greatest threat to higher education in this country today and is a national disgrace.”<sup>28</sup>

The connection made between the situations of adjunct faculty members and associate professors is astute. There is a structural relationship between the increase in the use of faculty adjuncts across all institutions of higher education, the decrease in the percentage of tenure-track and tenured faculty members, and the intensified requirements for scholarly publication across all institutions, as noted by the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion. As work in institutions of higher education is increasingly divided into two tiers—one teaching-dedicated, the other research-focused<sup>29</sup>—the demands on tenure-track faculty members for research and publication are increasing.<sup>30</sup> A comparison between 1995 and 2005 is useful here. While the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members has remained about the same, the proportion of tenured and tenure-track faculty members to non-tenure-track faculty members has declined precipitously.<sup>31</sup> The point is that the rising bar for tenure and promotion is related to the reciprocal phenomena of a growing number of adjuncts who are not subject to those requirements and the symptomatic emergence of a faculty increasingly divided into separate teaching and research tiers. There may also be a correlation between the increasing stringency in requirements for promotion and the goal of institutions to diversify their faculty. We believe this connection requires further scrutiny.

Another important issue on the horizon—if not already here—requires attention: the increasing levels of debt, some of it staggering, incurred by graduate students pursuing their doctorates. Although the associate professor survey did not include questions about debt, this issue was discussed by members of the CSWP, who felt that such heavy burdens of debt can conspire to lead faculty members to choose not to have children.

In conclusion, over the last decades the number of women in higher education in the modern languages and literature has increased. But, as we have learned from the associate professor survey, inequities between women and men persist. Women consistently take significantly longer than men do to be promoted from the rank of associate professor to professor. This reflects a serious and continuing inequality in the academy and constitutes an “unfinished agenda,”<sup>32</sup> one that urgently needs to be addressed.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In this regard, the results of the survey corroborate, with a focus on the rank of associate professor, the findings reported in “Women in the Profession, 2000,” which underscored the “persistent disparities . . . between men and women in terms of percentages at most ranks and the rate at which individuals move through the ranks” (Committee 201). This general conclusion was based in great part on the 1995 National Endowment for the Humanities Survey of Humanities Doctorates, which tracked four ranks (instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor) by gender and minority status in the fields of English and the foreign languages across three cohorts, defined by time since earning the doctorate.

<sup>2</sup> We are especially grateful to David Laurence and extend our warm thanks to Nelly Furman, director of Programs and the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages, and Maribeth Kraus, director of Convention Programs, who have served as liaisons from the MLA to the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession.

<sup>3</sup> The CSWP survey was designed in tandem with the Humanities Indicators Project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The purpose of the Humanities Indicators Project is to compile and analyze data on the humanities on the model of the *Science and Engineering Indicators*, which is published biannually by the National Science Board.

<sup>4</sup> The survey drew on the 2000 Carnegie classification of institutions of higher education. For a basic description of the Carnegie classification of institutions of higher education, visit the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching site.

<sup>5</sup> Of the 401 respondents, 326 provided information about their age. As a group the women are slightly younger than the men—fifty-one on average as compared with fifty-five on average for the men.

<sup>6</sup> Data from the 2004 NSOPF for full-time tenured associate professors in English and for full-time tenured associate professors in the foreign languages show even higher figures. In English the percentage of both female and male faculty members remaining at the associate professor rank for nine years and more is 35.5%. In the foreign languages that figure is higher still; the percentage of both female and male faculty members remaining at the associate professor rank for nine years and more is 45.9%. The discrepancy between faculty members in English and those in the foreign languages is almost wholly a consequence of the greater concentration of foreign language faculty members in Carnegie doctoral institutions.

<sup>7</sup> The first most common professional activity was serving as a peer reviewer for a scholarly journal, which was cited by 64.3% of the respondents. No significant differences in gender were revealed in the participation in different kinds of professional activity.

<sup>8</sup> Male respondents also mentioned mentoring—or the lack thereof—in answer to the help/hindranece open-text question but were less eloquent on the subject. One man from a private doctoral institution remarked, “We do a very good job of mentoring and supporting assistant professors, but at times we seem to fall short in supporting associate professors.”

<sup>9</sup> The figures also align with data from the 2004 NSOPF.

<sup>10</sup> Research suggests that women and men differ in how they report what counts as work. Men are more likely to classify as work activities that could be considered relatively marginal to it and thus overreport their work in relation to women (see Martin, Hess, and Siegel).

<sup>11</sup> Data from the 2004 NSOPF differ considerably. They show that 58% of women and men in all fields at the rank of associate professor report having at least one dependent child at home.

<sup>12</sup> For the category of caring for others (not including child care or elder care), women respondents from doctoral research universities, master's colleges and universities, and baccalaureate colleges report on average that they devoted 14.6 hours a week. As with elder care, it should be noted, however, that these hours are based on a small number of responses (only 16).

<sup>13</sup> Given the requirement of simplification and standardization for a survey that is predominantly quantitative, we used the terms "marriage" and "marriage-like," understanding that they are inadequate to signify the range of primary commitments to another person.

<sup>14</sup> However, the number of cases in these categories (2 and 7, respectively) are too small to suggest anything more than an avenue for further study.

<sup>15</sup> The numbers of people reporting here are small, however (12 women and 10 men reported being "very satisfied").

<sup>16</sup> The number of respondents is small, and thus these findings should be treated with caution (especially the notably elevated percentage of men in Carnegie baccalaureate institutions—18.2%, or 4 of 22 cases—who reported that the publication of a monograph was "not valued," compared with one woman—3.8% of 26 women).

<sup>17</sup> A key finding from the Ohio State survey is that the longer that faculty members are at the associate professor rank (particularly after ten years), the more likely it is that they experience career dissatisfaction. See the section "Associate Professors at OSU: Results of the Career Enhancement Survey" in *Faculty Career Enhancement Committee: Final Report*.

<sup>18</sup> This finding is echoed in Virginia Valian's *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Although the book was first published in 1998 and thus is based on earlier data, Valian reports that in the academy as a whole, for full-time female faculty members "having children is either unrelated to productivity or is positively related" (270); she also reports that "single women and women without children publish less than men do" (271).



<sup>19</sup> Eric L. Hinton offers this definition: “A microinequity is defined as a subtle message, sometimes subconscious, that devalues, discourages and ultimately impairs performance in the workplace. These messages can take the shape of looks, gestures or even tones. The cumulative effect of microinequities often leads to damaged self-esteem and, eventually, withdrawal from co-workers in the office.”

<sup>20</sup> See Robert N. Butler’s *The Longevity Revolution*.

<sup>21</sup> See Linda Kerber’s call to frame a new agenda for a more humane workplace in institutions of higher education.

<sup>22</sup> The 2004 NSOPF data show that women cluster in non-tenure-track positions and that the percentage of women becomes smaller and that of men larger as one moves up the ranks from instructor to assistant professor to associate professor and professor. For full-time tenure-track faculty members in four-year institutions, the 2004 NSOPF data show that women account for 49.4% at the rank of associate professor, while men account for 50.6%; women account for 32.2% at the rank of professor, while men account for 67.8%. The comparable 1993 NSOPF data show that women account for 47.2% at the rank of associate professor, while men account for 52.8%; women account for 27.7% at the rank of professor, while men account for 72.3%. In English and the foreign languages, women have come to represent 60% of each year’s graduating pool of doctorates; see Laurence.

<sup>23</sup> See the essay by Aimee LaPointe Terosky, Tamsyn Phifer, and Anna Neumann on the early posttenure experience of twenty women in research universities, in particular on “the pulls away from scholarly learning” and toward institutional service, the organization of research, and administration (57).

<sup>24</sup> By way of comparison, the total budget for the National Endowment for the Humanities in the 2007 fiscal year was \$141.1 million, while the total budget for the National Science Foundation for the 2007 fiscal year was \$5.9 billion.

<sup>25</sup> Of these fellowships, twenty-nine were awarded to men, thirty-six to women, or 45% and 55% respectively. Of the sixty-five fellowships, twenty were awarded to assistant professors, twenty to associate professors, and twenty-five to professors. A disproportionate share of these fellowships in terms of years in rank are awarded to assistant professors.

<sup>26</sup> See the report by Julie Ellison and Timothy K. Eatman on public scholarship in the humanities, arts, and design in relation to promotion and tenure. Publically engaged scholarship is understood as existing on a continuum with traditional scholarship. It is defined as scholarly “activity integral to a faculty member’s academic area. It encompasses different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities. Through a coherent, purposeful sequence of activities, it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value” (9). Public scholarship often takes the form of projects that combine research, teaching, and creative activity as well as publication, and the report recommends the use of a portfolio in the tenure dossier that might include writing

for a nonacademic audience, policy reports, and oral histories, among other things. Ernest L. Boyer's work on multiple forms of scholarship is foundational.

<sup>27</sup> There is another meaning to being "stuck" at the rank of associate professor. See Julie Striver's piece in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* about the possibilities of moving to another institution as an associate professor.

<sup>28</sup> The data reported in "Women in the Profession, 2000" suggest a possible systemic relationship for women in the profession between the proportionately larger numbers of women than men at the rank of instructor and at the rank of associate professor. In the foreign languages, for example, the largest proportion of white men and men of color were at the rank of full professor, while the largest proportion of white women and women of color were at the rank of associate professor; strikingly, a larger proportion of white women and women of color were employed at the rank of instructor than at the rank of full professor (Committee).

<sup>29</sup> See the 2008 MLA report *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World*, in which the two-tiered structure of language instruction, on the one hand, and literary studies, on the other, that characterizes foreign language departments in universities is identified as one that "has outlived its usefulness and needs to evolve" (3).

<sup>30</sup> The findings in the associate professor survey about the professional activities that faculty members perceive count toward tenure and promotion are highly congruent with the findings of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion, which surveyed department chairs. Taken together, findings from these two surveys strongly suggest that, from the perspective of individual faculty members, in institutions in which publication is emphatically underscored as a necessary condition for promotion and tenure, teaching feels less valued by comparison. In institutions where publication of research is less emphatically required for tenure and promotion, however, a decided majority of faculty members feel that both publication and teaching are highly valued.

<sup>31</sup> Compare the 1995 and 2005 Fall Staff Surveys (*Fall Staff; 2005 Fall Staff Survey*). In 1995 there were 393,503 tenured and tenure-track faculty members across all institutions; in 2005 the number was 415,503. In 1995 the percentage of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members was 42.3% across all institutions (both four-year and two-year institutions); in 2005 that percentage had fallen to 32.2%. During this period the number of faculty members off the tenure track in full-time and part-time positions grew enormously. From 1995 to 2005, the percentage of faculty members in four-year institutions who were tenured or on the tenure track fell from 51.3% to 38.3% while the percentage of full-time non-tenure-track faculty members increased from 17.8% to 22.2% and the percentage of part-time faculty members increased from 30.9% to 39.5%.

<sup>32</sup> See Judith Glazer-Raymo's *Unfinished Agendas*.

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