

Report Card on Gender Scholarship and Equity in Sociology Departments  
(Among PhD Granting Institutions):  
*Revision to the Report Card on Gender and Women Friendly Institutions (2004)*

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In 2004, Sociologists for Women in Society released a report on the state of women sociologists and gender scholarship in the discipline. The *SWS Report Card on Gender and Women Friendly Institutions (2004)* offered an additional ranking system to those created by the National Research Council and *US News and World Report* rankings of departmental prestige and merit. Unlike these ranking guides, the SWS report's goal was to recognize sociology departments that excel in creating a climate that is welcoming to women and feminist scholars. This is an update revised to recognize those sociology departments who now excel in gender scholarship and equity and also to show how the discipline has changed, or not, in the past four years.

We took the challenge offered by Chait and Trower (2001) when they suggested;

If, for example, a civil rights or feminist group widely disseminated a report card or ranking of faculty compositions, broken down by race and gender, of the top colleges and universities, these schools might be spurred into constructive competition to improve (2001b).

Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the under-representation of women in the academy increases the higher one moves up the institutional ladder of prestige. Women now earn 51 percent of doctoral degrees (National Science Foundation, 2005), yet they make up only 25 percent of full professors in graduate programs and they are overrepresented among low level instructors and lecturers in doctoral granting departments (Chait and Trower 2001a, Kulis, Sicotte, and Collins 2002). Women at every rank earn less than their male counterparts, and women hold a disproportionate share of the lowest-paid part-time academic positions (Kulis, Sicotte, and Collins 2002). In sociology, women earn 64 percent of doctoral degrees (NSF, 2005), yet they make up only 26 percent of full professors in graduate programs and they are overrepresented (at 61 percent) among instructors and lecturers at doctoral-granting institutions (American Sociological Association 2003a).

The research presented here ranks gender-friendly departments and grants the SWS SEALS OF APPROVAL based on data collected from the *2007 ASA Guide to Graduate Departments*. In order to assess the reliability of the data, we contacted the Directors of Graduate Studies in each PhD granting institution to verify the data. We coded two variables:

- percentage of tenure track faculty who are women
- percentage of tenure track faculty with research and teaching specialties in the areas of gender and inequality (e.g. intersectionality).

Just as the methods used by NRC and *US News* are imperfect, we recognize that our measures have weaknesses. There is no simple, unambiguous, or fully "objective" means to measure the gender-friendliness of any department. We also recognize that women students and students interested in gender issues can receive excellent training from one or two outstanding scholars

even in departments with few women or feminist scholars. Yet, prior research suggests that the under-representation of women faculty operates as a systematic structural impediment to the intellectual and professional success of women students and faculty (ASA Committee on the Status of Women 1990).

We recognize that the correlation between these variables and “gender-friendliness” is by no means absolute. We also want to note that we see a clear distinction between the number of women faculty and the number of faculty who do research on gender and inequality. Thus, the measures are independent. We suggest that these measures, taken together are useful for determining a department’s overall openness to women and to gender- and diversity-sensitive teaching and research.

We use the already established three SWS SEALS OF APPROVAL. The SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR FACULTY GENDER EQUITY will be awarded to those departments in which 40 percent or more of the faculty are women. THE SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR GENDER SCHOLARSHIP will be granted to those departments in which over 25 percent of faculty specialize in gender or inequality scholarship. Finally, the seal we hope will be the most widely coveted—the SWS SEAL OF EXCELLENCE—will be awarded to those departments that meet SWS standards for both faculty equity and representation of gender scholarship.

In the few years between the original report and our current revision, the presence of women and gender scholarship in the discipline has changed dramatically. There have been marked improvements on each measure while there remains a clear underrepresentation of both women tenure track faculty and gender scholarship in the most prestigious departments (as determined by the National Research Council and the *US News and World Report*). Still, many more departments are awarded these seals of honor in 2008 than four years ago, indicating positive changes in the discipline for women, feminists, and gender scholars.

### **SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR FACULTY GENDER EQUITY**

For the last twenty years, over 40 percent of the doctoral degrees in sociology have been awarded to women. Since 1994, women have received over half the doctorates in sociology. In 2005, 64 percent of new sociologists were women (NSF, 2005).

Based on the pool of available sociology PhDs, along with the recognition that labor market and organizational barriers impact the employment of new faculty, the SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR GENDER EQUITY is awarded to all those departments in which **40 percent or more** of the faculty are women.

Seventy-three graduate departments, representing 65 percent of the doctoral-granting sociology departments in the country, meet the standards for this seal of approval. This is now the norm in sociology departments. In 2004, only thirty-seven graduate departments, representing 33% of sociology departments in the country, met this standard (Hays and Risman 2004). This near doubling of departments which meet these criteria is clear evidence of the feminization of the discipline. Only one third of PhD granting departments do not now have at least 40% female faculty.

Over 50% Female Faculty	
University of California- San Francisco	64%
Wayne State University	64%
Bowling Green University	61%
Arizona State University	60%
University of Colorado at Boulder	60%
Kent State University	58%
University of Central Florida	57%
Syracuse University	57%
Temple University	57%
University of Utah	57%
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	56%
University of Oklahoma	56%
South Dakota University	56%
Brandeis University	55%
Washington State University	55%
Iowa State University	54%
Fordham University	53%
University of Iowa	53%
University of New Hampshire	53%
Rutgers University	53%

40%-50% Female Faculty	
University of Southern California	50%
Boston College	50%
University of California-Santa Cruz	50%
Case Western University	50%
University of Illinois at Chicago	50%
John Hopkins University	50%
University of North Texas	50%
University of Pittsburgh	50%
Florida State University	48%
Boston University	47%
University of Miami	47%
University of California-Irvine	46%
University of California-Santa Barbara	46%
Emory University	46%
Georgia State University	46%
Northwestern University	46%
Southern Illinois University	46%
Tulane University	46%
University of California-Davis	46%
University of Minnesota	45%
Duke University	44%

Howard University	44%
University of Kansas	44%
University of Maryland	44%
North Dakota State University	44%
University of South Carolina	43%
University of California-Berkeley	43%
Indiana University	43%
Miami University	43%
University of Nevada Las Vegas	43%
Northeastern University	43%
Portland University	43%
University of South Carolina	43%
State University of New York-Albany	43%
Utah State University	43%
University of Kentucky	42%
University of Alabama-Birmingham	42%
University of Cincinnati	42%
Uni. of Illinois Champaign Urbana	42%
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	42%
University of Michigan	42%
Ohio State University	42%
Stanford University	42%
Brown University	41%
University of Connecticut	41%
University of Delaware	41%
University of Oregon	41%
Western Michigan University	41%
Yale University	41%
University of Akron	40%
Brigham Young University	40%
Cornell University	40%
Oklahoma State University	40%

By contrast, thirteen percent of sociology departments (14 departments) have fewer than 30 percent women among their ranks. This compares to nearly one third of sociology departments with so few women only four years ago. Given the dramatic change in the sex composition of the discipline, it seems useful to identify those departments where women are still underrepresented at 20% or less. They include:

Under 20% Female Faculty	
University of Chicago	18%
Louisiana State University	18%

#### **SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR GENDER SCHOLARSHIP**

The next seal of approval is designed to identify departments with a central focus on gender or inequality research with an intersectional approach. The SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR GENDER SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to all those departments in which over 25 percent of the faculty name gender or inequality among their specialties<sup>1</sup>.

In 2004, twenty-four departments, representing twenty-one percent of sociology departments, won this seal. In four years, the number of departments meeting SWS standards for gender scholarship increased to thirty-seven, representing thirty-three percent of the sociology departments in the country. The following departments win this seal in 2008.

#### Over 40% Gender Scholarship

Utah State University	50%
Georgia State University	50%
University of Alabama-Birmingham	42%
University of Iowa	41%

#### 30% to 40% Gender Scholarship

Washington State University	40%
University of Kansas	39%
University of Connecticut	37%
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	36%
University of Pittsburgh	36%
University of New York-Albany	36%
Boston College	35%
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	35%
University of California-Riverside	33%
University of Cincinnati	33%
University of Illinois at Chicago	33%
Kansas State University	33%
Kent State University	33%
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	33%
University of California-Santa Barbara	32%
University of Colorado-Boulder	32%

#### 25% to 30% Gender Scholarship

State University of New York- Albany	30%
University of Southern California	30%
Rutgers University	30%
Florida State University	29%
Purdue University	29%
Syracuse University	28%
Bowling Green University	28%
Vanderbilt University	28%

<sup>1</sup> Specifically, this includes those faculty who listed "Gender," "Feminist Theory," "Sex and Gender," "Inequality," "Race/Class/Gender," "Gender Inequality," "Gender and [blank] Inequality," "Feminist [blank]," "Gender and [blank]," or "Women and Men and [blank]" in the 2007 *ASA Guide to Graduate Departments*.

Cornell University	27%
Oklahoma State University	27%
Southern Illinois University	27%
Stanford University	26%
State University of New York-Buffalo	26%
State University of New York-Stony Brook	26%
University of California-Davis	25%
University of Maryland	25%
University of Georgia	25%

By contrast, there are still departments with very few women and little gender scholarship. Departments with 10 percent or less of faculty specializing in gender or inequality include:

Florida International University  
Miami University  
John Hopkins University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Boston University  
Howard University  
University of California San Diego  
University of South Carolina  
University of Pennsylvania  
Columbia University  
University of Norte Dame  
Baylor University  
Princeton University  
University of Chicago  
Texas Women's University

### **SWS SEAL OF EXCELLENCE**

Finally, SWS would like to recognize those departments that excel in both the proportion of faculty who are women and in the representation of scholarship on gender inequality. To recognize them, we offer the SWS SEAL OF EXCELLENCE.

To be awarded this seal, a department must meet the SWS standards for BOTH representation of women faculty and representation of gender/inequality scholarship. We suggest that such departments are likely to be the most gender-and women-friendly departments in the country.

Twelve doctoral-granting sociology departments received this honor in 2004. Today, twenty-nine doctoral-granting departments, more than twice as many departments, meet these demanding criteria. In alphabetical order, they include:

University of Alabama-Birmingham  
Boston College

Bowling Green State University  
University of California-Davis  
University of California-Santa Barbara  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Connecticut  
University of Colorado-Boulder  
Cornell University  
Florida State University  
Georgia State University  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
University of Iowa  
University of Kansas  
Kent State University  
University of Maryland  
University of Massachusetts-Amherst  
State University of New York- Albany  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
University of Nevada-Las Vegas  
Oklahoma State University  
University of Pittsburgh  
Rutgers University  
University of Southern California  
Southern Illinois University  
Stanford University  
Syracuse University  
Utah State University  
Washington State University

Of these twenty-nine doctoral-granting institutions recognized by the SWS for their excellence in gender-friendliness, 18 are ranked among the 60 most prestigious sociology departments in the country by *US News and World Report* (2008). They include (with their *US News* rank):

Stanford University (6)  
Cornell University (14)  
University of Maryland (25)  
State University of New York- Albany (25)  
University of California-Davis (29)  
University of California-Santa Barbara (29)  
Rutgers University (31)  
University of Iowa (34)  
University of Massachusetts- Amherst (34)  
Washington State University (38)  
University of Southern California (42)  
Florida State University (42)  
University of Illinois at Chicago (46)  
Boston College (49)

University of Pittsburgh (49)  
University of Colorado Boulder (55)  
University of Connecticut (58)  
University of Kansas (58)

### **Women, Gender Scholarship, and Institutional Prestige**

To what extent is there overlap between departments who both have women faculty and support in gender scholarship and institutional prestige? As previous research has suggested, there is good reason to believe that the higher one moves up the ladder of institutional prestige, the fewer women one will find, the less diversity overall, and the less concern with gender and inequality scholarship. We find a great deal of departmental variation, even among the upper ranks.

Of the 20 most prestigious departments in the country (as ranked by *US News and World Report*), nine departments receive the SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR FACULTY GENDER EQUITY. This triples the departments receiving the seal in 2004.

University of California-Berkeley  
University of Michigan  
Stanford University  
Indiana University  
Northwestern University  
Cornell University  
Duke University  
Ohio State University  
Yale University

Of the 20 most prestigious departments in the country, two doctoral granting institutions receive the SWS SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR GENDER SCHOLARSHIP. This is a slight improvement from 2004, where **no** departments ranked in the top 20 in the *Us News and World Report* were awarded this particular seal.

Stanford University  
Cornell University

In comparison to the 2004 report in which none of the most prestigious departments received the highly coveted SWS SEAL OF EXCELLENCE, we proudly award this seal to two departments:

Stanford University  
Cornell University

Hence, to the extent that organizational cultures and academic practices continue to favor men, many women scholars and students interested in gender research will continue to be faced with a trade off—seeking work and education in the most prestigious departments, or choosing to surround themselves with women faculty and scholars interested in gender and diversity teaching and research. However, perhaps the most important finding of this report is that this tradeoff is



not absolute. As our data suggest, there are many highly ranked sociology departments that demonstrate a commitment to equality by promoting gender scholarship and the representation of women among their faculty.

Although this is only one assessment and there are many other criteria that could be used to measure gender-friendliness, we offer this SWS ranking system as one piece of information. We urge all those departments receiving SWS SEALS to proudly note this fact in department brochures, announcements, and future *ASA Guides to Graduate Departments*.

We hope that this report card will be a helpful tool in guiding prospective graduate students towards women, gender, and feminist friendly sociology departments. For those on the job market, this report card offers suggestions on where feminist academics will be more likely to find welcoming and supportive departments. We also suggest that feminists in other disciplines consider similar ranking schemes. Our hope is that department leaders in sociology departments across the country will use these findings to advertise their strengths and to identify and overcome their weaknesses.

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