

The 2012 SWS Seals of Approval:
Report Card on Faculty Gender Equity and Gender Scholarship

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In 2004 and 2008 Sociologists for Women in Society awarded three Seals of Approval to deserving doctoral departments in the discipline. Intended to “spur [...] schools into constructive competition to improve” (Richard Chait and Cathy Trower quoted in Risman and Berube 2008), the seals recognized departments that practice gender equity within the faculty and that encourage faculty scholarship about gender. This, the third in the series of reports, identifies recipients of the 2012 awards and reviews trends.

The SWS Seals of Approval are awarded to departments that meet specific criteria, namely:

- 1) The SWS Seal of Approval for Faculty Gender Equity is awarded to departments with at least 40 percent women in the tenured and tenure-track ranks,
- 2) The SWS Seal of Approval for Gender Scholarship is awarded when at least 25 percent of the (full-time) members of a doctoral faculty specialize in scholarship about gender and inequality, and
- 3) The SWS Seal for Excellence awarded to departments that have fulfilled both of the criteria listed above.

This year, SWS awards its seals of approval in the wake of the Great Recession. Although the recession was officially over in 2009, its effects on universities have lingered. Even as more women received doctorates in sociology, the recession limited the hiring of full-time tenure track faculty.¹ Reacting to the recession, some professors delayed retirement. To save money, many universities did not replace those who did retire with full-time tenure-track personnel. Although the job market showed signs of recovery in academic year 2011-2012, the cumulative effect of the recession is that a smaller proportion of departments deserve these seals than in 2008.

Methods:

Programs: We examined characteristics of 195 of the programs listed in the *2011 ASA Guide to Graduate Programs*. When a university listed more than one sociology department, we coded the one that seemed the most mainline. For instance, Cornell lists three departments in the

¹ Since 1994, there has been a steady increase in the stream of women receiving sociology doctorates; in 2010 60 percent of those receiving a sociology doctorate were women
http://asanet.org/research/stats/gender/number_doctorate.cfm; <http://asanet.org/facultyhires.pdf>

Guide, a department of organizational sociology, a department of developmental sociology and a department of sociology. We considered only the third department. All told, we examined 114 doctoral departments and 81 master's departments.

We used to *US News & World Report* rankings of top graduate departments in sociology to define elite departments. This reputational analysis is based on ratings provided by department heads and graduate directors whose departments awarded at least five doctorates from 2001 to 2005. In general, reputational ratings are not reliable indicators of program quality; nor are measures that are easy to manipulate such as impact factors and citation patterns (Tuchman 2009, 2012). These measures can also become self-fulfilling prophecies (Espeland and Sauder 2007).

Cut-offs: We used the same cut-offs for the seals of approval as the 2008 Risman and Berube report (Risman and Berube 2008; cf. Hays and Risman 2004). We coded for two variables: percentage of tenure track faculty who are women, and percentage of tenure track faculty with research and teaching specialties in the areas of gender, and/or gender inequality (e.g. race class and gender). The seal of approval for gender equity was given to those departments whose tenure-track faculty members were at least 40% female, and the seal of approval for gender scholarship was given to those departments with at least 25% of tenure-track faculty specializing in gender.

The appendix presents results of an unsuccessful attempt to impute some meaning to the patterns of gender equality and gender scholarship.

Findings:

Patterns over Time: As seen in Table 1, since 2008 the percentage of departments deserving the SWS Seals of Approval has decreased slightly, but is appreciably better than in 2004. The differences from time to time are not statistically significant. Our findings confirm that the percentage of women in full-time tenure and tenure-track employment is substantially the same as four years ago. The percentage of faculty reporting a specialization in gender, including gender inequality has declined during the Great Recession.² (The difference from year to year is not statistically significant.) Nonetheless, these two trends may be associated. The ASA Sex and Gender Section attracts many more women than men as members; gender was not one of the top specializations listed in the American Sociological Association's 2011 job bank advertisements (Spalter-Roth, Kisielewski, and Jacobs 2011, Appendix 1).

² Hays and Risman 2004, Risman and Berube 2008, http://www.asanet.org/documents/research/pdfs/2011_2012_ASA_Job_Bank_Survey_Brief.pdf), <http://asanet.org/facultyhires.pdf>), http://asanet.org/research/stats/gender/number_doctorate.cfm

Table 1: Percentage of Ph. D. Departments Meeting Criteria for Faculty Seals

<u>SEALS</u>				
	Faculty Gender Equity	Faculty Gender Scholarship	Equity and Scholarship	N
<u>YEAR</u>				
2004	33%	21%	11%	112
2008	65	33	26	113
2012	64	28	22	114

Sources: Hays and Risman (2004), Risman and Berube (2008)

Variation by Type of Department: Previous reports examined doctoral departments and emphasized that elite departments were less likely to receive the seals of approval than were other departments. We included departments granted the master's degree in this year's study. As a general rule, participants in what the ASA calls the "dominant career model" (Spalter-Roth 2007) tend to identify doctoral programs as more prestigious than master's programs. According to this reasoning, a doctoral program at a "middling" regional research university is defined as superior to a master's program at a highly ranked college.

The result of this inclusion is a rather dramatic pattern (as seen in Table 2). It appears that departmental quality (as conventionally defined) and the inclusion of women faculty are inversely related: the more elite a department (by conventional criteria), the lower the percentage of women on the faculty. (Because it includes ties, in 2012 *US News & World Report* placed 21 departments in its top 20 sociology programs.)

Table 2: Percentage of Graduate Departments Meeting Criterion for Faculty Gender Equity, 2012

Type of Program	Percentage Meeting Criterion	N
Masters Program	79	81
Doctoral Program (including elite)	64	114
Elite program	29	21

Elite programs: From 2004 to 2012 the number of elite departments (as defined by the reputational rankings of *US News & World Report*) qualifying for SWS Seals of Approval has been fairly stable. Since 2004, the Stanford University sociology department has been the *only* elite program to qualify for a seal of approval for gender scholarship.

However, more departments qualified for the Gender Seal of Equity in 2012 than in 2004. University of Indiana, Bloomington and Northwestern University qualified for the Gender Equity Seal in both 2004 and in 2012. (Berkeley dropped out in 2012.) Three other elite universities (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, University of California, Los Angeles, and Columbia University) joined the group.

It is difficult to generalize about these changes. In some cases, they may result from a cumulative shift of one position from “female” to “male” after one takes retirements, tenure decisions and hiring into account. For instance, from 2008 to 2012, the percentage of women faculty at the University of California, Berkeley decreased from 41 to 38 percent. In other instances, a changed pattern may result from a policy decision to hire in specialties where women tend to be concentrated. However, on the whole, an increase in the percentage of women in an elite department does not appear to be associated with a meaningful increase in the percentage of faculty that declares a specialty in gender, as defined above. UCLA provides an apt example. Although the gender equity increases from 30 to 43 percent, the percentage of professors engaged in gender scholarship merely increases from 15 to 18 percent.³

Table 3: Elite Departments Qualifications for Seals of Approval, 2004 and 2012
(by decreasing 2012 *US News & World Report Rank*)

	YEAR			
	2004		2012	
	% Faculty Women	% Gender Scholarship	% Faculty Women	% Gender Scholarship
University of California, Berkeley	41*	14	38	4
University of Wisconsin, Madison	31	12	37	14
Princeton University	21	7	27	5
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	34	18	41*	14
Harvard University	37	5	32	5
Stanford University	38	25*	32	26*
University of Chicago	20	5	18	5
University of N. Carolina, Chapel Hill	26	15	39	7
Northwestern University	44*	20	44*	22
University of California, Los Angeles	30	15	42*	18
Columbia University	26	0	40*	10

³ One possibility is that women *may* be breaking out of the confines of gendered specialties although some ASA sections, such as sex and gender and race, class, and gender, continue to include a high proportion of women. Transformation of the field would also require men to abandon the specialties where they have historically been over-represented, such as theory, methodology, and economic sociology.

Indiana University, Bloomington	44 *	20	43*	10
University of Pennsylvania	17	3	36	9
Duke University	36	10	33	0
New York University#			30	22
University of Texas, Austin	34	11	39	20
Cornell University	29	21	25	8

***Boldface** indicates the department meets the criterion for a seal of approval in this category.
 # Missing information indicates the department was not listed in 2004.

Recommendations:

We recommend that the Seals of Approval be awarded as follows:

SWS Seal of Approval for Faculty Gender Equity:

Department	Percent. Female Faculty (Rounded, declining order)
Syracuse University	79
Georgia State University	69
Howard University	69
University of Cincinnati	67
University of Illinois, Chicago	67
Boston University	65
University of Kentucky	64
Wayne State University	63
Rutgers University	62
University of Colorado, Boulder	62
Brandeis University	60
New School for Social Research	60
University of Nebraska, Lincoln	60
Bowling Green State University, OH	59
University of California, Santa Cruz	59
University of Oklahoma	58
Tulane University	57
University of North Carolina, Charlotte	57
University of Virginia	56
University of Central Florida	55
Johns Hopkins University	55
Mississippi State University	55
University of Connecticut	54
Kansas State University	54
Rice University	54
University of Louisville	54

University of Iowa	53
University of Pittsburgh	53
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	53
University of Delaware	52
Case Western Reserve University	50
Florida State University	50
George Mason University	50
Iowa State University	50
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	50
University of Utah	50
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee	50
University of California, Davis	50
University of California, Santa Barbara	50
Washington State University	50
Northeastern University	48
Boston College	48
Kent State University	48
Miami University (Ohio)	48
University of Tennessee, Knoxville	47
Michigan State University	47
University of Minnesota	47
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	46
Virginia Technical University	46
Emory University	46
University of Southern California	46
Western Michigan University	45
University at Albany, SUNY	44
Northwestern University	44
University of Akron	44
Indiana University, Bloomington	44
Ohio State University	44
Portland State University	43
University of California, Irvine	43
University of Florida	42
University of California, Los Angeles	42
University at Binghamton, SUNY	42
North Carolina State University	42
Florida International University	41
Temple University	41
University of Michigan	41
Columbia University	40
Loyola University, Chicago	40
Texas Women's University	40
University of Alabama, Birmingham	40
University of Kansas	40

SWS Seal of Approval for Gender Scholarship

We recommend that the following departments receive the SWS Seal of Approval for Gender Scholarship:

Department	% of Faculty who do Gender Scholarship (Rounded, declining order)
University of Cincinnati	58
University of Southern Illinois	50
University of California, San Francisco	50
University of Kansas	40
Syracuse University	36
University of Kentucky	36
Florida State University	35
University of Nebraska, Lincoln	35
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	35
Georgia Institute of Technology	33
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	33
University of North Dakota	33
University of Connecticut	33
Virginia Technical Institute	33
University of California, Santa Barbara	32
Purdue University	32
University of Oklahoma	32
Kansas State University	31
University of Louisville	31
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	29
Boston College	29
Oklahoma State University	29
University of Southern California	28
University of Georgia	27
University of Colorado	27
University at Buffalo, SUNY	27
Stanford University	26
University Arizona	25
University at Binghamton, SUNY	25
University of Akron	25
University of Central Florida	25
University of Illinois, Chicago	25
University of California, Davis	25

SWS Seal of Excellence

And we recommend that the following 24 departments receive the Seal of Excellence:

Boston College
 Florida State University
 Georgia State University
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania
 Kansas State University
 Syracuse University
 University at Binghamton, SUNY
 University of Akron
 University of California, Davis
 University of California, San Francisco
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 University of Cincinnati
 University of Colorado, Boulder
 University of Connecticut
 University of Illinois, Chicago
 University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
 University of Kansas
 University of Kentucky
 University of Louisville
 University of Massachusetts, Amherst
 University of Nebraska, Lincoln
 University of Oklahoma
 University of Southern California
 Virginia Technical Institute

Summary: Doctoral departments with excellent records on faculty equity and gender scholarship appear to take pride in their accomplishments, as indicated by the rate at which they replied to our questionnaire (see appendix). There has also been some limited improvement in elite departments, though at least one department which had a good record in 2008 did not have one in 2012. On the whole, though, the Great Recession appears to have had a negative impact on both faculty gender equity and the prevalence of scholarship on gender in sociology doctoral departments.

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Appendix: Survey of Ph. D. departments.

Methods: We surveyed a stratified sample of 40 departments. We asked:

1. When was the last time you offered a graduate course on gender?
2. Do faculty in your department conduct research that examines the intersections of race, gender and class?
2a. If so, please briefly describe the research.
3. Please describe any contributions your department has made to the promotion of social equality for women?
4. What policies or practices in place at your institution promote social equality for women?

We used the representation of women and of gender courses in a department to draw the sample, classifying each variable into high, medium, and low.

Survey Questions: In general, the survey questions did not produce meaningful results. We found:

1. Departments with a high percentage of women faculty and a high percentage of faculty who study gender were more likely to answer these questionnaires about gender, as did 90 percent of the sampled departments in this category. (Fifty-three percent of the other sampled departments did so.)
2. Some male department heads (all types of departments) still ask their women colleagues to answer surveys about gender.
3. Relatively few departments give a graduate course about gender (or race, class, gender, or some combination) every year. Those that do are more likely to have a fair percentage of women as faculty and people who specialize in the study of gender, but the size of the department and its declared emphases are also pertinent.
4. Each responding department found something good to say about itself and mentioned at least one person who does research on gender. Even a large department with relatively few women (29 percent) and relatively few specialists in gender (21 percent) mentioned three women doing research about gender or gender inequality.
5. Most departments are more oriented toward their own policies about gender than those of the university. That is, they are more likely to give lists of their policies than those of the university.
6. Mentioned university policies include:
 - (a) Have maternity leave policies (since their university did not, one department invented its own)
 - (b) Have a representative of an ADVANCE grant in each academic department

- (c) Have mentoring practices for faculty
- (d) Comply with EEOC and Title IX
- (e) Have a committee, commission or task force on gender which reports to a central administrator (president or provost)
- (f) Have workshops on equity for search committees.