

**The Case for Leadership:
Why Women Should Have Viable Access
to Decision-Making Roles in Higher Education**

by

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for

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The genesis of this report was President James Wagner's request to the President's Commission on the Status of Women for materials that addressed the case for women in leadership. Under then-chair Allison Dykes, a brainstorming session among the full membership of the President's Commission on the Status of Women followed, with the Executive Committee of the PCSW compiling the results of that session along with articles, data, and publications on the standing of women in the professoriat and the professions. Realizing the enormity of the project, the PCSW commissioned Stacey Jones, associate director of Emory Creative Group (formerly the Office of Publications), to review and compile the data and write this report.

Executive Summary

From board rooms to the corridors of law firms and hospitals and, yes, even in the halls of academe, women in the professions and the workplace still find it difficult to reach the upper echelons of their chosen fields. At Emory, as elsewhere in higher education, women enter the bottom rung of the professorate in numbers commensurate with their graduation rates from PhD programs. Women are well represented in the ranks of entry- and mid-level management in every corner of the University, and the recent appointments of two women to lead Candler School of Theology and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences—in addition to Marla Salmon’s presence at the School of Nursing—is good news indeed. However, statistics show that as women approach full professorships and the highest levels of decision making at Emory, whether it’s the Ways and Means Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, the President’s Cabinet, or the Board of Trustees, the pipeline narrows considerably and men predominate.

Colleges and universities pay a price when women leave their employ due to factors such as disenchantment with the pace of promotion or perceived discrimination. Statistics show that it takes about 150 percent of a person’s annual salary to replace them, not to mention the priceless cost of the years of institutional and job knowledge that depart along with them. Therefore, businesses are finding that gender diversity impacts the bottom line in ways both direct and indirect. University of Michigan Professor Theresa Welbourne looked at the short-term performance of companies with all-male management after an initial public offering (IPO) versus those with male and female top executives. “After controlling for a number of variables, companies with women in senior management were initially valued about 15 percent higher,” she wrote. “This signals that investors value diverse management teams who bring different perspectives to the table, allowing companies to make better business decisions.”

A Cone/Roper study found that customers and employees alike preferred companies associated with “good causes and ethical practices.” For colleges and universities, this translates to the intangible good will among employees and in the community that comes with a reputation for fairness and progressive workplace practices. At Emory, we already have stated in our Strategic Plan and elsewhere that these are our goals—to be the type of employer that attracts, retains, and rewards the best and brightest workers.

There are many good reasons to make sure women are present in senior management in more than token numbers, among them:

- The many women among the ranks of Emory alumni, faculty, staff, and students with the abilities and experience to succeed as leaders throughout the University
- The effort that Emory has undertaken through initiatives such as the Center for Women, the President’s Commission on the Status of Women, and various women-focused student groups to support and develop women throughout their careers as students, faculty, and staff here
- The majority of university students, now predominately female, would have greater numbers of much-needed female role models and mentors
- Fewer losses of qualified women candidates to industry and other sectors due to concerns about work-life balance in academia
- Greater numbers of women and sympathetic men could bring about changes to the tenure

system, now structured so that the greatest professional progress takes place during prime childbearing years and exacts a high toll on women *and* men who choose to have full lives outside the academy

- A better environment for women already in limited leadership roles but whose minimal presence makes it difficult for them—and difficult for other women who aspire to leadership roles
- Reduced costs due to rehiring and retraining workers after disenchanted employees leave
- Studies show that the most effective style of leadership—transformational—tends to be practiced by women

There are a number of factors that account for women's limited presence in the most senior positions, but underlying cultural and gender biases play a large role. These biases work to accumulate disadvantage for women seeking senior faculty and administrative roles, making established networks and customs such as tenure hard to navigate. Statistics bear this out in business, the professions, and academia. Although women make up 36 percent of MBA students, fewer than 8 percent hold top-level jobs—executive vice president and above—in corporations. Women make up 47 percent of medical school graduates yet constitute 11 percent of professors in medical schools and 18.6 percent of associate professors. (At Emory, women make up approximately 13.9 percent of the ranks of medical professors and associate professors.) A 2006 *New York Times* article found that only about 17 percent of partners at the nation's top law firms were women, up from 13 percent in 1995. Yet law school classes typically consist of about 49 percent women.

Although women opt out of the workforce for a variety of reasons, greater factors than that are at play, as the accompanying report demonstrates. As women make up a greater percentage of the undergraduate population—58 percent of Emory undergraduates were women in fall 2005—they will need to see strong role models throughout the institution in order to consider the professoriat and University administration a viable career path.

In cultivating women for and appointing them to its top administrative, decision-making positions, Emory will set itself apart from its peer institutions in the advancement and retention of women faculty and staff. Other universities that have tackled similar issues of work-life balance and women in leadership are:

- University of California
- Duke University
- University of Michigan
- MIT
- Ohio State University

Each of these institutions has found that additional efforts will be required in order to achieve parity in the promotion and hiring of women to the senior ranks of faculty and administration.

The synthesis of information and statistics found here will provide data for President James Wagner and other University leadership to make the case to various constituencies as to why it is critically important to increase the recruitment, promotion, and retention of women at Emory.

The Case for Women Leaders

By any measure, women are doing extremely well all along the spectrum of learning. From grade school to graduate and professional schools, girls and women are graduating at much higher rates, with higher GPAs and test scores than many of their male counterparts. As barriers to educational access have eroded, girls and women have proven that they are as capable as boys and men at learning and mastering content in any discipline.

One of the important goals of education is fostering and furthering a profession or career. Many women—such as those in higher education administration, the professoriat, or in disciplines such as medicine, law, and business—find that remaining societal and structural barriers greatly hinder access to the upper reaches of their professions. For women, who currently earn some 51 percent of all doctorates awarded to U.S. citizens, the pipeline to tenure and full professorship narrows considerably due to a number of factors the academy must change in order to ensure fair and equal access to women in the future.

For women who aspire to true leadership roles in higher education administration, the path often looks like a funnel—broad based at the entry point and middle ranks but narrow at the tip.

We need to ask ourselves: at a time when women are earning nearly half of all terminal degrees and entering the preliminary rungs of the tenure track at about the same rate as men, why are so few are granted tenure and promoted into the professorships and chairmanships that drive the profession? Why also do so many leave the profession before they even get to that point? And why do women remain outside the doors to real executive leadership, present in its corridors in only nominal numbers?

The reasons are varied, but both research and anecdotal reports reveal that chief among them are the following factors for faculty: dissatisfaction with the work environment that women faculty at every level feel in greater measure than their male counterparts; the quest for tenure, which applies methods of evaluation that have been slow to respond to a changing and diverse workforce; and the importance of mentors who forged paths before and provide potent examples for those who follow.

Many of these factors also hold true for women administrators, but for both groups more subtle patterns may be at work. These are the patterns of social conditioning, or “gender schema,” in the words of psychologist Virginia Valian, that predispose both men and women to overrate the talents and abilities of men and underrate those of women. “Whatever emphasizes a man’s gender gives him a small advantage, a plus mark. Whatever accentuates a women’s gender results in a small loss for her, a minus mark,” Valian writes in her book *Why So Slow?: The Advancement of Women*.

The President’s Commission on the Status of Women at Emory has studied issues of equity for women throughout its existence. Among many factors, the following stand out as particularly hindering women’s access to the top ranks of the professoriat and administration at Emory and elsewhere in the academy.

1. Role Models

As Emory’s student population becomes majority female, women students need strong role models throughout the institution. Emory enrollment statistics for fall 2005 show that 61 percent of the graduate student population is female. Women make up half of the professional school student populations and 58 percent of undergraduates. On average, women make up 58 percent of Emory’s entire student body. The University’s full-time faculty numbers 2,371, 830 of whom—or 35 percent—are women, according to the latest figures available from the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. Equal access to most forms of education has been fully available to women for at least thirty years. Why, then, are women not more fully represented in senior faculty and administrative ranks?

A recent study by University of Toronto Associate Professor Penelope Lockwood shows that female role models are particularly important for women students and that having them enhances a women’s professional self-esteem. Although men too were more likely to pick role models of the same gender, they did not report that “gender was a deciding or influencing factor” in choosing a mentor.

By this measure, Emory is failing its substantial population of female students—indeed, all of its students—by inadequately hiring and promoting women to positions of leadership, where their very presence would show that women belong at all levels of the academy and in all disciplines. Women in greater numbers ultimately will help erode—and perhaps someday eliminate—current stereotypical notions that continue to block many women from moving up the academic ladder, especially in the scientific fields.

Gender Distribution of BS Recipients to Role Models (Faculty)

	Percentage Females		Percentage Males	
	Students	Faculty	Students	Faculty
Chemistry	47.3	12.1	52.7	87.9
Math	48.2	8.3	51.8	91.7
Computer Science	27.7	10.6	72.3	89.4
Physics	21.4	6.6	78.6	93.4
Economics	32.3	11.5	67.7	88.5
Political Science	50.1	23.5	49.9	76.5
Sociology	70.2	35.8	29.8	64.2
Psychology	76.5	33.5	23.5	66.5
Biological Sciences	58.4	20.2	41.6	79.8

This table shows the results of a survey of the National Science Foundation’s top fifty ranked faculties in the above disciplines and demonstrates the dearth of female role models for students in the natural and social sciences. SOURCE: The Barnard Center for Research on Women

But it isn’t just undergraduates who need role models. A Princeton task force examining the status of female faculty in the natural sciences and engineering found that both male and female faculty overwhelmingly supported the notion of mentoring, but among untenured faculty only 33 percent of women reported having a mentor, as opposed to 64 percent of men.

Mentoring provides the mooring for nascent professors to find their way professionally and personally as they work toward tenure. The concept is widely accepted in corporate circles as a practice that recognizes and shepherds future leaders. The lack of mentoring in academic circles is most likely among the causes of workplace dissatisfaction that women report at all levels of faculty rank. A 1999 U.S. Department of Education survey found that 12 percent of associate professors reported being likely to leave within three years for jobs outside of academia. “Their dissatisfaction with the profession grows the longer they remain in this rank; associate professors who have held that rank for ten years or more feel greater stress and are more dissatisfied than other faculty members,” the report’s authors state.

2. Stemming the Tide

Higher education is educating but losing qualified female candidates to industry and other private sector jobs due to concerns about work-life balance. Women are prematurely opting out of the university workforce. Here again, this comment about women in the scientific disciplines could very well apply to all women in academia. “With the time and financial investment that individuals and institutions make in becoming or producing scientific and technological researchers, it is critical for institutional leaders to devise strategies for attracting them into and retaining them in academia,” says the report “An Agenda for Excellence: Creating Flexibility in Tenure-Track Faculty Careers,” issued by the American Council on Education.

All graduate education, as currently structured, costs institutions a great deal of money. Of course, universities also benefit from an inexpensive supply of novice faculty in the form of graduate students, but the real payoff is in hiring these talented PhDs, who are educated in their own institutions and elsewhere, to replenish the ranks of faculty.

Research shows that women are opting out of the tenure process early on and that at Emory and elsewhere women PhDs fill the ranks of part-time untenured faculty in greater or equal numbers to men. Today, faculty of either gender, but particularly women, face tough decisions about prioritizing career over family and vice versa. The University of California “Faculty Family Friendly Edge” report states, “The majority of UC faculty parents indicate that they have had to slow down their careers as a result of their parenting—over two-thirds of women and nearly half of men.” Given that the tenure clock is often at odds with the biological clock, women are particularly at risk during a crucial time of family formation and career development. The report noted that women faculty between the ages of 30 to 50 with children report spending more than 100 hours per week on “professional, domestic, and care-giving activities”; men of the same age with children report spending slightly more than 85 hours per weeks at those tasks; and same-age faculty with no children report 80 hours per week.

Among the voices in the UC report:

- *Knowing what I know now, I would have stayed in private industry, where I could balance things better. Unless academia changes, it is not a place for people with children.*
- *Having children is far more time-consuming than you might think. The career of at least one parent will suffer substantial losses in advancement, salary, etc. If you have two children, plan on two decades of critical time lost in career advancement.*
- *. . . I would say, your colleagues may seem nice now, but brace yourself for stigmatization and long-term low salary levels.*
- *To be honest, for a women with tenure track responsibilities, it’s a pretty impossible situation. The work is pretty crushing. There are wonderful times, but my kids definitely suffer from the amount of time that I have to spend on my work.*

**Percentage of Female Faculty at Emory
by Discipline in the Arts and Sciences**

Job Title	Total	No. of Females	Percentage Female
HUMANITIES (Women earned 50% of PhDs nationally in 2002; 46% in 1987)			
Professor & Chair	4	1	25%
Assoc. Prof. & Chair	2	1	50%
Professor	58	13	22%
Associate Professor	57	34	60%
Assistant Professor	26	13	50%
Senior Lecturer	17	14	82%
Lecturer	14	10	71%
SCIENCES (Nationally, women earned 29% of PhDs in physical sciences in 2002; 50% of PhDs in the life sciences; and 18% and 38% in 1987, respectively)			
Professor & Chair	2	0	0%
Assoc. Prof. & Chair	1	0	0%
Professor	31	2	6%
Associate Professor	29	3	10%
Assistant Professor	18	5	28%
Senior Lecturer	12	3	25%
Lecturer	11	3	27%
SOCIAL SCIENCES (Women earned 60% of PhDs nationally in 2002; 48% in 1987)			
Professor & Chair	4	1	25%
Assoc. Prof. & Chair	1	1	100%
Professor	32	5	16%
Associate Professor	44	17	39%
Assistant Professor	31	15	48%
Senior Lecturer	8	7	88%
Lecturer	9	6	67%
EDUCATION (Women earned 67% of PhDs nationally in 2002; 57% in 1987)			
Professor & Chair	1	1	100%
Assoc. Prof. & Chair	1	1	100%
Professor	5	3	60%
Associate Professor	6	2	33%
Assistant Professor	3	2	67%
Senior Lecturer	5	2	40%
Lecturer	5	2	40%

The chart at left shows the national averages (shaded boxes) for women faculty in the humanities, the sciences, the social sciences, and education and the corresponding number of women holding various ranks in these disciplines at Emory. With the exception of the Department of Education, women at Emory still have not achieved leadership parity with men, despite gains in the number of women holding terminal degrees in the past nineteen years. Note, however, that in the Department of Education at Emory, as evidenced by the lower numbers of women at entry-level positions and associate professor, an effort seems to be under way to introduce more male faculty into the department.

SOURCE: Job Group Analysis, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, 2004

3. An Anachronistic Profession

Princeton University President Shirley M. Tilghman’s call for recruiting, retaining, and advancing women scientists is applicable across disciplines. She believes that **if women continue to be underrepresented in the academy, the professoriat will look “increasingly anachronistic to students, and we risk losing the most talented among them, who will, after all, have an infinite range of career options from which to choose.”** The notion that women do not seek doctoral degrees in certain disciplines—and hence their absence from the ranks of the professoriat in these disciplines—does not hold true when the data is examined (see chart below). Women are underutilized in many disciplines, and even in those disciplines in which they attain PhDs in numbers greater than or equal to men, they are underrepresented in the tenured ranks. Statistics show that more international scientists are hired as faculty at colleges and universities than U.S. females and minority group members combined.

Assistant Professors (FY02) and PhD Attainment (1993–2002) by Discipline, Gender, and Ethnicity, Nationally

	White Male		Asian Male		URM* Male		Female	
Discipline	% with PhDs	Assistant Professors	% with PhDs	Assistant Professors	% with PhDs	Assistant Professors	% with PhDs	Assistant Professors
Chemistry (FY03)	54.8%	65.4%	9.6%	11.5%	4.2%	1.6%	31.3%	21.5%
Math	58.1%	60.5%	11.3%	15.0%	3.4%	5.0%	27.2%	19.6%
Physics	68.9%	70.6%	13.9%	14.9%	3.8%	3.3%	13.3%	11.2%
Economics	54.9%	59.8%	9.6%	16.1%	6.0%	5.1%	29.3%	19.0%
Political Science	52.4%	54.2%	3.6%	4.5%	7.0%	4.8%	36.6%	36.5%
Sociology	31.5%	37.0%	3.0%	3.5%	6.5%	7.0%	58.9%	52.3%
Psychology	29.5%	46.0 %	1.1%	4.6%	3.3%	4.0%	66.1%	45.4%
Biology	43.2%	55.4%	8.7%	10.7%	3.3%	3.7%	44.7%	30.2%

SOURCE: Barnard Center for Research on Women

*Underrepresented male

Here again, the difficulties of combining work and family discourage many young professionals of both sexes from the academy as they seek a greater life balance. Present-day fiscal realities practically dictate that the spouses/partners of young faculty must work, most likely making shared parenting duties the rule rather than the exception. The University of California report stated that faculty who exit the tenure track usually cite, in rank order, as reasons: (1) low salary, (2) family/geographic considerations, (3) housing problems, (4) spousal/partner employment problems, and (5) lack of research money.

The types of career duties they mention as most stressful for parents seeking tenure include attending conferences or giving conference papers (22 percent of men; 46 percent of women); writing and publishing (29 percent of men; 48 percent of women); and doing fieldwork or field research away from home (27 percent of men; 48 percent of women).

4. The Wheel of Fortune

People hire—and promote—those like them. As a rule, women progress more slowly up the career ladder in academia and in fewer numbers. A special report by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* cited Marc Goulden, a researcher at the University of California–Berkeley, who found that for each year after securing a tenure-track job, “male assistant professors were 23 percent more likely than their female colleagues to earn tenure. And for each year after earning tenure, male professors were 35 percent more likely than their female colleagues to be named full professors.” This held true despite the fact that men and women enter the ranks of teaching in equal numbers.

This trend can be seen outside faculty ranks as well. At Emory, the Office of Equal Opportunity Program’s Job Analysis Report finds that 55 percent of director-level jobs at Emory are held by women; 54 percent of the people reporting to cabinet-level officers are women. At the highest administrative levels of Emory, seven of the thirty-seven trustees are women, one of nine cabinet members is female, and none of the four executive-level positions is held by a woman.

This breakdown echoes the findings of a 1996 study that appeared in *American Psychologist*. The researchers created a hypothetical corporation with eight levels of rank, the entry level consisting of an equal number of men and women. The researchers accounted for a certain percentage of promotions and factored in a 1 percent bias in favor of the promotion of men. After running their computer models through multiple promotion variables, the highest level of leadership in the fictional corporation remained 65 percent male. The small, 1 percent “bias factor” demonstrates that the accumulation of tiny disadvantages works in the long run to impede women’s efforts to break into the ranks of upper administration. Says *Why So Slow?* author Valian, “It is unfair to neglect even minor instances of group-based bias, because they add up to major inequalities.”

How does this happen? Research on stereotyping has found that people readily remember and believe information that correlates to their stereotypes of groups and tend to dismiss contradictory information. For women in the workplace, this means they must overcome a large number of gender schema, or stereotypes, in order to get ahead. Thus, even at a time when women are graduating with undergraduate and professional degrees in nearly equal numbers to men, gender schema still portray “the professions as suitable for men, and men as suitable for the professions,” says Valian. “The immediate consequence for a woman entering a profession is that those around her, both men and other women, perceive her as at least slightly unsuited to that profession because . . . the schema for women is incompatible with the schema for a successful professional, resulting in lower expectations of a women’s potential achievement.”

The low expectations, believes Valian, will follow women more persistently throughout their careers. In graduate school women are less likely to be taken under the wing of experienced male teachers. “If you are a woman, your male adviser may have spent less time working with you on your dissertation and believed less in your potential,” a female economist told the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. “They promote their female students less, so by the end of the PhD, you see women disproportionately in the bottom half of the class.” When it comes time for job recommendations, male advisers invariably think of their best students as male.

Arri Eisen, a senior lecturer in biology at Emory, told the *Academic Exchange*, “Those who make the [hiring] decisions here are predominantly older white males. Many of them started their careers when there were virtually no women at all in their fields, so it isn’t part of their worldview. Chances are they’re most comfortable hiring people like themselves. It’s just human.” That’s a sentiment echoed in much of the research and literature about equality in academe. However, lest the American professoriat and university administration begin self-destructing, creation of intentional plans to push past these biases must be considered.

Says Princeton President Tilghman, “In so many circumstances, we have to fight against the natural instinct to associate with people who look and think most like ourselves. . . . if women

are not involved in making up the lists [of potential candidates], it is almost inevitable that they will be overlooked.”

5. Family or Career?

The tenure system (along with partner systems in law, medicine, and business) is structured so that professional progress takes place at prime childbearing years. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton’s thoughts might just as well apply to the aspirations of women administrators and female PhDs seeking tenure and permanent jobs in the professoriat: “Are women willing to pay the price for corporate life? They have to play by the same rules as men do. And right now there are really brutal rules for women who want to have families.”

Most professional women planning to have children seriously consider the timing of pregnancy and childbirth and the impact of impending motherhood on their careers and colleagues. However, in how many professions are the penalties for bearing children and starting families so onerous that many women seriously consider whether or not to start families at all? Tilghman cites statistics which state that more than one-third of female scientists and engineers are unmarried, compared to 17 percent of men; 10 percent of married women scientists and engineers have an unemployed spouse compared to 40 percent of men. She cites an American Chemical Society survey in which 21 percent of women scientists say balancing family and work is their biggest career obstacle versus 2.8 percent of men. The disciplines of science and engineering have made tremendous strides in attracting women doctoral candidates. In the life sciences nearly 50 percent of the undergraduate degrees *and* PhDs are granted to women. “Yet when my department and those at comparable universities advertise an assistant professorship, the applicant pool is composed of only 25 percent women,” says Tilghman. “We have lost half the PhD pool between the awarding of the doctorate and the first job application.” It does not, Tilghman says, take a leap of imagination to figure out that the decline coincides with prime child-bearing years.

In their oft-cited study, “Do Babies Matter?,” Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden found that men who started families within five years of completing their doctoral degrees in the sciences and engineering are “strikingly more successful” in earning tenure than women who do the same thing—38 percent more successful to be exact. They found this pattern to hold across the disciplines—in the humanities, the social sciences, and the “hard” sciences. “This disparity, of course, is precisely what you would expect in a work environment that was not designed for women with children, and one that has done little to accommodate the dramatic expansion of women in the workforce in the last forty years,” says Tilghman.

Mason and Goulden found that tenure-track women were more than twice as likely to say they had fewer children than they had wanted and also more likely to divorce: about 50 percent more often than their male counterparts and at twice the rate of women who chose to pursue adjunct or part-time work. “Women aiming for high positions in the professional, corporate, and academic world neither marry nor have children in their early twenties as their mothers did,” the authors state. “The culture has shifted to a delay mode, where a good boost up the career ladder is considered the prudent preface to starting a family. In focusing on professional outcomes as the measure of gender equality, we have failed to notice the widening gap between men and women in forming the families they want, as measured by marriage and children.”

6. Legal Challenges to the Status Quo

From the outside, universities appear to be among the most enlightened employers in the country. In reality, “they are difficult professional environments for women to navigate because their standards and criteria are nebulous,” wrote Pamela Haag in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The principal of academic freedom has been upheld, despite various tests, by the nation’s highest court. These Supreme Court rulings give “colleges more latitude in hiring and promotion than

other employers enjoy,” says Haag. Even so, female plaintiffs have been successful in proving “invisible hand discrimination,” as Haag terms it, in the academic environment. “Scholarly ‘deliverables’ are broad, idiosyncratic to the field, and directed by the scholar herself; the hours are potentially limitless; and the tenure and promotion procedures are decentralized and subjective,” she says. As an example, Haag posits tenure criteria such as “collegiality,” “future promise,” “reputation,” and “creativity” as ideas that easily can be seen as subjective—and therefore subject to interpretation. “Plaintiffs have claimed that ‘uncollegial’ is a catchall pejorative for any woman who doesn’t conform to gender norms or expectations,” she says.

Virginia Valian told the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “If a woman is listed as a co-author on a paper, it might be likely thought she was given a gift.” In letters of recommendation, men are often described as “brilliant and original” while women are termed “reliable, responsible, and meticulous,” she adds. Says Joan C. Williams, distinguished professor of law at Hastings College of Law at the University of California–Berkeley and a noted expert in work-life balance, “You throw the book at women and apply the rules rigidly for them, looking strictly at their accomplishments. For a male candidate, you look at his promise.”

Valian cites studies in her book which show that women’s success in low- or mid-level administrative positions does not actually run counter to widely held gender schemas. “Supervisors do not see moderate success as unusual for women,” she writes. “High success, however, is less compatible with the female gender schema; one way of retaining the schema is to attribute women’s high success not to their ability but to other factors, like hard work.”

A lukewarm evaluation might cause a hiccup in the overall trajectory of a man’s career; however, one or more of them might seriously derail that of a woman. One or two bad performance reviews for a man might be explained away due to factors such as an unreasonable boss or a bad job fit. For a woman, such evaluations might confirm for a supervisor certain gender schemas that he or she holds about women. Says Valian, “Evaluators need to understand that every evaluation is important, because evaluation contributes to the accumulation of advantage or disadvantage. No one in authority can comfort himself or herself by dismissing small differences in their treatment of others as unimportant over the long haul. To the contrary, small differences add up to considerable disparities in advantage and disadvantage over time.”

Likewise, Haag argues that institutions should assign more concrete values to tenure criteria such as reputation and creativity and leave ambiguous categories based on faculty opinion—collegiality and promise—alone. Policies that stop the tenure clock in practice but in reality harm the reputations of women faculty, or the devaluing of courses taught or works published in disciplines such as women’s studies, have formed the basis of lawsuits that have set successful legal precedents on behalf of plaintiffs. Colleges and universities put themselves at legal risk if they believe that a policy on paper will be upheld as a policy in fact in U.S. courts if they can’t prove they’ve put muscle behind enforcing it.

7. One Is the Loneliest Number

The fewer women in positions of leadership, the harder it makes it for those already there.

Several studies have found that women leaders in male-dominated fields are likely to be judged more negatively than their male counterparts. Therefore, many women spend significantly more time “negotiating with subordinates and getting their buy-in” in order to manage successfully. This makes leadership for women a much more onerous and tedious process, especially in fields traditionally dominated by men.

One study showed academics with identical curriculum vitae, one bearing a female name, the other a male. Male and female reviewers consistently rated the female applicant less competent for the open position than the male applicant.

For Catalyst, the research and advisory organization on women in the workforce, the

lingering effects of pervasive gender stereotyping in popular culture and in the workplace provide a “daunting challenge” to employers. In its report “Women ‘Take Care,’ Men ‘Take Charge’: Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders Exposed,” Catalyst states, “Gender stereotypes portray women as lacking the very qualities that people commonly associate with effective leadership. As a result, they often create false perceptions that women leaders just don’t measure up to men in important ways.” Prior studies have found that in departments in which they number no more than 20 percent, women are more likely to feel the effects of gender stereotyping.

Emory’s goals for itself are ambitious. If the University is to achieve its future promise, a commitment must be made to distribute power and influence more equitably between its male and female employees. Linda Wysong Becker, a vice president at Nebraska’s Union College, has found that women excel as transformational leaders and in these times of rapid change, it’s transformational leaders who make a difference. Says Becker, “Women need to develop and share their gifts and motivate other women to do so—by using women’s transformational skills, not by imitating male leaders of the past. Women need to support one another and anyone who leads positive change.” But so too must colleges and universities give the women who graduate from their undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs a real and equitable chance to lead now and into the future.

Emory has the opportunity to change the dynamics and face of its leadership by being deliberate in including women candidates in its executive searches, by considering nontraditional paths to leadership, by looking inward at its own excellent cadre of Emory-trained women, and by carefully considering the conclusions and recommendations of the work-life task force. Taking a thorough and creative approach to addressing the issues brought forth in this report will catapult Emory into a leadership position, both within higher education and in the world at large, and truly make it the transformative institution it aspires to be.

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Attachments

“Faculty family friendly edge: an initiative for tenure-track faculty at the University of California,” University of California

“Navigating the new subtleties of sex-discrimination cases in academe,” Pamela Haag

“Do Babies Matter (part II)?: closing the baby gap,” Mary Ann Mason and Mark Goulden

“Changing the demographics: recruiting, retaining, and advancing women scientists in academia,” Shirley M. Tilghman

“Where the elite teach, it’s still a man’s world,” Robin Wilson

“Why women excel as transformational campus leaders,” Linda Wysong Becker