

ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence

Advancing women, transforming the University, investing in a culture of inclusive excellence



Fair Treatment and Diversity

The UMD ADVANCE Grant Towards an Institution for Inclusive Excellence (UMD = T12E), the Office of Faculty Affairs, and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, are all engaged in efforts to improve professional growth opportunities and work environment for UMD faculty. A critical part of those efforts is research to benchmark the current status of faculty work environments and to see if there are important differences by gender, race and ethnicity, career stage, and college. This report presents findings from a spring 2013 UMD work environment survey.

The UMD Work Environment Survey assessed specific aspects of faculty work environment, such as faculty perceptions of their own professional growth, institutional and unit supports for professional growth, climate for work-life balance, fair treatment and diversity, and satisfaction, all of which have been linked to retention, advancement, and productivity. There were 784 tenure track respondents, approximately 47% of full-time UMD tenure track faculty in fall 2012. Here major findings are reported for tenure track/tenured respondents. A full institutional report with all data and tables, as well as college-specific reports can be found at the ADVANCE website: www.advance.umd.edu.

"I personally experience gender and race based discrimination, and have seen other faculty members being discriminated [against]... Ignoring/dismissing faculty with accents during meeting, harder promotion case, lower salary, etc."

University of Maryland's 10-year Strategic Plan for Diversity (2010) outlines UMD's collective commitment to diversity, inclusion, and fair treatment. Research has found that faculty perception of campus climate for diversity and perception of fair treatment and justice are related to faculty's intent to leave, job satisfaction, and morale (Daly & Dee, 2006; Jayakumar, Holward, Allen & Han, 2009; Seifert & Umbach, 2008).

In the 2013 UMD Work Environment Survey, we asked questions regarding the campus climate for diversity, diverse representation, fair treatment, and discrimination. We also provided respondents with an opportunity to elaborate on incidences of discrimination or bias they had encountered, if they so chose. Major findings of response assessments and open-ended comments are presented below.

Major findings:

- About half of participants agreed that opportunities are at least as good for female faculty (49%) and Faculty of Color (48%) as they are for male faculty and White faculty, respectively.
- 19% of faculty reported having experienced discrimination.
- Women and Faculty of Color perceive and experience more negative diversity climates.
- Vast differences in attitude exist by gender, race/ethnicity, and rank about diversity,

institutional environments for diverse faculty, and discrimination experiences.

Key themes of gender and racial bias emerged from open-ended comments on fair treatment and diversity. Some faculty members also addressed age discrimination. Examples of these themes are represented in the following faculty comments:

“Asked to type minutes because I was a woman. Asked by a [senior male colleague] if it made me uncomfortable that he said he thought I was attractive. Majority of women in department paid less than men.”

“Age discrimination by senior faculty, treating me as if I am a new, assistant professor with no right to participate in faculty decision-making when I am a tenured associate professor.”

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER, RACE, AND RANK

Survey items on diversity issues by gender differed significantly between men and women with a large effect size. Figure 1 represents the mean responses for these survey items.

- Women faculty were less likely to agree that opportunities for women and Faculty of Color are at least as good as those for men and White faculty, respectively, suggesting women are more likely to perceive a gendered and racially biased climate.

Differences by race emerged, as well. Figure 2 represents the mean responses for these items.

- Faculty of Color were more likely to agree that they have to work harder than colleagues to be perceived as a scholar and that they have experienced discrimination in their unit based on their identities.
- Faculty of Color were less likely than White faculty to agree that opportunities for Faculty of Color are at least as good as those for White faculty.

Differences were also evident by rank.

- Full Professors were more likely than Assistant or Associate Professors to agree that opportunities for female faculty are at least as good as those for male faculty.

- Assistant Professors were less likely to agree that opportunities for Faculty of Color are at least as good as opportunities for White Faculty.
- Assistant Professors were more likely to indicate that Faculty of Color have to work harder than colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar.

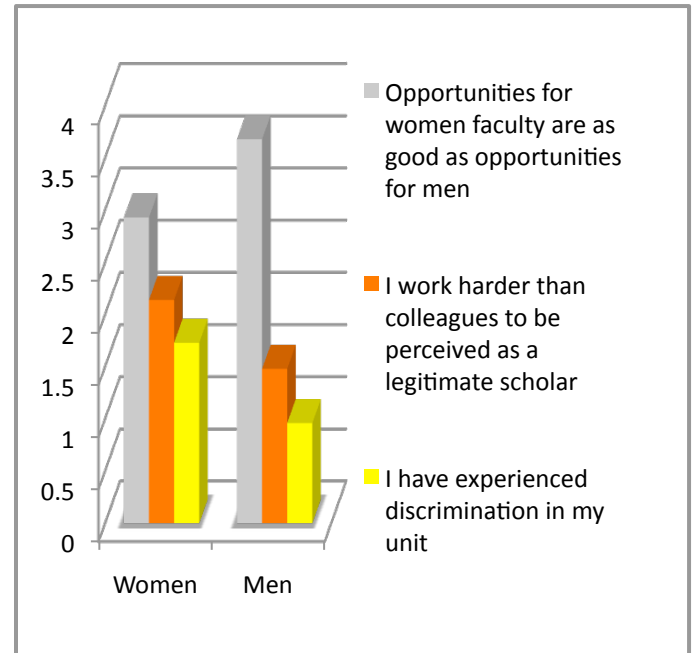


Figure 1: Diversity Issues by Gender

Note: Strongly Agree=5; Strongly Disagree=1. Wording truncated for table presentation.

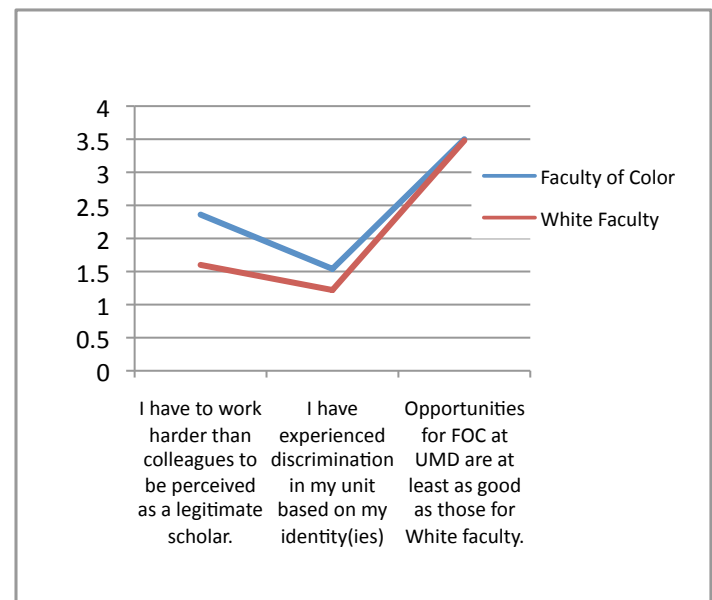


Figure 2: Diversity Issues by Race

Note: Strongly Agree=5; Strongly Disagree=1. Wording truncated for table presentation.

Although UMD espouses commitment to and implementation of diversity and fair treatment within its walls, experiences among different faculty members continue to vary substantially based on their individual and multiple identities. Our findings indicate many tenured and tenure-track faculty still perceive practices and attitudes inconsistent with those of our guiding mission for diversity.

REFERENCES

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