

FINAL REPORT

Study of Faculty Work Life at the University of Alaska Fairbanks

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presented by

The Faculty Senate Committee on the Status of Women



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INTRODUCTION

Figure I-3. Years it has taken current faculty to go from assistant professor to associate professor, by gender

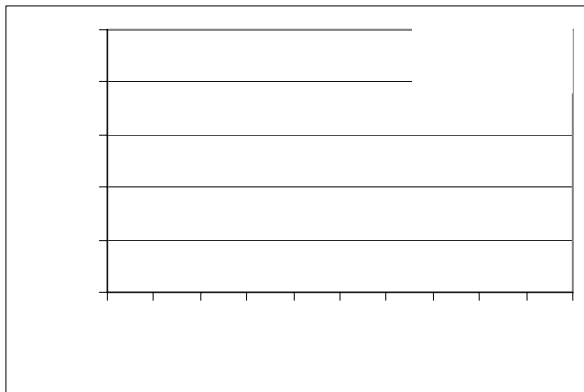
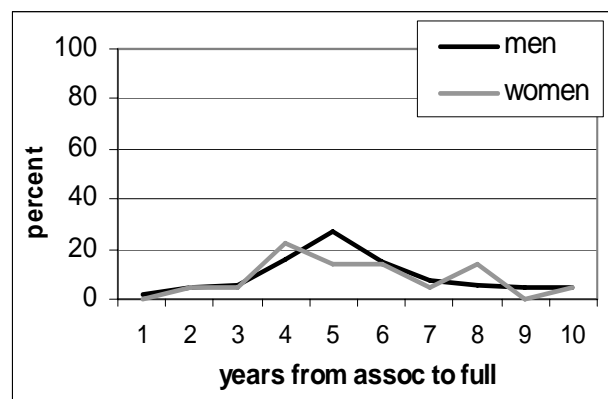


Figure I-4. Years it has taken current faculty to go from associate professor to full professor, by gender



The vertical axis represents the percentage within each gender, e.g. the percentage of women or men who took four years to change ranks.



between them and their extended family, and with the political atmosphere of their community.

The study documents many aspects of work life at UAF that are perceived very positively by faculty members. Clearly, the university is a satisfying place to work for a majority of faculty. Even still, the study also reveals a number of issues that are problematic, and a challenge lies ahead for the university if we are to continue to attract and retain

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This report summarizes the results of the Study of Faculty Work Life at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The study was sponsored by the Faculty Senate, conducted by the Faculty Senate Committee on the Status of Women (CSW), under the auspices of the Provost's Office and the Governance Office. This report is based on

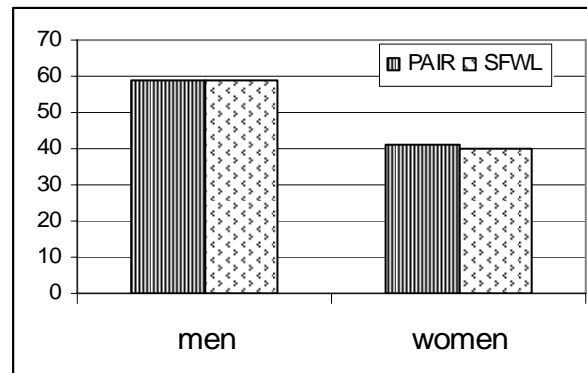
data from this study document that men make up 59% of the faculty. The PAIR data notes that women make up 41% of the faculty, while this study reveals that women make up 40%. In the present study, .7% of the respondents in this study did not state their gender or identified as transgender. We believe this probably explains the less than one percent difference in the two datasets.

Second, in 2004, PAIR documented that 70% of UAF faculty are tenured or tenure-track². Among the respondents for this study, 73% report being tenured or tenure-track. The 3% difference between the two figures may be explained by two factors: 1) 2.5% of the respondents of the study did not state whether they had experienced or expect to experience the tenure process, and thus were not included in the analysis about tenure; 2) the PAIR data includes 595 faculty, while the population for the Faculty Work Life Study is 599.

A third reason why we assume there to be no non-response bias is that the data from PAIR indicates that in 2004, 42% of UAF faculty were currently tenured³. Among the respondents for the Faculty Work Life Study, 43% currently hold tenure, a percentage that closely corresponds to PAIR data.

Fourth, PAIR indicates that in 2004, 11% of UAF faculty were at the rural campuses⁴. Among the respondents for this study, nine percent say they are at a rural campus. The two percent difference can probably be explained by the fact that 33 respondents did not state their location. This is possibly because of worry that saying they are from a particular campus might identify them as individuals, thus breaching the confidentiality assured by the study. It is probable that this could explain the two percent difference be-

Figure 1. Comparison between two datasets: PAIR and SFWL



PAIR=UAF Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research; SFWL=Study of Faculty Work Life.

tween the PAIR data and the data from this study.

A Note About the Data

Our overriding goal for this project is to collect and present information to the university community that is easily understood, and thus highly usable. The analysis in this report is written so that people with only a lay understanding of statistics can find the information usable. Most of the important data is presented in easy-to-read chart format. In most cases, we collapsed categories so as to simplify analysis. For example, we typically collapse categories such as “agree strongly” and “agree somewhat” into “agree”, or “very satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” into “satisfied” in order to make the analysis comprehensible to lay persons.

Members of the university community who are especially interested in more complex statistical analysis are invited to examine the appendices. Much of the data will also be available online at a future date. Specific

¹PAIR. 2004. <http://www.uaf.edu/pair/2004/D4s04.html>

²PAIR. 2004. <http://www.uaf.edu/pair/2004/D5s04.html>

³PAIR. 2004. <http://www.uaf.edu/pair/2004/D5s04.html>

⁴PAIR. 2004. <http://www.uaf.edu/pair/2004/D5204.html>

questions and comments may be addressed to the Committee on the Status of Women.

Unless otherwise noted, data that appears in this study is from the Faculty Work Life Study.

Conclusion

A strength of this study is that it utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data. Respondents were asked not only to mark boxes to indicate their response to questions, but they were also encouraged to write comments. Respondents' written comments appear in the appendices. Information with potential to identify individual respondents has been deleted.

In the future, we expect to publish a series of recommendations based on the data contained in this report. It is our hope that this study will create opportunities for members of the UAF community to come together to recommend ways to improve faculty work life.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

There are 318 respondents included in this study. Respondents are employed as faculty by UAF, and exhibit a range in terms of rank, length of time employed at the university, and educational attainment. Demographic and other information is summarized here so as to present a brief profile of respondents.

Figure 2 illustrates the years during which respondents were hired. As the figure notes, 42% of the respondents say they were hired during the current decade, the period represented by the years 2000-05. The second-biggest group of faculty (33%) were hired in the last decade, during the 1990s. The third-biggest group, those hired during the 1980s, represents about one fifth of the respondents (19%), while about 7% say they were hired during the 1970s. Less than one percent of the faculty who responded to the study say they were hired earlier than 1970.

Women make up about 40% of the respondents, and men make up about 59%. Approximately one percent of respondents identify as transgender or did not state their gender on

their questionnaire.

Most of those who participated in the study say they are US citizens (86%), while 14% say they are not US citizens. The majority identify as heterosexual (92%), though 7% identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. A majority of faculty say they are married or have a domestic partner (80%). Ten percent are not married or partnered, and nine percent say they are divorced, widowed, or separated.

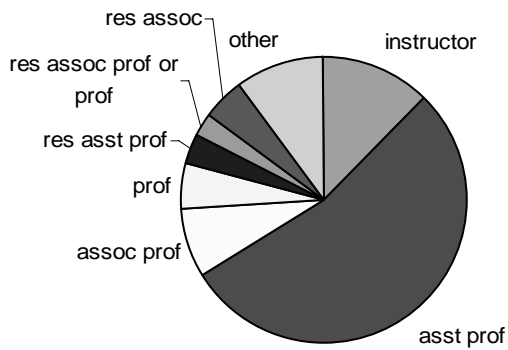
Participants were asked when they s 70.9(jor-)TJT*0

faculty, between 15% and 19% say their mother has an advanced degree. But nearly double these percentages report that their father has an advanced degree (30% of men, 38% of women). There are clearly some interesting effects that have to do with parent educational attainment and gender that might be interesting to pursue elsewhere.

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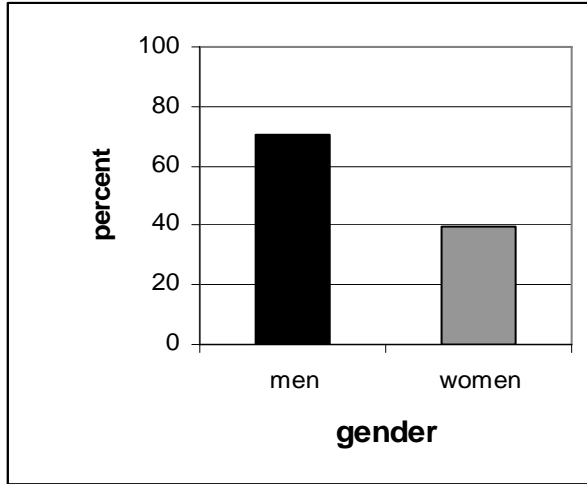
Figure 5. First position at UAF





own process of being hired at UAF, as Figure

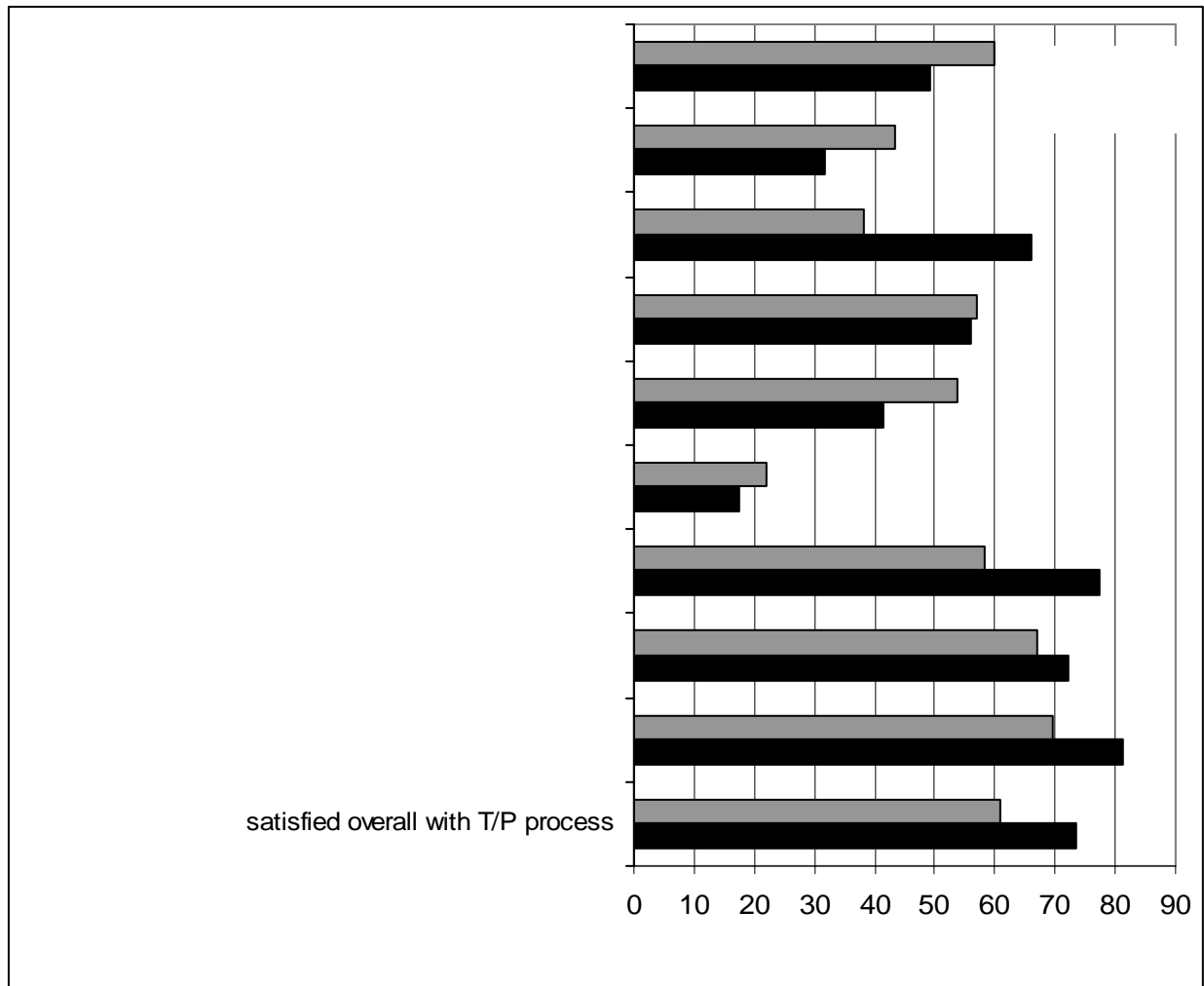
Figure 16. Percent who currently hold tenure, by gender



39% of female respondents currently hold tenure. Several national studies document that women have a higher attrition rate at every step of the tenure process when compared to women.

Some interesting gender differences appeared in the study pertaining to respondents' satisfaction with the tenure process, as shown in Figure 17. Women faculty who have experienced the tenure process felt more supported than men did on three specific aspects of the process: getting mentoring, help with improving their teaching, and receiving assistance in achieving tenure/promotion. However, overall, men say they feel more sup-

Figure 17. Respondents' satisfaction with aspects of the tenure/promotion process, by gender



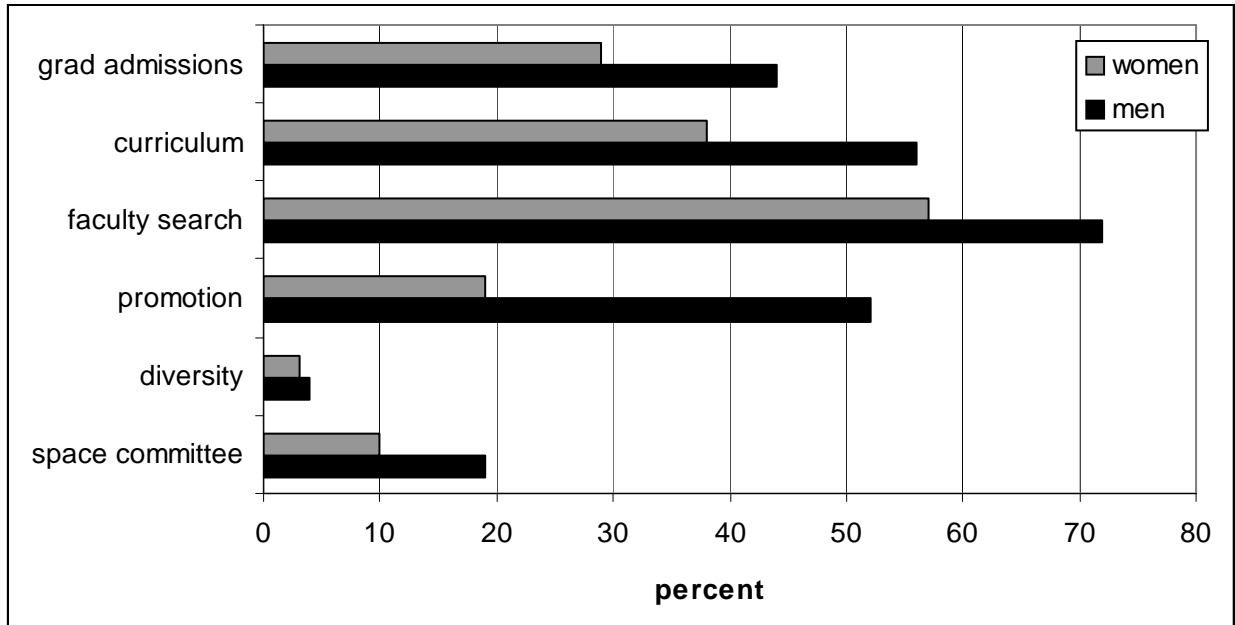
ported in their bid for tenure. Male respondents are nearly twice as likely to say there is a strong fit between their teaching, re-

cent of both men and women prefer to spend

ulty express about upgrades of their equipment and travel funds from the university.

With colleagues slightly less satisfied (4.75 (s.d. = 0.48) versus 4.70 (s.d. = 0.46) respectively) and slightly more dissatisfied with the university's support for teaching (4.70 (s.d. = 0.46) versus 4.65 (s.d. = 0.46) respectively).

Figure 21. Faculty who have ever served on departmental or unit committees, by gender



motion committee, compared with only 19% of female respondents. Leadership on various committees, exhibited in Figure 22, also reveals marked gender patterns. Again, chairing promotion committees presents the most gender difference. A fourth of the men surveyed have served as chair of a promotion committee (24%), while a scant 5% of women have

chaired such a committee. An underlying cause of this gender disparity might be the fact that men currently are more likely than women to hold a rank above assistant professor, thus sharply limiting the percentage of women who can serve on promotion and tenure committees.

Figure 22. Faculty who have ever chaired departmental or unit committees, by gender

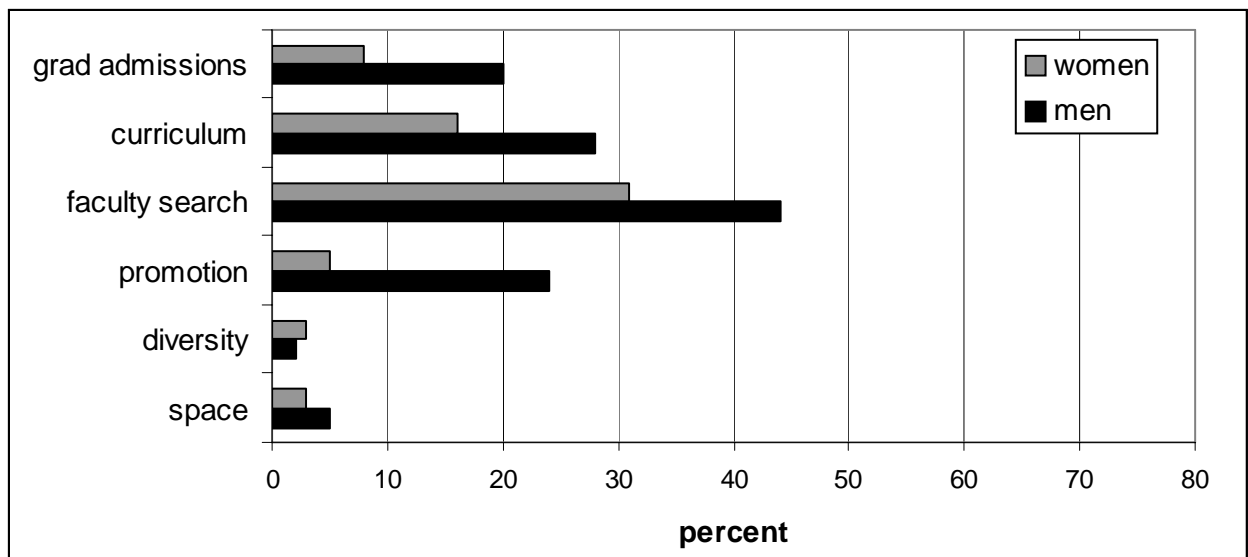
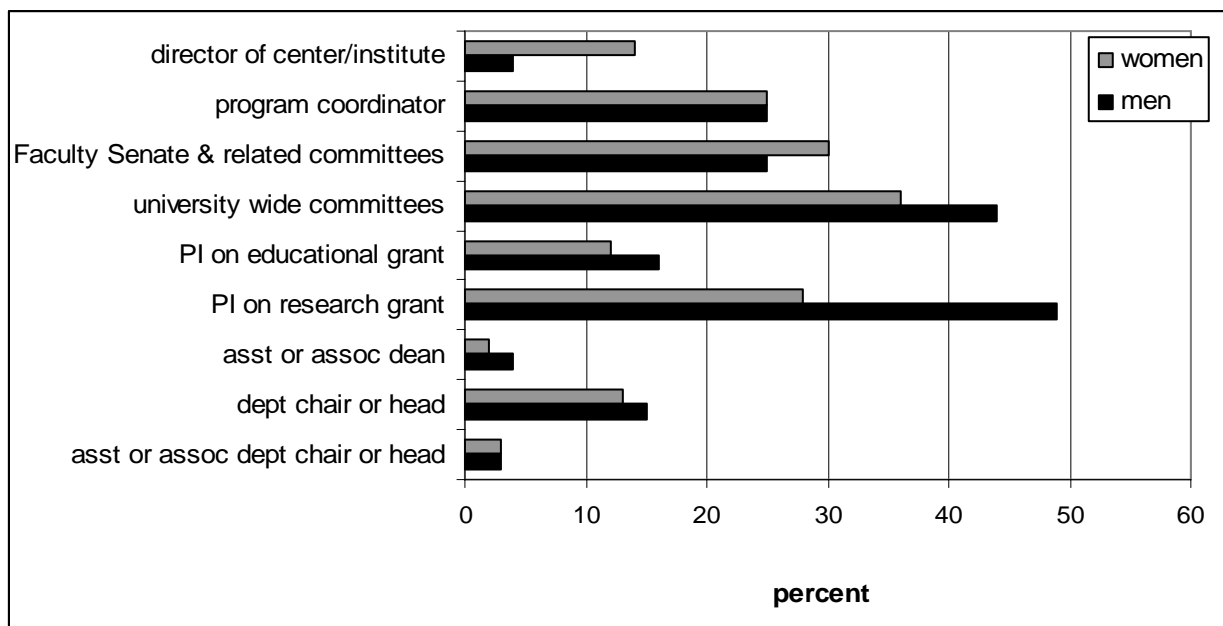


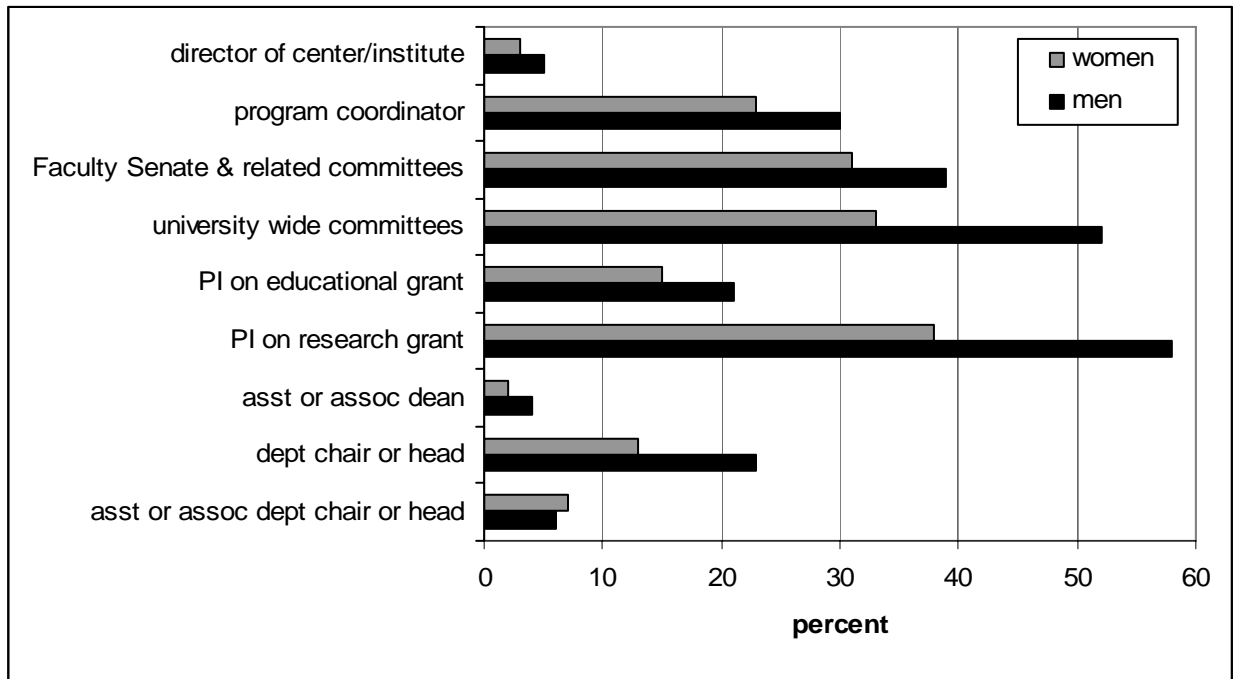
Figure 23. Faculty who currently serve in selected leadership positions at UAF, by gen-

Leadership

The study also inquired whether faculty currently serve in selected leadership positions at UAF. Figure 23 documents the results. The results are gendered in mixed, and quite interesting ways. Among the respondents, women are much more likely currently to serve as a director of a center or institute (4% of men compared to 14% of women). Women are also more likely currently to serve on the Faculty Senate and related committees (30%) than are men (15%). Men and women are about equally as likely currently to serve as a program coordinator (25% for both), or department chair or head (15% of men, 13% of women). In contrast, men (49%) are much more likely currently to serve as a PI on a research grant than are women (28%) and somewhat more likely currently to serve on university-wide committees (44% of men, 36% of women). So few respondents report currently serving as assistant or associate department chair or head, or as assistant or associate deans, that the reported gender differ-

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Figure 24. Faculty who have served in selected

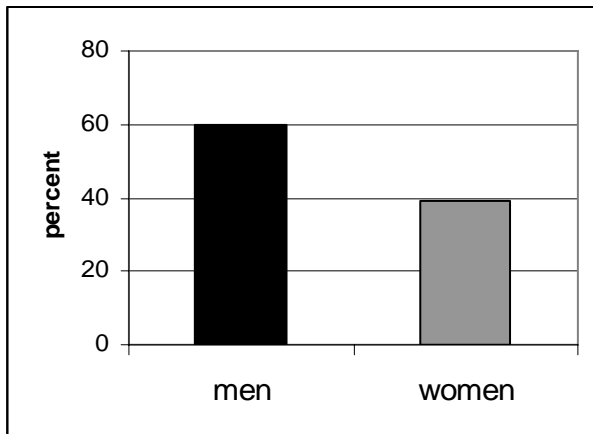


more likely to have served as the president of a professional organization compared to women (19%). A striking contrast to the trend of UAF male faculty having served in leadership roles more than women is found in

the percentage of women who have served as the president of a service organization. While 30% of female faculty have served in such a capacity, only 24% of male faculty have. The percentage of men and women who have

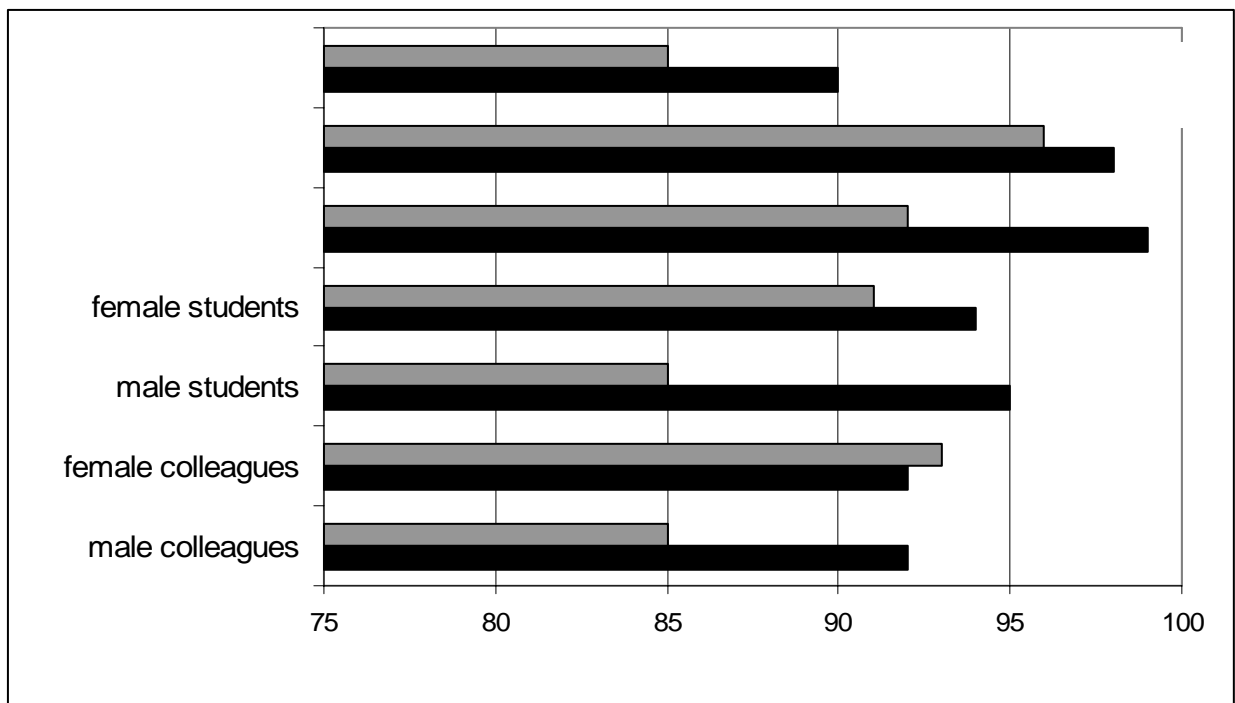
institute or a center. Approximately one third of men (33%) and women (30%) say they intend to pursue a formal leadership position. Those respondents who say they are interested in taking on a formal leadership role were also asked whether they perceive any barriers preventing them from taking on such a position. Figure 26 shows that their responses show a marked gender pattern. While 60% of male faculty interested in formal leadership report that they perceive no barriers to them doing so, only 39% of female faculty perceive no barriers.

Figure 26. Faculty intending to take on formal leadership and perceive no barriers to doing so, by gender

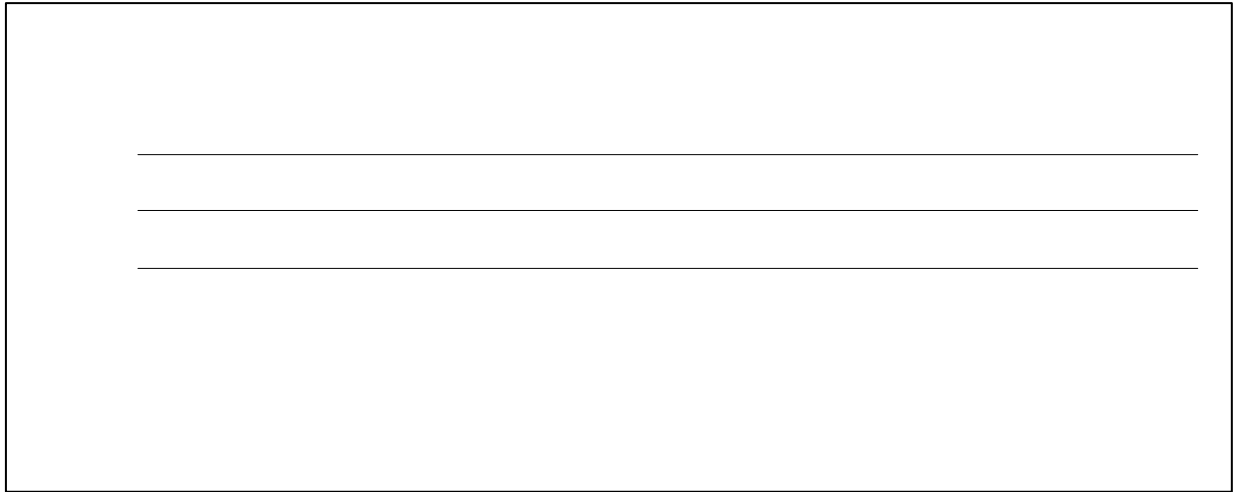


Respect accorded to faculty

At UAF, the vast majority of respondents believe they are treated with respect by their chair/coordinator, staff members, students, and colleagues in their primary department or unit. However, as Figure 27 displays, a particular gender pattern emerges when men and women faculty are asked to rate their agreement about the respect accorded to them by



specific groups. The most marked gender difference appears when faculty are asked about the respect they perceive from male students. Eighty five percent of women faculty agree



making. Contrast this with Figure 30, where comparatively few faculty of either gender feel like a full and equal participant in university problem-solving and decision-making (men 33%, women 30%). Similarly, while just over half of men (52%) and less than half of women (47%) feel they have a voice in how departmental resources are allocated, only a minority of men (16%) or women (9%) feel they have a voice in how UAF resources are allocated. Most male faculty (86%) and female faculty (76%) think that their departmental meetings allow for all par-

ment among faculty that their departmental committee assignments are rotated in a fair manner (70% of men, 58% of women).

It is important to note that although men's and women's responses followed the same trend on all measures illustrated in Figures 29 and 30, in that overall, a majority of faculty feel a sense of equitable participation and decision-making power at the departmental level, but little at the university level, there is also a persistent gender gap. Women consistently report feeling less like an equal and full participant than do men, and they feel they have less voice in resource allocation both at the departmental and university levels. Fe-

male faculty are less likely than men to believe they are involved in decision-making either at the departmental or the university level. Women faculty are less likely than men to report that departmental meetings allow for all participants to share their views.

Satisfaction with UAF

The study asked its participants to describe their general sense of satisfaction with the University of Alaska Fairbanks. As Figures 31 and 32 document, satisfaction trends among both male and female faculty exhibit similar trends, while also showing gender patterns that should be further examined. The vast majority of faculty report they are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their job. There are some potential

UAF Programs and Resources

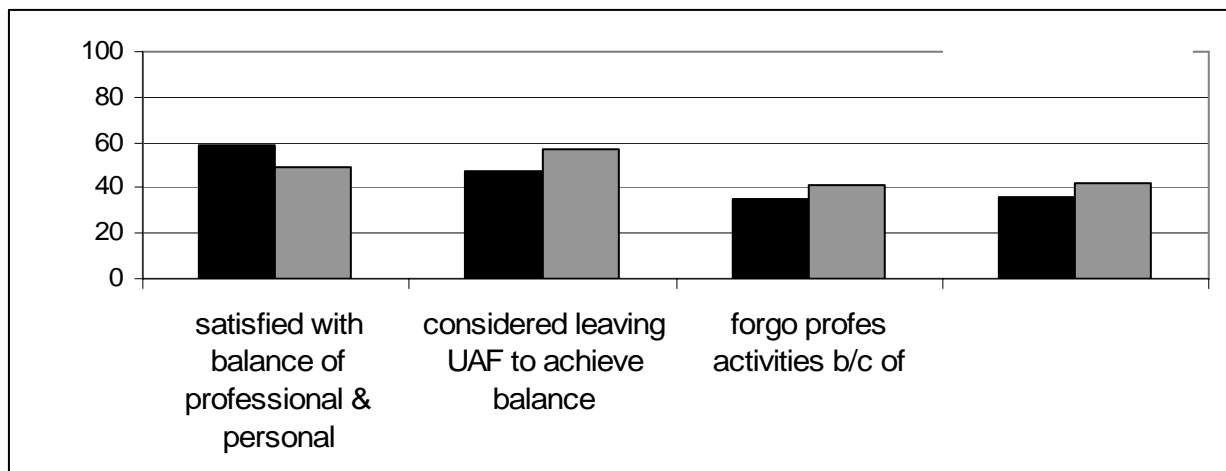
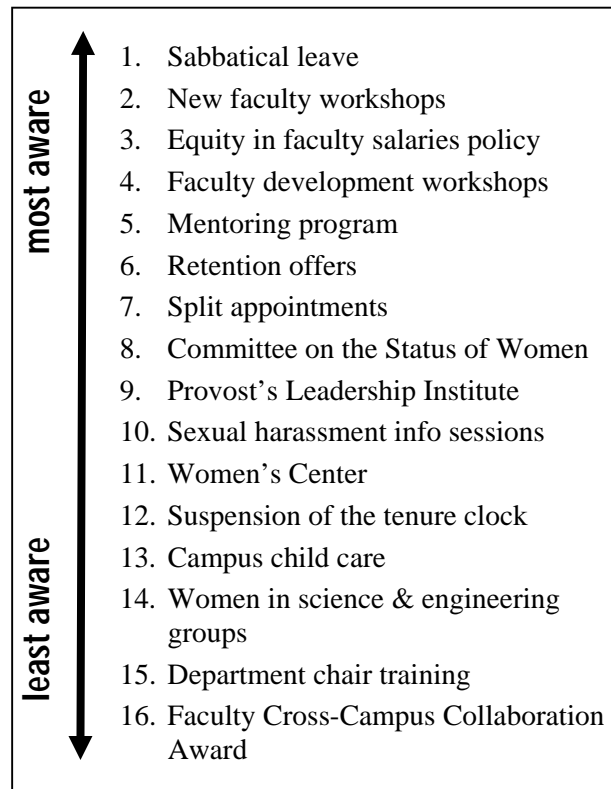
The study asked respondents to evaluate programs instituted at UAF to improve faculty working environments. Figure 34 describes how aware faculty are of these programs. Faculty are most aware of sabbatical leave. Workshops for new faculty are the second most commonly cited, followed by the equity in faculty salaries policy. Faculty are least aware of the Faculty Cross-Campus Collaboration Award. Faculty were asked to rate the programs according to how valuable they are. Faculty say the sabbatical leave program is the most valuable. This is followed by the mentoring program, equity in faculty salaries policy, and new faculty workshops.

On all 16 programs and resources, respondents were asked whether the university is adequately implementing each. The resource or program that was cited most often as *not* being adequately implemented was the equity in faculty salaries policy. Conversely, there is widespread agreement among the study's participants that the university *is* adequately implementing the sabbatical leave program and new faculty workshops.

Balancing Personal and Professional Life

Nationally, the question of how universities can assist faculty in balancing their professional responsibilities with their personal

Figure 34. Faculty awareness of UAF programs and resources

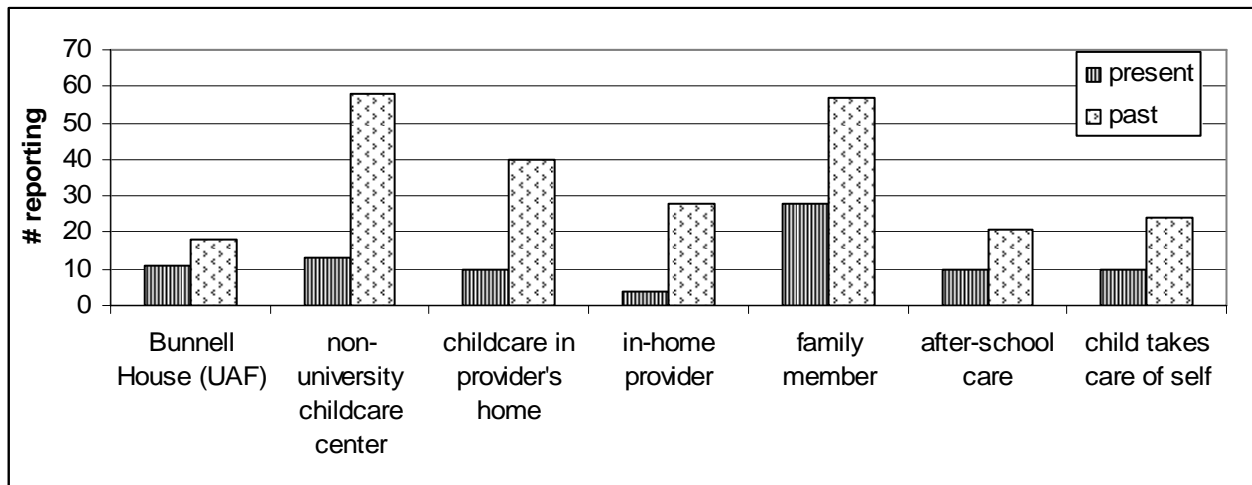


Balancing work and home

Male faculty and female faculty differ in their perspectives on how satisfied they are with the balance they have between their professional and personal lives. For example, as Figure 35 shows, more men (59%) than women (49%) say they are usually satisfied with the way their personal and professional lives are balanced. Female faculty are more likely to say they often must forgo professional activities because of their personal responsibilities (41% of women, 35% of men). Of the respondents, 42% of the women say they believe their personal responsibilities and commitments have slowed down their career progression, compared to 36% of the men. Perhaps most disturbingly, while nearly half of the men (47%) surveyed say they have seriously considered leaving UAF in order to achieve a better balance between their work and personal lives, 57% of women say they have seriously considered leaving for this reason. There is also a gender difference that surfaces in the question about whether the university supports faculty in their quest to balance their personal and professional lives, as Figure 36 shows.

Children, child care, and other family issues

Just less than half of faculty say that while they have been at UAF, they either currently care for a dependent child, or that they have cared for a dependent child in the past. Figure 37 shows there is little gender difference between faculty who say they have taken care of a dependent child while at UAF. Overall, 54% of faculty say they have

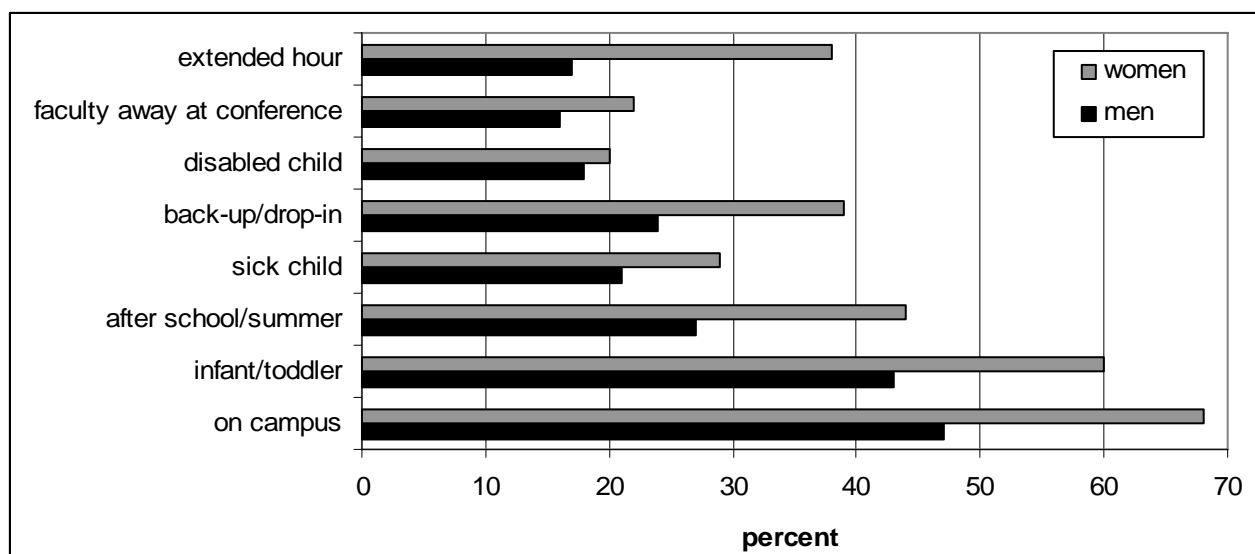
Figure 38. Current and past child care arrangements among faculty

child care in a provider's home. An interesting aspect to point out in Figure 38 is the spread of the data over the seven options listed. Because faculty were able to check all of the options they have ever used, the data shows that searching for a viable solution to the issue of quality child care is an ongoing issue and that faculty typically use several options. Overall, the vast majority of faculty (between 82% and 88%) say they are satisfied with their present and current childcare arrangements, with women expressing some-

what higher satisfaction.

Figure 39 summarizes faculty beliefs about what types of child care should be a priority for the university. The question of how high a priority the university should make particular child care arrangements was asked of all faculty, not just those who have children. There are clear gender differences, with women consistently placing a higher priority on all types of childcare than men.

Gender also surfaces in the question of whether the university should place a priority

Figure 39. Types of child care that should be a priority for the university, by gender

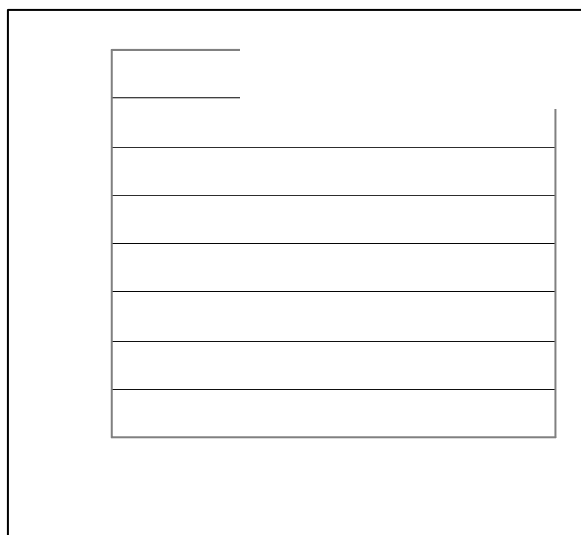
on offering assistance in covering child care

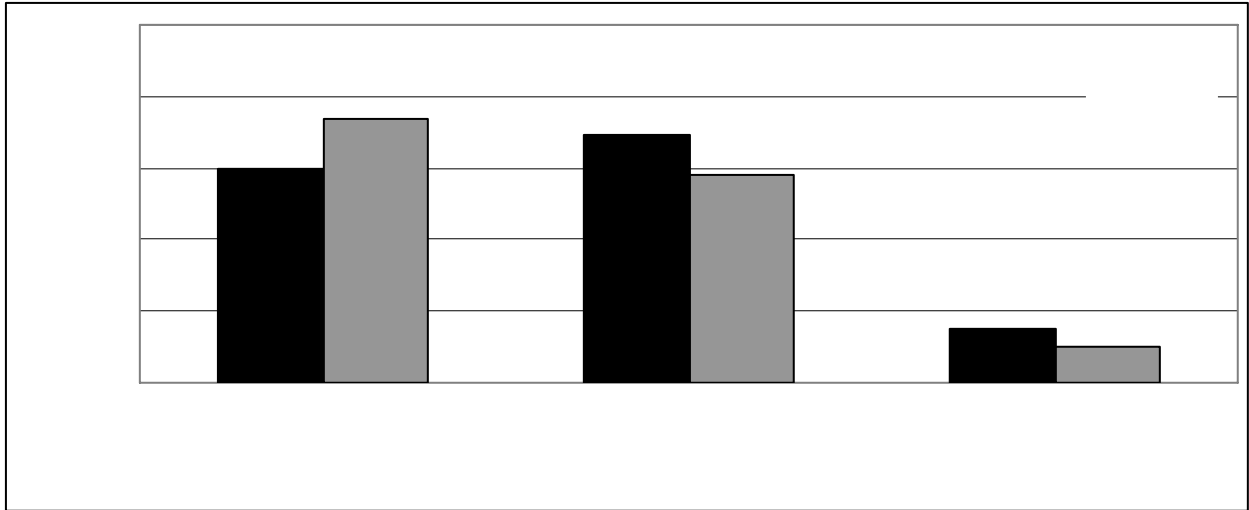
be a same-sex partner or an other sex partner, and also many who say they are divorced, widowed, or separated, or that they are not partnered/married. The tendency is for men to be more likely than women to be married, but women to be more likely to be in a domestic partnership, divorced, widowed, or separated, or to say they are not currently married or partnered than men are. The number of women and men who say they are married or partnered, but their spouse/partner lives elsewhere, is similar. UAF faculty mirror national trends in academia, where over 75% of men faculty members are married, but just over half of women faculty are.

There are some employment issues unique to this university and to other universities that share the attributes of isolation, small population, vast distances, or extreme weather. Employment of spouse/partners is one of the issues that is especially pertinent to UAF, as there are comparatively few employers from which to choose. Figures 42 and 43 compare male and female faculty members' answers on questions related to spouse/partner employment. As Figure 42 shows, over half of male faculty (56%) say their spouse/partner currently works full-

time, while less than half (47%) say their spouse/partner's preferred employment is to work full-time. A comparison with Figure 43 reveals an interesting feature of the data: women faculty say their spouse/partners' preferred full-time employment status (75%) and current full-time employment status (73%) more closely match than male faculty's do. Also, more of the spouse/partners of women faculty currently work or prefer to work full-time than men's do. One-third (33%) of men say their spouse/partner prefers to work part-time, while just 13% of women say their spouse/partner prefers part-time employment. Approximately one-fourth of men say their spouse/partner is not currently employed, but only nine percent of women say the same.

Gay, lesbian, and bisexual (GLB) faculty report higher levels of agreement between their spouse/partner's current employment status and preferred employment status than do faculty who identify as heterosexual. Among GLB faculty, 64% say their spouse/partner works full time and 64% report that this is their spouse/partner's preferred employment status. The same is true for GLB faculty whose spouse/partner works part-time or is retired.





The study asked respondents to say whether their spouse/partner currently works at UAF, and also if the respondent was hired as a “trailing spouse.” Among heterosexual faculty, over one-fourth (28%) say their spouse/partner works for the university. A nearly identical percentage of GLB faculty (27%) reports the same. Five percent of the heterosexual faculty members say they were hired as a “trailing spouse,” but none of the GLB faculty say this.

Figure 44 explores three issues about fac-

ulty spouse/partners’ job opportunities. Women (74%) are more likely than men (60%) to say their spouse/partner is satisfied with their current job opportunities. A male faculty member (69%) is more likely to say that they are both staying because of his job than a female faculty member (58%). A man is also more likely to report that his spouse/partner has left their community without him in order to enhance employment opportunities (men 15%, women 10%).

Figure 45 shows that a disturbing number

of faculty and their spouse/partners have seriously considered leaving UAF in order to enhance the career opportunities for their spouse/partners. Nearly a fourth of men (23%) say their spouse/partner has seriously considered leaving their community to enhance the career opportunities for their spouse/partners. A similar number of women (25%) reports the

jobs. For example, it becomes apparent that women (53%) feel more job-related stress than men (42%). Women (58%) also feel more job-related fatigue than men (42%). Women feel more depressed (16%) and nervous (21%) in relation to their job than men feel depressed (9%) or nervous (13%). Men and women tend to feel short-tempered or affected by SAD in relation to their jobs at

Women at UAF

Figures 51 through 54 illustrate faculty responses to questions specific to their departments. One of the most often-heard questions pertaining to women in academia is the question of whether there are “enough.” Figure 51 documents that a majority of faculty think that yes, there are enough women in their department. Significantly more women (73%) than men (59%) say that there are enough women faculty in their department.

Figure 51. Are there enough women in your department?

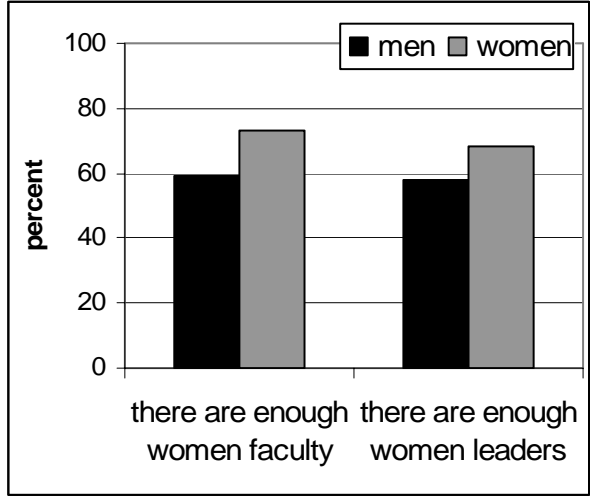


Figure 52. How is the climate for women faculty in your department?

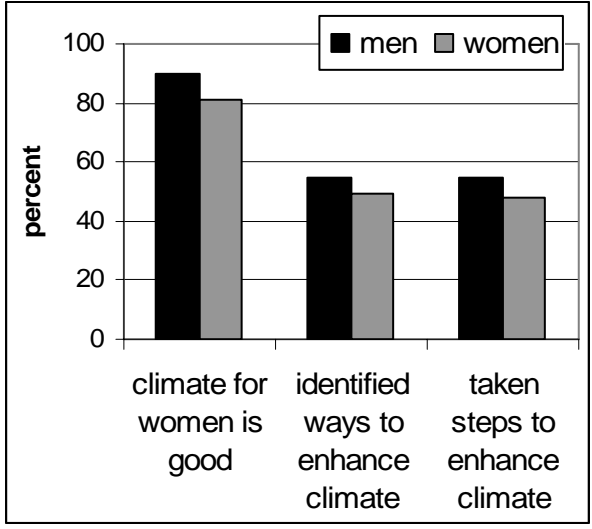


Figure 53. Recruitment: “My department has...”

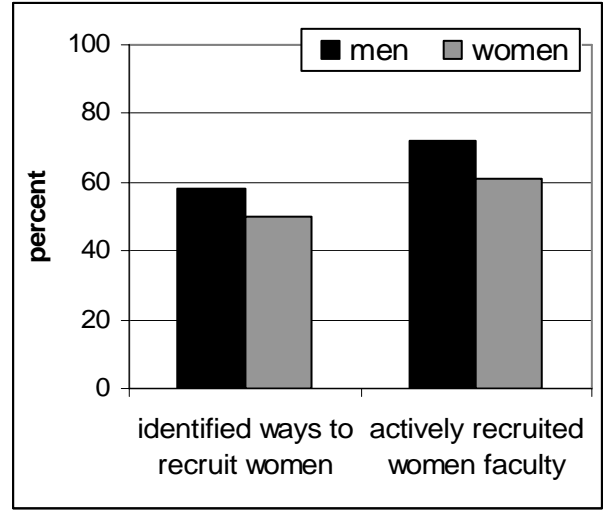
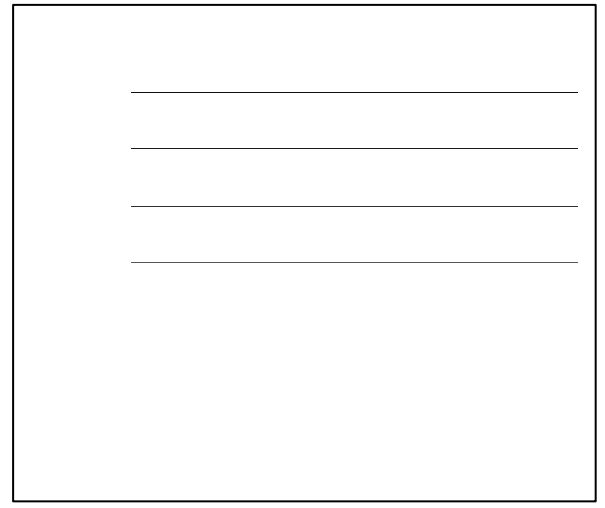


Figure 54. Leadership: “My department has...”

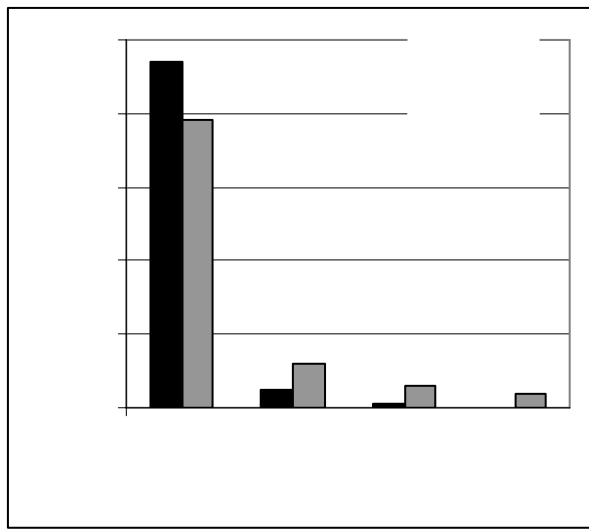


Similarly, more women (68%) than men (58%) say there are enough women leaders in their department. Figure 52 notes that most faculty think that the climate for women is good in their department, although more men (90%) than women (81%) think so. About half of women and men believe their department has identified ways to enhance the departmental climate for women, and that their department has actively taken steps to enhance the climate for women.

On the issue of recruitment of women,

Figure 53 shows that faculty opinion is somewhat mixed. While 58% of men think that their department has identified ways to recruit women faculty, only half of the women (50%) think this to be true. Nearly three-quarters of men (72%) think that their department has actively recruited women, but less than two-thirds of women (61%) agree. Still,

this figure documents that a majority of both men and women think their department is trying to recruit women faculty, even if it may



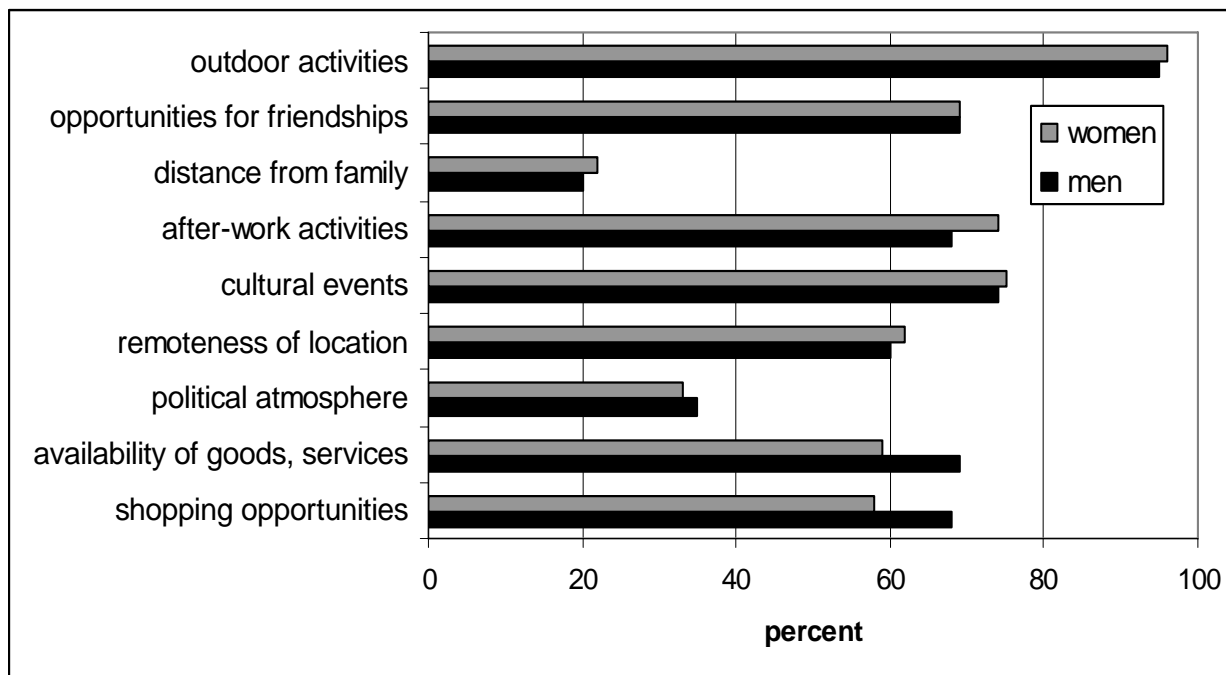
Faculty here report significant levels of sexual harassment during the last five years at UAF, as Figure 62 documents. As detailed earlier, women at UAF are more often targets of sexual harassment during the past five years than men are. Although most men and women have *not* experienced sexual harassment in the past five years, six percent of men and a shocking 22% of women say they have. While none of the men surveyed say they have experienced sexual harassment at a chronic level, five percent say it has happened to them once or twice during the last five years, and one percent report it having happened three to five times. Among all respondents, 12% of women say they have been sexually harassed once or twice during the last five years, and six percent say they have experienced the problem of sexual harassment three to five times in the last five years. Four percent report sexual harassment being a chronic problem with which they must contend as faculty members.

Figure 63 shows that men and women differ in their opinion about the seriousness of the problem of sexual harassment at UAF. More men than women believe that the issue

is taken seriously at the university. Comparably, more women than men believe that sexual harassment is a big problem at UAF. Figure 64 also documents an interesting gender difference related to sexual harassment. While more women than men say they know the steps to take to deal with sexual harassment, less women than men say that that

process is effective.

Having discovered that sexual harassment is considered to be a problem by many at the university, the study asked respondents to identify the relationship with those who sexually harasses them. Figure 65 details the relationships, showing marked gender patterns. Most of the perpetrators of sexual harassment against men are students. While this population also harasses women to a significant degree, most perpetrators of sexual harassment against women at UAF are junior faculty members. Comparatively few men are sexu-

Figure 66. Faculty satisfaction with community issues, by gender

for cultural events (women 75%, men 74%). About three-quarters of women (74%) also say they are satisfied with the opportunities for after-work activities, while men express somewhat less satisfaction with the possibilities for after-work activities (68%). Over two-thirds of men and women (69% for both) say they are satisfied with the opportunities their community offers for the development of friendships and other peer relations.

Men (69%) express more satisfaction than women (59%) about the availability of goods and services, and about shopping opportunities in their community (women 58%, men 68%). Well over half of both women (62%) and men (60%) say they are satisfied with the remote location of their community.

Just a third of faculty say they are satisfied with the political atmosphere of their community. In fact, 65% of men and 67% of women say they are dissatisfied with this aspect of their community. Faculty express the most dissatisfaction with the distance their community is from their extended family members, although for one-fifth of women and men fac-

ulty, the distance from family is satisfying. Eighty percent of men and 78% of women are dissatisfied with the distance, while 20% of men and 22% of women are satisfied by the distance from their extended family.

On most measures, faculty are satisfied with community life, and with the unique opportunities Alaska communities offer. Those aspects of our communities that are most highly ranked—outdoor activities, opportunities for friendships, after-work activities and cultural events—should be highlighted and emphasized.

CONCLUSION

This report documents many of the wonderful aspects of faculty work life here at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). As was discussed, the majority of faculty express satisfaction about many parts of their jobs. Clearly, the unique location and focus of UAF make the university especially attractive to many who make their home here as faculty members. As a university community, we should emphasize the good things that make working here a joy so as to continue to attract and to retain our valuable colleagues.

UAF has made great strides in increasing opportunities for women faculty, as seen in the fact that women now represent about half of the percentage of new faculty hired in the current decade. However, women faculty continue to lag behind men in key ways. It is incumbent upon the university community proactively to address some of the challenges preventing women faculty from achieving their potential to the same degree as men. Similarly, the study documents challenges that must also be overcome so that faculty of color also experience equality of opportunity and achievement while faculty members at UAF.

The Faculty Senate Committee on the Status of Women plans to invite various constituencies at UAF to engage in dialogue about the issues raised in this report. It is our hope that together, the UAF community can create viable and innovative solutions to the challenges documented by this report. We also hope to create ways to expand those aspects of faculty work life that respondents describe as particularly satisfying and enjoyable.

Report prepared by:

Sine Anahita
2005-06 Member, Committee on the Status of Women

With assistance from:

Carol Gold
2004-06 Co-Chair, Committee on the Status of Women

Jane Weber
2004-06 Co-Chair, Committee on the Status of Women

and the 2004-05 and 2005-06 members of the Faculty Senate Committee on the Status of Women

Coordinated by:

Sheri Layral, Coordinator,
Governance Office

Data entry work by:

Christian Gou-Leonhardt, student assistant

Jaime Walker, student assistant

Funded by:

Office of the Provost
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Additional information provided by:

Hild M. Peters, Academic and Faculty Services Manager, Office of the Provost

Planning, Analysis and Institutional Research (PAIR)