

Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession

The American Economic Association (AEA) has charged the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) with monitoring the position of women in the profession and with undertaking activities to improve that position. This report presents information on the advancement of women students and faculty in academic economics and reports on the Committee's activities during 1995. Currently, CSWEP has almost 7,500 persons on its mailing list. This includes 1,818 students and 388 men, as well as all women who are members of the AEA or who have joined CSWEP separately.

The Hiring and Promotion of Women Economists in Ph.D.-Granting Departments

For the past two years, CSWEP has worked on developing a network of contacts in all the Ph.D.-granting departments. One of the tasks of these contacts is to report annually on the progress of women in their departments. As a result, CSWEP has been able to acquire much more complete and accurate information than is available through the AEA Universal Academic Questionnaire (UAQ) which is mailed to all department chairs each fall. In fall 1994, CSWEP was able to obtain responses on a one-page questionnaire from 111 of the 115 Ph.D.-granting departments where it has contact persons. This is in contrast to the UAQ, which received responses from only 69 Ph.D.-granting departments.¹

Information from the CSWEP Questionnaire on the Status of Women Faculty.—Table 1 provides information on the share of women faculty at various levels in 111 Ph.D.-granting departments. The first column provides information on all 111 schools, while the second column provides a comparison to the top 20

schools. (Note that all of the top 20 schools returned the CSWEP questionnaire, so this is a complete sample of these schools, which has never been available through the UAQ.)

Table 1 indicates that the share of women in academic appointments decreases with rank. The growing group of nontenured faculty in economics departments (due to cost pressures on many schools) contains 25-percent women. Untenured tenure-track assistant professors are 23-percent female and associate professors are 13-percent female, while full professors in economics are only 6-percent female. Among the top 20 schools, the numbers are lower at every rank, indicating less representation of women on the faculty in the very top-ranked departments.

Information from the UAQ on the Status of Women Faculty over Time.—While the UAQ data are less reliable, because of both a smaller sample size and a high variance in which schools report over time, they do provide a time series on women's representation by rank over the years. Figure 1 shows the patterns from 1974 to 1994 in Ph.D.-granting departments. The 1994 numbers from the UAQ are quite close to those from the CSWEP data. The share of women at each rank continues to increase over time, although the increase has been very slow in recent years.

Figure 2 compares public and private schools that grant Ph.D.'s. Both this year and on average over the past five years, the share of women at each rank is slightly higher in public universities than in private universities. This is most noticeable in 1994 at the full-professor level, where only 1.7 percent of the reported faculty are women in private institutions, while 5.4 percent of the full professors are women in public institutions.

Figure 3 looks at the advancement and promotion of women through the ranks. Figure 3 compares new Ph.D.'s to new assistant professor hires. The number of new Ph.D.'s who were women has been relatively constant, averaging 25.6 percent over the last

¹ CSWEP's sample includes only U.S. economics departments. The UAQ includes a few non-economics departments that grant economics degrees.

TABLE 1—SHARE OF WOMEN BY RANK, PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS, FALL 1994

	Percentage women	
	All Ph.D.-granting departments	Top 20 departments only
Non-tenure track	25.2	19.0
Assistant professor (untenured)	22.8	18.9
Associate professor (total)	12.9	9.5
Untenured	6.4	5.0
Tenured	13.6	10.7
Full professor (tenured)	6.3	4.2

Source: Data collected by CSWEP; 111 of 115 schools reporting in column 1, 20 of 20 schools reporting in column 2.

five years.² The share of new assistant professors hired into Ph.D.-granting departments over the last five years has been at about this same level.

Figure 4 looks at the next point of career progression, comparing the female share of newly hired or promoted associate professors to the share of women among the stock of assistant professors. In 1994, the share of newly hired or promoted associates fell well below the share of female assistant professors. Over the past five years, the female share of new hires or promotions at the associate level has averaged 4.2 percentage points below women's representation at the assistant-professor level. Figure 5 compares the share of women newly hired or promoted as full professors to the share of women among the stock of associate professors. Over the past five years, the share of new full-professor hires has averaged 2.7 percentage points below the share of female associates.

The evidence in Figures 3–5 indicates that there is some gap between the rate at which women are being hired and promoted and their share in the rank below. Indeed, efforts to sim-

² A consistent series on the share of women Ph.D.'s in economics is obtained from the National Science Foundation's annual Survey of Earned Doctorates.

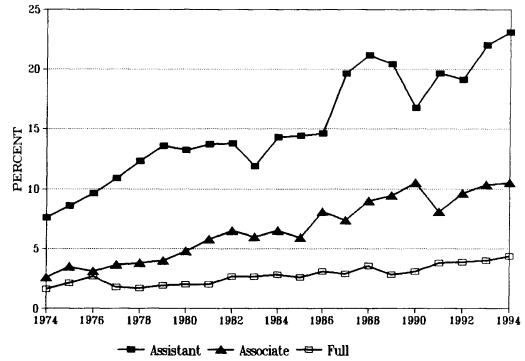


FIGURE 1. FEMALE FACULTY IN PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS, PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL FACULTY BY RANK, 1974–1993

Source: American Economic Association, Universal Academic Questionnaire, 1974–1994.

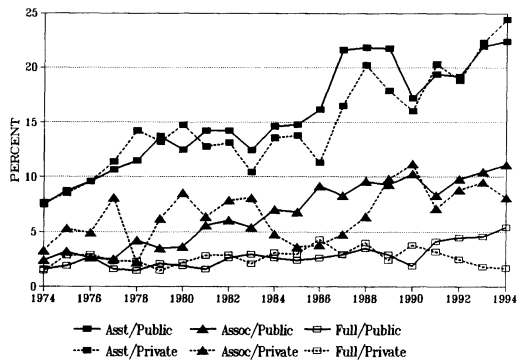


FIGURE 2. FEMALE FACULTY IN PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS, PERCENTAGES BY RANK AND TYPE OF INSTITUTION, 1974–1994

Source: American Economic Association, Universal Academic Questionnaire, 1974–1994.

ulate the expected progress of women through the ranks, given their entry-level representation, indicates that women are not advancing as rapidly as might be expected.

Information on the Status of Women Graduate Students and Undergraduates in Economics.—The availability of faculty women to economics departments depends crucially upon the pipeline of women being trained in economics. As noted above, the share of

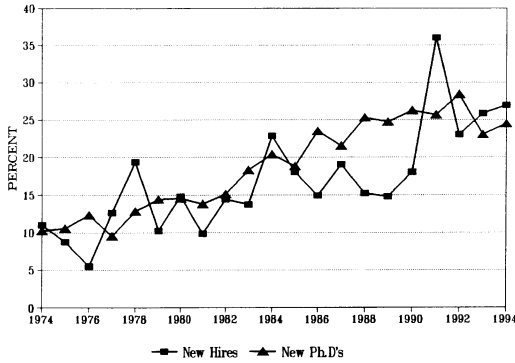


FIGURE 3. SHARE OF NEW PH.D.'S VERSUS SHARE OF NEW ASSISTANT-PROFESSOR HIRES WHO ARE FEMALE IN PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS

Source: Assistant-professor hiring information from the American Economic Association, Universal Academic Questionnaire, 1974–1994. Ph.D. information from the National Science Foundation.

women in graduate programs has been relatively constant since the late 1980's. The share of undergraduate economics majors who are female has actually fallen over the past 10 years. The UAQ reports that 29 percent of graduating B.A.'s in economics were female in 1994. CSWEP data show a very similar 30.4-percent share of women among B.A.'s given by Ph.D.-granting departments. As long as the share of women majors remains at this level, it will be difficult to increase the share of women in graduate school.

Table 2 reports information on women in graduate programs in economics, taken from the 1994 CSWEP questionnaire. About one-third of the students in the entering class were female; while 27 percent of those granted Ph.D.'s over the year were female.³ The representation of women in Ph.D. programs in the top-20 ranked schools is very similar to that in all graduate programs. While these shares are above the level of 10 or 20 years ago, the share of women in economics Ph.D. programs re-

³ The National Science Foundation reports that 24.5 percent of doctorates granted in economics in 1994 went to women, slightly below the number CSWEP identifies.

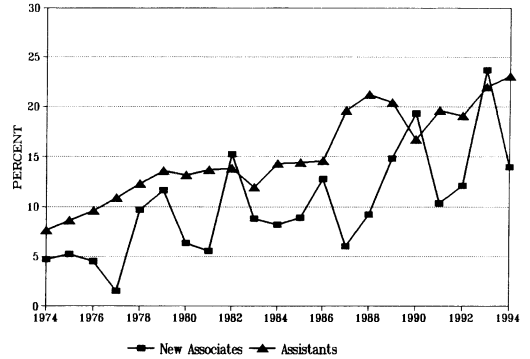


FIGURE 4. SHARE OF NEW ASSOCIATE-PROFESSOR HIRES OR PROMOTIONS IN PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS VERSUS SHARE OF EXISTING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS WHO ARE FEMALE, 1974–1994

Source: American Economic Association, Universal Academic Questionnaire, 1974–1994.

mains very low compared to other related disciplines; out of 22 disciplinary fields for which the National Science Foundation reports data on doctoral recipients, only 5 have a lower share of women than economics (physics & astronomy, atmospheric & marine sciences, mathematics, computer sciences, and agriculture sciences). The shares of women in Ph.D. programs in the life sciences, in the rest of the social sciences, and in the humanities are far above that in economics.

Table 3 shows how women fared in the job market 1994, relative to men. With about 27 percent of the Ph.D.'s, women were far more likely to enter jobs at non-Ph.D.-granting academic institutions and far less likely to take non-U.S. jobs (reflecting the lower representation of women among foreign students). Women took academic jobs at Ph.D.-granting institutions and public-and private-sector U.S.-based jobs at about the same rate as men. The lower rate of women who found no job suggests that women are more likely to take academic jobs (often non-tenure-track) in non-Ph.D.-granting schools, rather than go without a job.

The Committee's Recent Activities

CSWEP is involved in a wide range of activities designed to help women advance in the

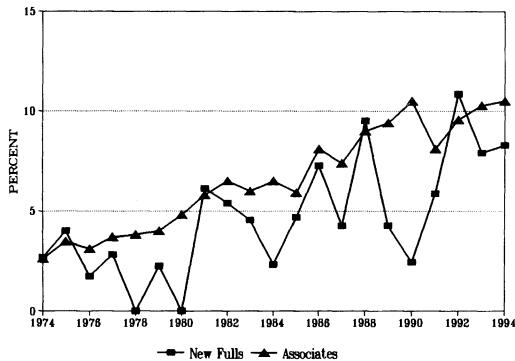


FIGURE 5. SHARE OF NEW FULL-PROFESSOR HIRES OR PROMOTIONS IN PH.D.-GRANTING DEPARTMENTS VERSUS SHARE OF EXISTING ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS WHO ARE FEMALE, 1974-1994

Source: American Economic Association, Universal Academic Questionnaire, 1974-1994.

economics profession. As part of its ongoing efforts to increase the participation of women (particularly younger women) on the AEA program, CSWEP organized seven sessions for the January 1996 meetings, three on gender-related topics, three on topics related to international trade and finance, and a roundtable discussion entitled "Raising Children and Managing a Career in Economics: How Do You Do Both?" CSWEP also held a business meeting and reception at the meetings and sponsored a hospitality suite.

One of the ongoing concerns of CSWEP has been to provide assistance to women who are not at the top-ranked or Ph.D.-granting departments. Through regional representatives to the Eastern, Southern, Midwestern, and Western Economic Associations, CSWEP is trying to extend its outreach to women who come to these meetings but may not be at the AEA annual meetings. While CSWEP has always organized sessions at these meetings, in both the Midwestern and the Southern Economic Associations a group of volunteers is looking at ways to establish greater networks among women faculty in smaller regional schools and in out-state university campuses.

One of CSWEP's most important activities is the publication of the *CSWEP Newsletter* three times each year. Each issue contains ar-

TABLE 2—SHARE OF WOMEN AMONG PH.D. STUDENTS AT DIFFERENT POINTS OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS, FALL 1994-1995 SCHOOL YEAR

	Percentage women	
	All Ph.D.-granting departments	Top 20 departments only
First-year students	29.0	27.8
ABD students ^a	25.7	22.6
Ph.D.'s granted in 1993-1994	26.7	28.4

Source: Data collected by CSWEP; 111 of 115 schools reporting in column 1, 20 of 20 schools reporting in column 2.

^a Students who have completed all requirements for the degree except for the dissertation.

TABLE 3—SHARE OF WOMEN PLACED IN JOB BY TYPE OF JOB, AMONG STUDENTS ON THE JOB MARKET, WINTER AND SPRING 1994

	Percentage women	
	All Ph.D.-granting departments	Top 20 departments only
U.S. Ph.D.-granting department	28.4	24.3
U.S. other academic department	35.7	31.0
U.S. public sector	25.8	25.6
U.S. private sector	27.7	20.0
Non-U.S. job	20.8	19.4
No job found	17.5	12.8

Source: Data collected by CSWEP; 111 of 115 schools reporting in column 1, 20 of 20 schools reporting in column 2.

ticles about women in economics, information of interest to younger economists about how the profession operates, articles on career opportunities, and information on research funding. This year, CSWEP also put together a *Special Reprint Issue* of the *Newsletter*, pulling together articles from the past six years of newsletters that provide particularly useful career advice to younger economists. CSWEP also maintains a Roster of Women Economists, providing information on all women members of the AEA. Employers particularly

interested in targeting female candidates can receive the entire *Roster* or a sorted version of it, available in print or on disk.

As discussed above, CSWEP has worked to maintain a network of CSWEP contacts in all the Ph.D.-granting departments. These CSWEP representatives both collect information on the progress of women in their department and distribute information on CSWEP to female graduate students and new faculty. Since these departments are where future economists are trained, maintaining close connections to them is of ongoing importance.

The Committee wishes to thank a number of people who made major contributions to CSWEP's work over the year. Joan Haworth, the Membership Secretary, and her staff maintain the Roster, send out annual membership reminders, and create customized listings from the Roster at the request of employers.

Three members left the Committee at the end of 1995: Robin Bartlett (Denison),

who served as the Midwestern Economic Association representative; Irene Lurie (SUNY-Albany), who served as the newsletter coordinator; and Ann Witte (Wellesley). Lisa Lynch (Tufts) started a term as Eastern Economic Association representative but resigned when she accepted a new position as Chief Economist to the Department of Labor. She was replaced by Daphne Kenyon (Simmons). CSWEP appreciates the work of all of these individuals on its behalf.

Finally, CSWEP thanks Helen Goldblatt and Yolanda Wales, both on the staff of Northwestern University, who provided administrative support for CSWEP during 1995 and who have each served as Assistant Editor of the *Newsletter*. The Department of Economics at Northwestern also provides much appreciated support to the operations of CSWEP.

REBECCA M. BLANK, *Chair*