

To: President Shapiro, Provost Linzer, Provost Holloway, Associate Provost for Faculty Lindsay Chase Landsdale, Board of Trustees
From: Organization of Women Faculty
Date: June 2, 2017
CC: Dean of Weinberg College, Dean of Medill School of Journalism, Dean of the Kellogg School of Management, Dean of the Pritzker School of Law, Dean of the Bienen School of Music, Dean of the School of Communication, Dean of the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, Dean of the School of Education and Social Policy

Next Steps Towards Greater Pay and Promotion Equity at Northwestern

The Organization of Women Faculty (OWF) appreciates the 2016 Northwestern Faculty Salary Equity Study and Faculty Compensation Survey, which is a serious effort to investigate pay equity at Northwestern University. We see the Provost's study as a first step in a longer effort to analyze the factors contributing to gender-based faculty promotion and pay inequities at Northwestern University.

The OWF held a panel presentation with Q&A in Fall 2016 and two talk-back sessions in Winter 2017 where female faculty shared their views regarding the Provost's study. Synthesizing this feedback, this document identifies next steps that Northwestern's Organization of Women Faculty ask the Administration to take in order to promote the goals of pay and achievement equity for women faculty at Northwestern.

Concerning findings of the Provost's Pay Equity Study:

The Provost's Pay Equity study provides a snapshot analysis of gender based salary disparities in a single year. The study compares like categories of faculty, attempting to control for internal and external factors that might account for the found salary disparities. The study found an aggregated 4.7% gap favoring male full professors. The study also reports that women spend a longer time in the rank of associate professor (page 11); taken together, the aggregate pay gap of 4.7% and increased time in lower ranks suggest that women may be paid less and promoted more slowly throughout their professional life at Northwestern. This finding may represent an improvement over the 1994 Task Force's study, which exposed significant disparities at all ranks and a 6.7% disparity at the full professor level.¹ Yet given that Northwestern's 2001 Committee on Women in the Academic Community Report found no statistically significant salary disparities, the 2016 study suggests that Northwestern has actually lost ground on confronting salary disparities over the last fifteen years.

We also observe the following:

- Since the 2001 study, the percentage of female full professors has increased by less than 2 percentage points.
- Although not all of the gender gaps discovered in the 2016 study rose to the level of statistical significance, nearly every estimate showed differences that favored men.
- The Faculty Perspectives Survey uncovered a large perception gap between male and female

¹ The 1994 study included all Northwestern schools. Earlier versions of the 2016 study included Feinberg, which led to a pay gap finding of the same magnitude as the 1994 study.

faculty when asked whether the University's work climate/culture is supportive regardless of a person's gender.²

- The instructor and lecturer category continues to be female dominated, to the point that the 2016 study was unable to find large enough like-groups to evaluate gender pay gaps.

Together these indicators suggest that female faculty experience disadvantages at Northwestern.

We must not revert again to the inertial state that allowed salary disparities to worsen and that contribute to the insufficient progress of women faculty at Northwestern since 2001.

Next Step Action Items from the Organization of Women Faculty

We identify 4 types of next steps:

- I. Finalizing and responding to the Preliminary Report II on Salary Equity and Faculty Compensation
- II. Creating a new approach to the setting and assessment of teaching-track salaries
- III. Avoiding repetition: addressing structural factors that contribute to inequity
- IV. Commissioning the next generation pay equity study

Each category includes specific calls for action. These action items are in line with what has occurred at peer institutions, such as the London School of Economics (which immediately remedied salary disparities) and MIT (which remedied disparities and hired consultants to deepen their study).

I. Finalizing and Responding to the Preliminary Pay Equity Study

The study focuses exclusively on salary levels, without comparing equal pay for equal work. We would like the following revisions and remedies as the preliminary study is finalized:

- 1. Provide in both percentage and dollar terms concrete information about gender-based salary differentials across schools and ranks.** The preliminary study only discusses percentage differentials. The study also does not identify overall salary disparities, or gender based salary disparities at the highest, middle and lowest salary levels (e.g. salary information available on the Provost's annual [faculty salary table](#) is not broken down or analyzed by gender). A finalized study should state overall gender based salary disparities, and gender based salary disparities at the highest, middle and lowest levels, including percentage and dollar terms. This is important for understanding appropriate remedies.
- 2. Remedy the accrued costs of gender based salary bias.** Create a separate pay-equity fund, and immediately remedy found disparities. In addition, assess and explore how one might remedy accumulated inequities. Remedies could include immediate salary increases, enhanced college

² This finding is reported in the Diversity and Inclusion Study (report III) analysis of questions 13 & 14. Men were 22-26 percentage points more likely than women to think that Northwestern's climate is supportive regardless of gender. Notably, 29% of female teaching track/clinical faculty and 35% of tenure line faculty somewhat or strongly disagreed that Northwestern's climate/culture is equally supportive regardless of gender. A much greater share of more junior faculty members disagreed that Northwestern's climate is supportive regardless of gender.

benefits for children, and/or lump sum contributions to retirement accounts to address past inequities.

- 3. Be forthright about the methodological limitations of the study.** The study clearly states the methodological choices made, but it is circumspect regarding the limitations of these choices. State more clearly what a focus on like comparisons and statistical significance fails to capture. In particular, which external and internal factors are *not* adequately captured (e.g. summer salaries, course relief/teaching loads, research funds, housing support)? Which indicators might themselves reflect gender bias (e.g. external recognition, the gendered nature of the academic job market)? Comment also on the limitations of a single year snap-shot analysis.

II. **A new methodology for teaching track faculty salary assessments**

The metrics used in the Northwestern Faculty Salary Equity Study and Faculty Compensation Survey do not capture the situation of teaching track faculty, who are ineligible for salary-raising leadership roles (e.g. department chairs and directors), national research awards, internal research and (for some schools) teaching-based prizes, and, in some cases, outside offers to secure a raise. A key gendered finding from Northwestern's 1994 pay equity study was that men were appointed or promoted to higher ranks (e.g. senior lecturer) compared to women (lecturer). The possibility that rank and workloads are unequally distributed among teaching track faculty is not investigated in the current study, nor is there an effort to evaluate if teaching track women were given initial rank and salary placements that were lower compared to men, thereby providing a different source of inequity. Additionally, the predominance of women at the teaching track level means that for many women faculty, there are few or no men at their equivalent rank and field with whom to compare them, limiting the possibility of finding statistically significant gender differences. Together, this suggests that the current study fails to adequately investigate pay equity disparities at the teaching track level.

- 1. Improve the study as it pertains to teaching-track faculty by exploring whether there is equal pay for equal work.** The finalized study should make a greater effort to incorporate the factors that affect teaching track faculty pay and promotion. The study should thus include an investigation of how teaching and service loads are related to salary as well as an investigation of professional experience that predates the hiring at Northwestern.
- 2. Create a task force to transfer best practices and if necessary define a different process to evaluate the contributions of teaching track faculty.** Tenured faculty are often the primary actors shaping decisions about teaching-track promotion and salary. In many cases, they lack guidance on how to make such determinations. This lack of guidance may be contributing to an over-reliance on CTECs, which are known to have gender, race and age biases. Moreover, the evaluation of teaching track contributions varies widely across schools, and in some cases, differs significantly between departments within the same school. While some variation in evaluation criteria across schools is understandable, a consistent and more transparent

process for teaching track faculty in all schools/departments is needed. Furthermore, the evaluation process and criteria are not uniformly communicated to teaching track faculty in all schools within NU. Thus, the entire teaching-track salary setting and pay equity process needs to be re-conceptualized with input from teaching track faculty, and communicated clearly to all.

3. Create generalized policies and practices that ensure equity across schools and over time.

We recognize that clinical and teaching track faculty may differ significantly in their contributions, so that no one system of pay assessment may apply to all teaching track faculty working at Northwestern. That said, the central administration can demand basic equality by ensuring that the forms of recognition associated with pay raises are extended to teaching track faculty across schools. The central administration can also regularly monitor whether starting titles and promotions are distributed in a gender and race neutral way. Finally, the University may increase the transparency of the salary process so that individuals can strive for higher salaries, and assess whether their greater achievements are being rewarded.

III. Avoiding Repetition: Longer Term Solutions

The mechanisms through which salaries are generated in different schools remain opaque. Some schools collect statements about the year's contributions (e.g. Vita Supplements, Faculty Annual Reports, etc.) while other schools do not, which suggests that service and teaching contributions may not factor into pay decisions, and that discrimination can survive because of school-based assessment practices. For some faculty, teaching evaluations—which are known to be gender biased—are a primary factor in determining raises and promotions, and for other faculty teaching evaluations play no role whatsoever. The opaqueness of the salary setting process makes it very hard to know which aspects of the current salary setting process contribute to inequities. Women faculty, for good reason, believe that discounting service and over-relying on teaching evaluations contributes to pay inequities. Meanwhile, faculty remain unsure how various assessments actually factor into the setting of salaries, and thus they are unsure how to procure a raise. Most faculty therefore presume that seeking an outside offer is the only way to achieve an equity based raise, and that teaching track faculty are permanently and irrevocably disadvantaged.

1) Hire an external consultant to study salary setting processes in each of the schools, to identify and remedy the sources of long term inequities.

Northwestern must investigate why female salaries continue to lag over time and at the full professor level. Most salary increases are incremental, a result of an outside offer, or in reward for leadership roles. We need to investigate structural problems in how offers are countered, leaders are chosen, and raises are awarded at Northwestern.

A consulting firm would be best placed to study the process of setting salaries, awarding endowed chairs and other forms of recognition, and selecting leaders to identify the sources of inequities across Northwestern's schools. This firm could also investigate the perception gap between male and female faculty, identifying strategies to better measure and capture whether faculty who

contribute greater levels of service and teaching are financially rewarded for their efforts.

2) Link the setting of salaries to the achievement of Northwestern priorities.

Research will always be central to Northwestern's mission, but we observe that Northwestern's focus on research grants, scientific findings, citation rates, and national recognition reinforces the national and global forces that have been shown to disproportionately reward men and male dominated disciplines.

Northwestern is setting some admirable goals for the future: Promoting and supporting a greater demographic diversity within the student body, enhancing the global skills of our students, and improving mentoring, and enhancing the critical thinking, speaking and writing skills of Northwestern students. These are labor-intensive goals, and if the past is any guide, achieving these goals will especially tax female and teaching-track faculty. This is the moment to put our financial resources towards the goals that our leadership sets.

More effort needs to be made to equalize opportunities to contribute at Northwestern, and to recognize, value and reward faculty contributions to the larger set of goals at Northwestern. This point applies to tenure-line faculty, and especially to teaching track faculty who will bear the brunt of the labor-intensive teaching, administration and advising roles (see point IV for more).

In addition, we need greater communication and transparency about how contributions are assessed, and raises determined. Faculty would then know where to invest their efforts, and how to best communicate their achievements to departmental and university leadership.

3) Train Northwestern leaders to avoid and remedy bias & create a salary pool to address found inequities.

All faculty involved in setting salaries need more training: Salary setting administrators, including department chairs, need to be trained to recognize and address gender bias within the units they oversee. Faculty must also be trained to assess the contributions of teaching track faculty (see point IV). Towards this end, all leaders involved in the setting of salaries need longitudinal data, and there needs to be a separate salary pool to address inequities.

4) Emulate best practices for tracking and promoting gender equality progress, including salary and achievement.

Northwestern should be emulating and even establishing best practices for maximizing the achievement and the internal recognition of its faculty. Schools within Northwestern are uneven and ad hoc in how they measure and track the contributions of their faculty, which in turn generates significant confusion about what Northwestern values and rewards.

If NU won an [NSF Advance grant](#), we might have a better chance of establishing good metrics for women in WCAS-Divisions I and II and McCormick. Beyond the STEM fields, we need to better capture the factors that give rise to salary inequities. For example, if certain faculty teach less, provide less service, and are thus able to invest more in research, this difference should be measurable. Northwestern also needs to ensure that awards do not disproportionately exist for male dominated positions compared to fields and roles where female faculty are more heavily represented.

We also need a more intentional system of mentorship and guidance for faculty rising in the scholarly, teaching and leadership ranks.

5) Beyond negotiation and empowerment: addressing the achievement gap

Northwestern is making a long-term investment in its faculty. Meanwhile, in the arc of a career most faculty will face external demands of providing care for children, siblings and parents which may contribute to achievement lags. Having hired the best faculty in the world, Northwestern should nurture the achievement of these faculty by better incorporating support for caregiving.

Northwestern might generate temporary off-ramps for faculty facing personal challenges or intense care-giving moments, followed by on-ramps that allow faculty to re-invest in the building of research and skills. Such off and on-ramps might help to address the leaky pipe, the cumulative salary inequities, and the sense that Northwestern's climate does not equally help men and women achieve.

6) Pay equity monitoring and regular review.

Northwestern must build in monitoring and checks so that leaders know that their failure to address gender and racial disparities will be observed and remedied. We also ask for a commitment to regularly (e.g. every 5 years) assess and adjust disparities that accrue. This review would examine and address lagging incremental raises and identify faculty needing access to an on-ramp to re-engage in career success

7) Creating an appeals mechanism:

We ask for the creation of an ombudsperson system that can help faculty identify and redress leadership problems affecting their salary and success at Northwestern. This person must be empowered and have the resources to investigate salary decisions affecting individual faculty. (University of Wisconsin-Madison offers [one model of investigation](#))

IV. A Next-Generation Pay Equity Study

We must generate data that can allow for an improved analysis. The problems related to teaching track faculty assessment are so deep that we discussed these separately above. The following data collection efforts are additional action items.

- 1) Incorporate a longitudinal assessment:** The evidence from the Preliminary Pay Equity Study suggests that the longer one stays at Northwestern, the greater the gender based salary inequities. The next-generation study must examine longitudinal data to identify whether and how women's salaries stagnate over time, comparing salaries based on the length of employment at Northwestern, and time within a particular rank.
- 2) Investigate starting salary levels of faculty across schools and ranks:** For situations where faculty had relevant prior professional experience, consider whether men and women are placed at equal ranks and salary level at the time of initial hire.

3) Provide greater detail on retention and departures: The Preliminary Pay Equity Study examined faculty employed in a particular year. From this analysis, it is not possible to know whether a small set of faculty is retained numerous times, garnering repeated raises. The Study does not show whether women faculty leave, in part due to salary dissatisfaction, only to be replaced by newly recruited and more highly paid female faculty.

4) Assess workloads of faculty across schools and ranks: Find a way to document and compare teaching and service loads by gender.

5) Where possible, improve upon existing methodological limitations:

Overcome statistical power limitations: Many of the analyses in the Preliminary Pay Equity Study were underpowered to find statistically significant gender differences because of small numbers of women in particular ranks and departments. Are there creative solutions that could overcome these limitations? A future study might combine categories with small Ns. For example, a future study might compare salaries in male dominated versus female dominated departments and consider gender differences by earnings quartiles.

Include Measures of Teaching and Service: Include teaching loads in the equity investigation. Consider how the study might include service loads as well.

Signed:

OWF Co-Chairs

Cristie Traina	Professor of Religion
Heather Colburn	Associate Professor of Instruction
Karen J. Alter	Professor of Political Science & Law

OWF Steering Committee

Kim Yuracko	Judd and Mary Morris Leighton Professor of Law
Christine Percheski	Assistant Professor of Sociology
Shana Bernstein	Clinical Associate Professor, Legal Studies
Lauren Rivera	Associate Professor of Management & Organizations, Kellogg
Miriam Shiran	Professor, Learning Sciences, SESP
Emma De Costa	Lecturer, Design, Thinking and Communication
Susan Mango Curtis	Associate Professor, Medill
Jillana Enteen	Senior Lecturer in Gender & Sexuality Studies