

The Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession

In establishing the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) in 1971, the American Economic Association recognized that women were not sufficiently represented in the economics profession and gave official sanction to efforts to increase the role and participation of women in economics. To this end, CSWEP has undertaken a number of activities aimed at increasing the number of women active in the profession and has attempted to monitor their role and activities in economics. Thus this report will briefly discuss CSWEP's activities and the status of women in the academic labor market for economists.

I. CSWEP Activities

CSWEP's activities aimed at increasing the participation of women in the economics profession fall into two major groups: those aimed at enhancing the workings of the labor market for economists, particularly with respect to women; and those aimed at increasing the visibility of women and women's issues in the economics profession.

In terms of informational activities, the maintenance of the roster and publication of the *Newsletter* are the most important. CSWEP maintains a roster of all women economists who have registered with it. Each listing on the roster states the highest degree earned, current job, and fields of interest. Thus potential employers can obtain from the roster a list of all potential women candidates who fit a given job description (for example economists specializing in money and banking with more than three years experience). Consequently the roster ensures that no potential woman candidate will be excluded from consideration for lack of information. The roster listings are sold at a modest fee and are widely used by academic departments, government agencies, and industry.

While the roster primarily serves the needs of potential employers to ensure that they have full information about the pool of women candidates, the list of jobs in the

Newsletter serves the needs of potential candidates. Although much of the job information in the *Newsletter* is also in the Association's publication of *Job Openings for Economists*, it is felt that the additional listings in the *Newsletter* are worthwhile. This is particularly true for people who are not actively looking for a job, but might learn of a suitable opening through the *Newsletter* listings. The *Newsletter* also provides information about issues of concern to women economists.

In addition to trying to improve the workings of the job market by enhancing the flow of information, CSWEP has attempted to increase the participation of women in the economics profession by sponsoring sessions at the annual meetings of the Association. While these sessions do not exclusively focus on women's issues, they attempt to focus on topics that might be of concern to women and in which women could be expected to be working. In addition, since the papers in this session are contributed rather than invited, the CSWEP session provides an outlet for less established economists, either male or female, at the annual meeting of the Association.

CSWEP has recently extended its activities to the meetings of the regional associations. During the academic year 1978-79, CSWEP sessions will be held in the meetings of the Southern Economic Association, the Midwestern Economic Association, and the Eastern Economic Association. In this connection, CSWEP hopes to establish regional representatives who will plan the CSWEP program at each of the regional meetings and encourage the participation of women economists at these sessions.

At each of the meetings of the economic associations, CSWEP also holds an open meeting and maintains a hospitality suite as a means of encouraging people to exchange their concerns about the role of women in the economics profession and discuss alternative ways to improve the role of women in the profession.

In this connection, during the past year

CSWEP has taken an active role on behalf of those members of the Association who felt that it was inappropriate for the Association to hold its meetings in states that have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). To this end, CSWEP made presentations before the Executive Committee of the Association in December 1977 and March 1978, urging it to move from Atlanta the annual meeting of the Association to be held in December 1979.¹ In both cases, the Executive Committee refused to vote to change the meeting site, citing as reasons: 1) the nonpolitical charter of the Association; 2) the fact

¹In addition, CSWEP raised the question of moving the 1978 meetings from Chicago, but it was generally felt that contractual obligations made such a move impossible.

that such an act would constitute a secondary boycott; and 3) existing contractual obligations. The issue was raised again in the Association's Open Business Meeting, which was held at Chicago in August 1978, and it was narrowly defeated by the members of the Association who were present at that time.

II. The Role of Women in the Economics Profession

While CSWEP actively attempts to promote the participation and visibility of women in the economics profession, the status of women within the profession must ultimately depend upon the kinds of jobs and responsibilities undertaken by women economists. As a primarily academic profession, this is best measured by the distribution of women econo-

TABLE 1—DISTRIBUTION OF FULL-TIME FACULTY BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION, ACADEMIC YEAR, 1977-78

	Chairman's Group			Other Ph.D. Departments			Only M.A. Departments			Only B.A. Departments		
	Total	Number	Percent	Total	Number	Percent	Total	Number	Percent	Total	Number	Percent
Existing												
Professor	614	8	1.3	525	10	1.9	166	7	4.2	255	12	4.7
Associate	231	6	2.5	377	18	4.8	143	5	3.4	287	18	6.2
Assistant	329	37	11.2	259	25	9.7	149	18	12.1	373	32	8.6
Instructor	129	4	3.1	45	7	15.6	30	9	30.0	41	15	16.5
Other	70	10	14.3	66	6	9.1	20	2	10.0	29	5	17.2
New Hires												
Professor	12	0	0.0	7	0	0.0	1	0	0.0	3	0	0.0
Associate	7	0	0.0	9	0	0.0	5	0	0.0	3	0	7.7
Assistant	71	8	11.3	62	9	14.5	78	4	8.3	74	8	10.8
Instructor	12	1	8.3	15	3	20.0	11	2	18.2	39	5	12.8
Other	9	1	11.1	10	3	30.0	1	0	0.0	4	2	50.0
Promotion to Rank (1976-77 to 1977-78)												
Professor	34	0	0.0	29	0	0.0	13	1	7.7	24	1	4.2
Associate	26	1	3.8	40	0	0.0	20	0	0.0	41	5	1.2
Assistant	5	0	0.0	6	0	0.0	7	2	28.6	16	1	6.3
Instructor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tenured at Rank (1976-77 to 1977-78)												
Professor	7	0	0.0	7	0	0.0	3	0	0.0	4	0	0.0
Associate	17	1	5.8	25	0	0.0	14	1	7.1	29	1	13.8
Assistant	2	0	0.0	11	1	9.1	3	1	33.1	18	3	16.7
Instructor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not Rehired (1976-77 to 1977-78)												
Professor	14	1	7.7	25	0	0.0	10	3	30.0	11	0	0.0
Associate	16	0	0.0	10	0	0.0	3	1	25.0	13	1	7.7
Assistant	32	3	9.4	27	1	3.7	23	6	26.1	49	8	16.3
Instructor	1	1	100.0	11	0	0.0	6	0	0.0	22	3	13.7
Other	16	2	12.5	11	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	3	0	0.0

mists among various types of academic institutions and the flow of young women economists into these institutions.²

Table 1 provides a summary of the distribution of academic jobs at the beginning of the academic year 1977-78 and the changes that took place between this and the previous year.³ This table presents information in terms of four types of departments: the Chairman's group; other Ph.D. departments; M.A. departments; and B.A. departments. The Chairman's group consists of the forty-three departments that focus on research and the training of Ph.D.s in economics. In terms of stature, it is generally agreed that academic appointments at a department within the Chairman's group carry the most prestige. Thus this discussion will tend to focus upon the role of women in the Chairman's group as a bellwether for the entire economics profession. The other Ph.D. granting departments primarily focus on undergraduate education, but also have a viable Ph.D. program. The M.A. departments similarly have a primary focus upon undergraduate education, but also have a Master's program. Finally, the B.A. departments are exclusively concerned with undergraduate teaching.

According to Table 1, the existing participation of women in the academic side of the economics profession is distressingly small. Within the Chairman's group, there are only eight women who are full professors, six who are associate professors, thirty-seven who are assistant professors and four who are instructors, respectively representing 1.3 percent of the full professors, 2.5 percent of the associate professors, 11.2 percent of the assistant professors, and 3.1 percent of the instructors. Although the percentage of women in each category is slightly higher for the other departments, the figures of the Chairman's group are representative.

²In this issue Barbara Reagan has an interesting paper arguing that women economists appear to be subject to the "revolving-door syndrome" under which they are hired at junior levels but not retained at senior levels.

³These figures and those of the subsequent tables are based upon the Universal Academic Questionnaire distributed to all department chairmen and tabulated by the Association.

Since tenured positions carry the most prestige within the profession it is useful to focus on them. In this connection, it is interesting to note that as of 1977-78 the departments within the Chairman's group apparently feel that there are only eight women whose research and publication records are sufficiently strong to merit their appointments as full professor and six women whose records are sufficiently strong to merit their appointment as associate professors. Moreover, during 1976-77, within the Chairman's group no woman was hired as a full professor, promoted to full professor, or hired as an associate professor. Although one woman within this group was promoted to associate professor and tenured at rank, one woman professor also left. Thus there appears to have been no net change in the stock of tenured women faculty members within the Chairman's group during 1976-77.

The situation with respect to the other departments appears to be equally bleak in 1976-77. During this year, no woman professor was newly hired by *any* economics department and only an associate professor was newly hired (by a B.A. department). One woman was promoted to professor in each of the M.A. and B.A. departments, while five women were promoted to associate professor by the B.A. departments. However, within the M.A. and B.A. departments, three woman professors were not rehired, and two associate professors were not rehired. Thus although the total stock of tenured women faculty appeared to grow in 1976-77, this growth can be called marginal at best.

In terms of changes that are occurring within the academic labor market, it is useful to consider the previous activity of those who were newly hired and the present activity of those who were not rehired. Table 2 indicates that within the Chairman's group, relatively more of the newly hired women were faculty at other institutions or were graduate students than their male counterparts. However, while 25.3 percent of the newly hired males in other Ph.D. departments came from other faculty positions, only 9.5 percent of the women hired by these departments held positions as faculty at other institutions. These latter figures are

TABLE 2—PREVIOUS ACTIVITY OF NEW HIRES AND CURRENT ACTIVITY OF THOSE NOT REHIRED BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION AND SEX, ACADEMIC YEAR, 1977-78

	Previous Activity of New Hires				Current Activity of Not-Rehired			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Chairman's Group	96	100.0	11	100.0	69	100.0	4	100.0
Faculty at Other								
Institutions	23	24.0	3	27.3	29	42.0	0	0.0
Graduate Student								
or Postdoctoral	54	56.2	7	63.6	2	2.9	0	0.0
Government	2	2.1	1	9.1	3	4.3	1	25.0
Business, Banking,								
Research	5	5.2	0	0.0	9	13.1	2	50.0
Other	12	12.5	0	0.0	26	37.7	1	25.0
Other Ph.D. Departments	95	100.0	21	100.0	94	100.0	3	100.0
Faculty at Other								
Institutions	24	25.3	2	9.5	29	30.9	2	66.7
Graduate Student								
or Postdoctoral	54	56.8	17	81.0	5	5.3	0	0.0
Government	3	3.2	0	0.0	14	14.9	0	0.0
Business, Banking,								
Research	40	4.2	0	0.0	16	17.0	1	33.3
Other	10	10.5	2	9.5	30	31.9	0	0.0
M.A. Departments	57	100.0	4	100.0	27	100.0	9	100.0
Faculty at Other								
Institutions	14	24.6	1	25.0	12	44.4	3	33.3
Graduate Student								
or Postdoctoral	35	61.3	3	75.0	2	7.4	0	0.0
Government	3	5.3	0	0.0	2	7.4	0	0.0
Business, Banking,								
Research	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other	5	8.8	0	0.0	11	40.8	6	66.7
B.A. Departments	146	100.0	26	100.0	87	100.0	14	100.0
Faculty at Other								
Institutions	60	34.2	5	19.3	31	35.6	4	28.6
Graduate Student								
or Postdoctoral	69	47.3	15	57.7	6	6.9	0	0.0
Government	6	4.1	0	0.0	6	6.9	1	7.1
Business, Banking,								
Research	14	9.6	3	11.5	14	16.1	4	28.6
Other	7	4.8	3	11.5	30	34.5	5	35.7

similar for the other departments and indicate that, on balance, men appear to have considerably more academic mobility than women. Stated alternatively, Table 2 indicates that men who are not rehired by one department largely remain in academia and take jobs at other academic institutions while women do not. This pattern is particularly striking with respect to the activities of those who are not rehired. Among men, the academic retention rate appears to have been about 40 percent among all departments and was 42 percent

among the Chairman's group. Among women, the overall academic retention rate is somewhat less than 20 percent, and none of the women who left the Chairman's group took an academic job.

Thus Tables 1 and 2 indicate that the participation of women in the prestige jobs at the prestige institutions appears marginal at best. Equally unfortunate is the fact that relatively little change appears to be taking place with respect to women in this relatively select group. Consequently, although it is

TABLE 3—DISTRIBUTION OF SALARY FOR WOMEN FACULTY BY TYPE OF DEPARTMENT AND TIME IN RANK, ACADEMIC YEAR, 1977-78

Highest Degree Offered and Relative Salary for Rank	All Women		Time in Rank			
	Number	Percent	Total	Above Median	At Median	Below Median
All Departments	235	100.0				
Salary above median	89	37.9	100.0	58.4	30.3	11.3
Salary at median	78	33.2	100.0	6.4	80.8	12.8
Salary below median	68	28.9	100.0	19.1	16.2	64.7
Ph.D., Chairman's	61	100.0				
Salary above median	25	41.0	100.0	64.0	28.0	8.0
Salary at median	15	24.6	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Salary below median	21	34.4	100.0	9.5	14.3	76.2
Ph.D., Other Departments	63	100.0				
Salary above median	29	46.0	100.0	62.1	27.6	10.3
Salary at median	17	27.0	100.0	5.9	70.6	23.5
Salary below median	17	27.0	100.0	23.5	0.0	76.5
M.A. Departments	29	100.0				
Salary above median	9	31.0	100.0	77.8	11.1	11.1
Salary at median	9	31.0	100.0	0.0	77.8	22.8
Salary below median	11	38.0	100.0	9.1	9.1	81.8
B.A. Departments	82	100.0				
Salary above median	26	31.7	100.0	42.3	42.3	15.4
Salary at median	37	45.1	100.0	10.8	78.4	10.8
Salary below median	19	23.2	100.0	31.6	36.8	31.6

important to note that women comprise relatively high proportions of the jobs at the junior academic ranks, unless these women begin to receive promotion and tenure, a negative demonstration effect may begin to take place. While women Ph.D.s are undoubtedly pleased to receive a junior faculty appointment at a department within the Chairman's group (or any other department for that matter), if a disproportionate number of these women fail to receive promotion and tenure, it is unlikely that women will perceive an academic career as being particularly attractive.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the salary distribution of women faculty members appears to be in line with that of their male colleagues. This can be seen from Table 3, which gives the distribution of salary of women faculty by type of department and time in rank. In general, salary appears to be related to time in rank, with those whose time in rank is above the median having a salary that is above the median. Although data are lacking to compare the distribution of male and female salaries, Table 3 does not indicate

the existence of any gross discrepancies between the distribution of salaries and the distribution of time in rank.

Ultimately, however, if more women are to play an active role in the economics profession, more women must be trained as economists. In this connection, Table 4 is interesting and indicates a rather sizable attrition rate between the granting of the B.A. degree and the Ph.D. degree. Specifically, in 1976-77, while 23.7 percent of all B.A. degrees were received by women, only 8.6 percent of Ph.D. degrees were received by women. Although it takes four-five years to turn a B.A. into a Ph.D., these figures are quite representative of the past four or five years⁴ and clearly indicate that relatively fewer women who receive economics training at the B.A. level choose to go on to graduate school and obtain a Ph.D. than do their male counterparts. Whatever the reasons for this decline, it is clear that the flow of new female Ph.D.s must be substantially increased if the

⁴See CSWEP reports in *Proceedings* issues 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977.

TABLE 4—DEGREES GRANTED IN ECONOMICS BY TYPE OF DEPARTMENT AND SEX, ACADEMIC YEAR, 1976-77

	All Departments	Ph.D. Departments			M.A. Departments	B.A. Departments
		Total	Chairman's	Other		
Number Departments	343	94	43	51	39	210
Number Ph.D.s	628	628	408	225	—	—
Number female	54	54	33	21	—	—
Percent female	8.6	8.6	8.2	9.3	—	—
Number M.A.s	1,434	1249	610	1539	183	2
Number female	250	225	111	114	25	0
Percent female	17.5	18.0	18.2	7.9	13.7	0.0
Number B.A.s	10,759	5234	3196	2038	861	4664
Number female	2,547	1099	678	421	165	1283
Percent female	23.7	21.0	21.2	20.7	19.2	27.5
Number Other	877	347	36	311	147	383
Number female	176	37	7	30	1	138
Percent female	20.0	10.7	19.4	9.6	0.7	36.0

proportion of women in academic jobs is to increase substantially.

Table 5 provides information on the jobs taken by new Ph.D.s in 1976-77 and indicates that although relatively fewer women Ph.D.s took academic jobs overall than their male counterparts, at least among students in the Chairman's group, relatively more women

took academic jobs than their male counterparts. This apparent discrepancy is explained by the fact that while 63.1 percent of new women Ph.D.s granted by the Chairman's group took academic jobs, only 13.5 percent of women Ph.D.s granted by other institutions took academic jobs. Since the Chairman's group is the primary source of Ph.D.s who

TABLE 5—DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVITIES OF NEW PH.D. DEGREES BY SEX AND TYPE OF DEPARTMENT, 1976-77

	All Ph.D. Departments		Chairman's Group		Other Ph.D. Departments	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Ph.D.s						
Total	714	100.0	414	100.0	300	100.0
Education	315	44.1	234	56.5	300	12.0
Government	71	9.9	35	8.5	81	27.0
Business, Banking, Research	96	13.4	47	11.4	49	16.3
Other	232	32.6	98	23.6	134	44.7
Male Ph.D.s						
Total	624	100.0	376	100.0	248	100.0
Education	284	45.6	210	55.9	74	29.8
Government	55	8.8	30	8.0	25	10.1
Business, Banking, Research	64	10.2	44	11.7	20	8.1
Other	221	35.4	92	24.4	129	52.0
Female Ph.D.s						
Total	90	100.0	38	100.0	52	100.0
Education	31	34.4	24	63.1	7	13.5
Government	16	17.8	5	13.2	11	21.2
Business, Banking, Research	32	35.6	3	7.9	29	55.7
Other	11	12.2	6	15.8	5	9.6

TABLE 6—ACTIVITIES OF 1976-77 PH.D.'S BY TYPE OF DEPARTMENT AND SEX

	Number of New Ph.D.'s Employed in:				
	Total	Education	Government	Business, Banking, Research	Other
All Ph.D. Departments					
Total	714	315	71	96	232
Number female	90	31	16	32	11
Percent female	12.6	9.8	22.5	33.3	4.7
Chairman's Group					
Total	414	234	35	47	98
Number female	38	24	5	3	6
Percent female	9.2	10.3	14.3	6.4	6.1
Other Ph.D. Departments					
Total	300	81	36	49	134
Number female	52	7	11	29	5
Percent female	17.3	8.6	30.6	59.2	3.7

take academic positions, it is encouraging to note that the bulk of new women Ph.D.s from these institutions entered the academic labor market. However, it is important to note that an annual flow of twenty-four women entering the academic labor market a year is not sufficient to change the distribution of

academic positions held by women. This is shown by Table 6, which indicates that only 10.3 percent of the new Ph.D.'s from the Chairman's group taking academic jobs were women.

Although relatively fewer women who receive B.A. degrees in economics go on to

TABLE 7—DISTRIBUTION OF PH.D. STUDENT SUPPORT, BY TYPE OF SUPPORT, SEX, AND DEPARTMENT, 1977-78

	All Ph.D. Departments		Chairman's Group		Other Ph.D. Departments	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Students						
Total	3484	100.0	2290	100.0	1194	100.0
Tuition only	205	5.9	153	6.7	52	4.4
Stipend only	549	15.8	322	14.1	227	19.0
Tuition + stipend	1743	50.0	1264	55.2	479	40.1
No support	926	26.6	520	22.7	406	34.0
No record	61	1.7	31	1.3	30	2.5
Male Students						
Total	2945	100.0	1912	100.0	1033	100.0
Tuition only	163	5.5	120	6.3	43	4.2
Stipend only	484	16.4	280	14.7	204	19.7
Tuition + stipend	1469	49.9	1072	56.1	397	38.4
No support	792	26.9	429	22.4	363	35.2
No record	37	1.3	11	0.5	26	2.5
Female Students						
Total	539	100.0	378	100.0	161	100.0
Tuition only	42	7.8	33	8.7	9	5.6
Stipend only	65	12.1	42	11.1	23	14.3
Tuition + stipend	274	50.8	192	50.8	82	50.9
No support	134	24.9	91	24.1	43	26.7
No record	24	5.4	20	5.3	4	2.5

obtain a Ph.D. than their male counterparts, it is important to note that this is probably not due to lack of graduate student support on the part of the academic departments. This is shown clearly in Table 7, which indicates that although a slightly lower percentage of women students receive full support (tuition plus stipend) overall, the percentage of women students receiving some form of financial aid is virtually identical to that of male students. Thus it is likely that it is perceptions concerning their future status in the economics profession that makes women turn from graduate study in economics rather than a lack of financial support per se.

In conclusion then, although the economics profession and its related institutions have made a conscious effort to recruit and encourage women economists in recent years, it appears that, on balance, progress is still painfully slow. Women economists in academic institutions still comprise an extremely

small percentage of the total, and the bulk of these women hold junior level, nontenured positions. Thus the real test of the commitment of the economics profession to enhance the status of women in its activities will occur in the next few years, when the presently nontenured women faculty come up for tenure and promotion. If a proportionate share of these women move up through the academic ranks, this will be a definite sign that the profession is serious about making women equal partners. If, however, a disproportionate share of young women economists are not retained, this will almost certainly be interpreted as a sign that the economics profession will remain an essentially male bastion. In this case, it is likely that able young women will increasingly turn away from economics and enter professions which they perceive will give them more attractive career opportunities.

ANN F. FRIEDLAENDER, *Chair*