METHODS

• 10 private, mid-sized, research universities in this study: Case Western Reserve University, Catholic University of America, Lehigh University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rice University, Southern Methodist University, Tufts University, Tulane University, University of Denver, University of Rochester.

• STEM departments included: engineering, physical, biological and environmental sciences, mathematics, economics, psychology, and sociology.

• For each woman STEM faculty member, a best matched male peer was identified within the same department based on rank, year of highest degree, and year of hire.

• STEM faculty (women: n=168, tenured=60.7%, mean years since PhD=16.5 y; men: n=125, tenured=65.6%, mean years since PhD=18.4 y; overall response rate of 41%) completed an online survey assessing their perceptions of and participation in collaborative and ID research as well as more general perceptions of the work environment. Distribution of participants by disciplinary division is presented in the table below.

• Analysis of variance was used to test effects of disciplinary division (engineering, natural sciences including mathematics, and social sciences), rank (pre-tenure and tenured), affiliation with an ID center/program, and gender. In all subsequent tables, values reported are means and all effects are significant at p < 0.05 level.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

• It is hard to say whether women are more intellectually attracted to collaborative and ID research because many women, especially those in engineering, seem to be cautious about how these choices impact on career progression. In other words, even if you are drawn to this type of work, practical concerns can limit involvement.

• At least for women in engineering, affiliating with an ID center is not necessarily an effective way to mitigate departmental climate issues.

• Simply providing access to potential collaborators is not sufficient. Institutional transformation must ensure that policies and procedures promote unbiased evaluation and appropriate recognition of collaborative and ID research. Faculty should perceive that the institutional culture at all levels truly supports collaborative and ID research.

ABSTRACT

• 10 years since PhD = 16.5 y; overall response rate of 41%)

• Some research suggests that women, compared to men, may be more attracted to collaborative and/or ID research, but may actually engage in less collaborative and ID research due to lower levels of access to networks that foster this type of research. (Rhoten & Pfirman, 2007; Bear & Woolley, 2011)

• This study assessed the gendering of collaboration and interdisciplinarity by comparing the research preferences, research activity patterns, and self-reported productivity of women and men across these universities.

CONCLUSIONS

3. Do the perceptions and experiences of women STEM faculty vary by disciplinary division? YES. For these items there were significant gender x disciplinary division interactions.

4. Does participation in an interdisciplinary center or program influence these perceptions/experiences? Gender x disciplinary division effects were significant. (n=80 women, 52 men)

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