

Gender Bias in the Sciences

In many disciplines, the representation of women as faculty lags behind degrees awarded. These resources explore the research on the reasons women are underrepresented across many fields. Committees are encouraged to consider, discuss and apply the implications from this research to address relevant barriers to equitable hiring, retention and advancement processes.

Overall research on gender

This annotated list of references collates diverse studies on <https://www.hastac.org/blogs/superadmin/2015/01/26/gender-bias-academe-annotated-bibliography-important-recent-studies> :

It has 2 major sections:

- Part I: Studies that Find Gender Bias in Academe
- Part II: Studies That Find

hiring, and supporting women in leadership positions:
<http://sites.nationalacademies.org/SHStudy/index.htm>

This report includes the following paragraph on pp.3-

Regner, I. et al. (2019). Committees with implicit biases promote fewer women when they do not believe gender bias exists. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 1171–1179.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-019-0686-3>

Steinpreis, R.E., Anders, K.A., & Ritzke, D. (1999). The Impact of Gender on the Review of the Curricula Vitae of Job Applicants and Tenure Candidates: A National Empirical Study. *Sex Roles*, 41(7/8), pp. 509-528. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1308098969?pq-origsite=summon>

-  disadvantage women
Commission on the Status of Women, University of Arizona. (n.d.) Avoiding gender bias in reference writing.
https://csw.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/avoiding_gender_bias_in_letter_of_reference_writing.pdf
- Flaherty, C. (2018). Help That Hurts Women. *InsideHigherEd*
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/06/19/study-finds-recommendation-letters-inadvertently-signal-doubt-about-female>
- Trix, F. & Psenka, C. (2003). Exploring the Color of Glass: Letters of Recommendation for Female and Male Medical Faculty. *Discourse & Society*, 14(2), 191–220.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926503014002277>

Ways to apply these research findings

Implications from this research may be applied in varying ways:

- Discuss gender and equity regularly as a department, bringing in relevant research articles for discussion
- Respond to any concerns that arise about hostile work environments or sexual harassment
- Address gender dynamics in the composition and discussion processes of committees
- Ask committee members to take an implicit bias test before they develop criteria and use this information to inform their discussions
- Establish strong criteria that create an inclusive definition of excellence and address gendered discrepancies in access to elite institutions, funding, publication, and more
- Discuss how to use consistent language across genders to discuss to applicants and colleagues
- Review data on gender representation in the department (ask EQHR for this data) and discipline
- Identify unintended barriers to full participation and advancement of women
- Integrate support for gender equity into the requirements for a position
- Acknowledge the potential impact of leaves and cumulative and systemic barriers on productivity and professional timelines
- Integrate gender considerations into reviewing materials, including letters of reference
- Use a gender lens to review the work of the department, including guest speakers, awards granted, workloads (formal and informal), and more