Women Faculty in STEM Colleges at Purdue University: Perceptions of the Classroom Environment Related to Student Interactions

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Perceptions of the Classroom Environment Related to Student Interactions

Susan Geier and Christie Sahley
The 2012 ADVANCE Purdue Classroom Environment Survey was designed to understand the various faculty perceptions of their classroom environment specifically related to student interactions to provide insights to inform programs, policies and procedures that foster faculty satisfaction and success across campus.

The survey was administered to faculty members during fall 2012. This preliminary report presents highlights of the responses from the STEM faculty.

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Classroom Incivility

- Classroom Inattentiveness
- Classroom Disruptions
- Cheating; sense of entitlement
- Hostile behavior
Survey Items

Overall classroom climate:

1) level of respect from students
2) level of respect from teaching assistants
3) satisfaction with the classroom environment
4) fairness of the students’ ratings for the courses
5) fairness of the students’ ratings for instructors

Open-ended
Semester Specific Interactions

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Respondent Demographics

STEM faculty respondents = 245

(28) 11% – Women Full Professors
(31) 13% – Women Associate Professors
(26) 11% – Women Assistant Professors

(86) 35% – Men Full Professors
(37) 15% – Men Associate Professor
(25) 10% – Men Assistant Professors

(13) 5% – not in above categories
Overall Classroom Environment

STEM Women Faculty

84% – overall respect by their students and teaching assistants

68% – satisfied with their classroom environment

66% – fair ratings of courses and

64% – fair ratings of instruction

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Student Classroom Behavior

Attitudes of many students are challenging
1) sense of entitlement
2) lack of preparation for academic work
3) poor attendance
4) cheating

Student Course-Taking Differential

Students’ inattentiveness
use of technology in the classroom

Published by Purdue e-Pubs, 2014
27% of the women respondents indicated they had been disrespected by students V.S. 2% of the men respondents.

Defining student disrespect

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22% of the women STEM respondents indicated they experienced some form of gender inequity.
Course Evaluations

Issues:

- Poor timing
- Inaccurately assessment
- Tenure and promotion
- Online evaluations
Administration Support

- Address Disruptive Students
- Need classroom and lab resources
Department Head Consultation

Reasons for NOT Consulting DH:

- Instructor’s Area
- Negative consequences
- “Classroom Territory”
- “Student is always right”
DH Reactions:

- Instructor Focused
- Dismissive
- Supportive
Faculty Interactions per Semester

- Qualitative analysis – Case Study
- Rank and gender
- Course characteristics
- Group attribution
- Comments
- Small number – Composites

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References

