

CSWP Site Visits to Improve the Climate of Women in Physics

Origin of Site Visit Program

- Response to 1990 request by physics department Chairs. Funded by NSF and APS.
- Pioneers Judy Franz, Millie Dresselhaus, Bunny Clark, Laurie Mc Neil, many others.....
- >40 departments visited, 6 national labs)
- Current coordinator Kim Budil (LLNL), Sue Otwell (APS)

Site Visit Mission

- Improve the climate locally to help women succeed - NOT just survive
- Even if numbers are ok, if women in a department are not thriving, they will not undertake outreach to high schools etc.
- Raise awareness through discussion and reports, to support equity in positions, opportunities, pay and recognition for women

Vision for Positive Change

THE GOLDEN RULES - Best Practices for Recruiting and Retaining Women in Physics
(<http://www.aps.org/educ/cswp/women-links.cfm>)

“The mark of a successful departmental climate for women is one in which the enthusiasm and ambition of the women undergraduates is transformed smoothly into successful and ambitious women graduate students, with dynamic, forging-ahead female postdocs, energetic junior women faculty, and productive, happy, senior women faculty who all serve as positive role models.”

CSWP Site Visit Protocol

Site visit protocol

- Team of 3 – 5 senior female physicists visit department (depending on department size)
- Students are surveyed in advance (web based thanks to AIP)
- 1 – 1.5 days on site to identify a set of generic problems
- Meet with Chair, faculty, students, postdocs, staff, Dean, other senior administrators
- Recommend approaches to improve the climate - in a confidential report to the chair
- Department reports back 1 year later - hopefully with steps taken to improve the climate for women

Common Issues for CSWP Site Visits



Faculty Diversity

Too little for too long

by CATHY A. TROWER and RICHARD P. CHAIT

NEW VIEW	OLD VIEW
Transparency of the review process assures equity	Secrecy assures quality
Merit is a socially constructive subjective concept	Merit is an empirically determined, objective concept
Cooperation is better than competition	Competition improves performance
Research should be organized around problems	Research should be organized around disciplines
Excellent teaching and advising should pay off	Research is the coin of the realm
Personal life matters – balance is important	Separate work and family
Faculty have a collective responsibility	Faculty thrive on autonomy

Common Weaknesses in Departments (from observation)

- **Senior female faculty are marginalized and sometimes discriminated against**
- **Students have no recourse when faculty misbehave**
- **Often there is poor accountability for hostile actions**
- **Male faculty are passive, happy to benefit from existing system**
- **Sometimes senior university administration are passive, unable or unwilling to help or intervene**
- **Students and junior male faculty learn to accept flawed system**
- **Lack of ethics, fairness, respect, accountability to society**
- **Denial of all of the above**
- **No pressure to change**

Laudable Strengths - Dream Dept.!

- **Senior and junior female faculty are present and leading aggressive research groups**
- **Critical mass of female postdocs and students also present**
- **Female postdocs and students have high career aspirations**
- **Talented department chair builds trust and broad, open, hiring plan within the department**
- **Male faculty accept, support and mentor female students/faculty**
- **Senior university administration willing to fund targeted diversity hires**
- **Attention to ethics, respect, fairness, accountability to society**

CSWP Site Visits - What Matters

- Critical mass
- Role models
- Family issues
- Community
- Leadership
- Respect

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Good Management!

The Golden Rules - Best Practices

What should departments do? (*The Golden Rules - Best Practices*)

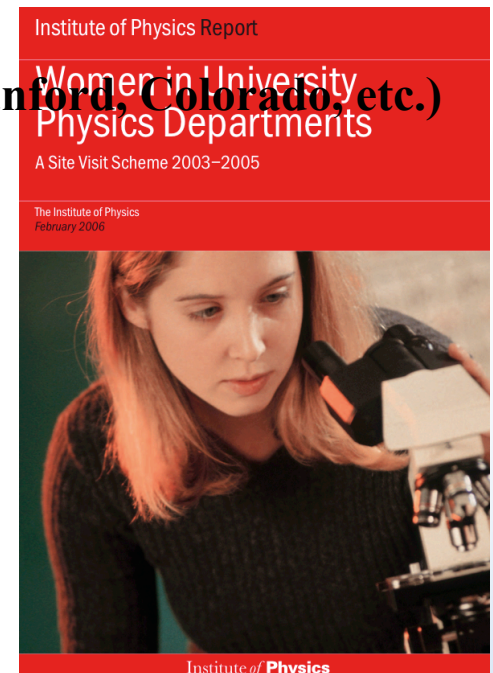
- **Increase the number of female faculty, postdocs and students**
- **Actively recruit female students**
- **Make sure they get good mentoring and right climate to succeed**
- **Do not tolerate discrimination**
- **For much more, see <http://www.aps.org/educ/cswp/> - 14-page pdf document under Site Visits**

What has changed in Physics Departments?

- **Difficulties more subtle** (no nepotism rules, few blatant comments, but hiring of diverse faculty still challenging, female faculty often marginalized)
- **Increase in undergraduate and graduate student populations** (23% and 18%)
- **Faculty somewhat stagnant** (Ph.D. granting went from 5% to 7% between 1994 and 2002)
- **Maternity leave for graduate students** (MIT, Stanford, Colorado, etc.)
- **International pressure** (UK and Canada)
- **Increasing media pressure for change**
 - MIT Report
 - Larry Summers
 - Negative publicity (e.g. Duke University)
 - Title IX Hearings

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News, Views and Careers for All of Higher Education

Jan. 30

Making Room for Baby

By Lisa M. Krieger Mercury News

Stanford University on Thursday promised its women graduate students 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, a bold step aimed at attracting and retaining female intellectual talent. The policy -- believed to be the second of its kind among major U.S. universities -- also guarantees that new mothers can maintain full-time student status and eases their return to classwork, research, and teaching.

“It is vital to the nation that we retain those women who seek graduate degrees,” said Arthur Bienenstock, Stanford's vice provost and dean of research and graduate policy, who announced the policy at a meeting of the Faculty Senate, the university's legislative body.

“Otherwise, we will lose our lead in innovation and ultimately our standard of living, as well as national security,” he said.

What has changed in Physics Departments?

Table 6. Percent of faculty positions in physics held by women, 1994, 1998 and 2002.

	1994	1998	2002
	%	%	%
Academic Rank			
Full professor	3	3	5
Associate professor	8	10	11
Assistant professor	12	17	16
Instructor / Adjunct	N/A	N/A	16
Other ranks	8	13	15
Type of Department			
PhD	5	6	7
Master's	7	9	13
Bachelor's	7	11	14
Overall	6	8	10

AIP Statistical Research Center: 2002 Academic Workforce Survey.