Highlights from the University of Minnesota-TC Salary Equity Study  
Women's Faculty Cabinet (WFC), December, 2010

Findings. Significant salary differences still exist between male and female faculty at the University of Minnesota Twin-Cities Campus (UMN-TC). Even after making adjustments for 16+ variables including rank, discipline, experience, years since highest degree and minority status, female faculty still earn significantly less than male faculty overall, and at each rank. Furthermore, these disparities are virtually unchanged from those reported in university wide salary analyses developed 21 years ago in the wake of the Rajender Consent Decree (Striebel, 1989; Rajender v. University of Minnesota, 1980). This situation raises significant concerns and has the potential to impact morale, climate, productivity, recruiting and retention for both genders.

Data and Approach. The data represent a snapshot of salaries in 2007 for the UMN-TC campus, excluding the Medical School. The data gathering and cleaning process was supervised over a 3 year period by Vice Provost Arlene Carney. The analyses were carried out through collaboration between faculty statistical experts and the Office of Institutional Research. The approaches used are based on well-established prior approaches by Streibel (1989) and Haignere (2002) using regression analyses. However, the interpretations and conclusions presented here represent the opinions of the WFC alone.

Percent Salary Differences in 2007. After adjusting for 16 variables including discipline and experience, the salary gaps at each rank were:
- Assistant professor: 4.6%
- Associate professor: 4.4%
- Full professor: 7.7%
- Across all ranks: 6.0%

All these figures represent statistically significant differences between male and female salaries.

Salary Differences in Dollars for 2007. These differences translate into substantial sums, particularly at the full professor level, as shown in Figure 1.

Discussion. A frequently asked question is whether these salary differences may be explained by gender difference in outside offers, or merit. Although these questions have not been examined for UMN-TC, a recent National Research Council (2010) study of U.S. research institutions found that men and women received almost identical numbers of outside offers, and men and women did not differ in merit criteria correlating with salary.

Next steps. The Provost reviewed the WFC’s full report and has provided funds for further analyses to be completed by an outside expert within the next few months. We view consultation with an outside expert who has no stake in the outcome to be a politically important and necessary part of the process. Additionally, it is time for the University community to start discussing solutions. Frequent, periodic analyses of salary and other equity-related statistics must be instituted so that we can monitor our progress as we move forward. If the UMN-TC is to reach its goal of being one of the top public research institutions, we must insure that we appropriately reward all faculty for excellence so we may continue to attract, retain and develop our most valuable resource: our people.

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1 The 16 variables include 9 to account for disciplines with larger or smaller than typical salaries.
2 The full study can be found in the Women’s Faculty Cabinet report: “Salary Equity Study: Findings and Recommendations,” May 24th 2010. http://www.academic.umn.edu/wfc/reports.html
3 Significant at p<0.01 for assistants and associates, and p<0.001 across all ranks and for full professors.

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Figure 1: Significant differences between male and female salary at ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001
- Assistant professor: $3,451
- Associate professor: $3,713
- Full professor: $9,283
- Across all ranks: $6,113

Note: All amounts are in 2007 dollars.