Women Now 17% Of Chemistry Faculty [1]

Submitted on 8 April 2010 - 5:44pm

This article is reproduced by CienciaPR with permission from the original source.

Calificación:

By Linda R. Raber Chemical & Engineering News [2] Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN) has been counting women on chemistry faculties for 10 years now, and for each of the past six, we have counted an average increase of one woman per 100 faculty members at the top 50 universities. Slow progress, to be sure, but predictable. For the 2009–10 academic year, this increase translates to a total of 281 women, or 17% of a total faculty of 1,685. For 2008–09, women accounted for 16%, or 263 women among 1,662 faculty (C&EN, Dec. 22, 2008, page 40). Each year, C&EN has surveyed schools identified by the National Science Foundation as having spent the most money on chemical research. This year's top 50 list was compiled on the basis of NSF data for 2007, which are the most recent available. The schools were contacted by e-mail and asked to provide the number of female and male tenured and tenure-track faculty holding full, associate, or assistant professorships with at least 50% of their salaries paid by the chemistry department in the 2009–10 academic year. All but one department replied, and its data were collected from the departmental website. In terms of numbers and proportion, Purdue University, which also has the largest chemistry faculty surveyed, came out on top. Purdue's chemistry department added a 15th woman to its faculty of 52, so now 29% of its chemistry faculty are women. Holding at nine women on its 32-member faculty (28%), the chemistry department at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, is a close second this year. The chemistry departments of six universities have no more than one in 10 women in the professorate, and they go a long way to dragging the average down. Together, these six universities are the academic home of 156 chemistry faculty members, of whom 13 are women. They are the University of Chicago, Cornell University, and Johns Hopkins University, along with three Georgia schools: Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and the University of Georgia, which has only one woman on its 26-member faculty, giving it the lowest proportion of women among the 50 schools. During the

decade that C&EN has compiled data on women's representation in the top 50 chemistry departments, some universities have appeared on the list or dropped off, but 33 institutions have appeared on every list. These 33 chemistry departments, which are identified in the table, provide a reliable, long-term source of trend information. C&EN used the data from the 33 universities to determine whether women's representation in these departments is similar to that of the entire top 50 on a year-to-year basis. It is. C&EN used the same data to determine how many of these long-term top 50 departments have enough women on their faculties that women who work there or who are contemplating applying for or deciding whether to accept positions they offer can avoid the burden of being one of only two or three women chemistry professors on campus. The news in this respect is unequivocally good. Among the 33 perennial departments, the number with just one or two women onboard has dwindled from nine to two over the past 10 years; the number with six or more women has leapt from four to 18. For years, groups looking at underrepresented populations in academic science have kicked around a "critical mass" hypothesis. It goes like this: Women will tend to be marginalized and their concerns may be more likely to be unvoiced or overlooked in departments where they comprise less than 15%—a critical mass—of women. The hypothesis was discussed in the National Academies report "Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering" (C&EN, Sept. 25, 2006, page 19). This year, 27 of the top 50 departments have achieved critical mass, and if the proposition holds, they are likely better workplaces for women than departments that lack this level of representation.

Tags:

- professors [3]

Links
[1] https://www.cienciapr.org/en/external-news/women-now-17-chemistry-faculty [2] http://pubs.acs.org/cen/email/html/8809education.html [3] https://www.cienciapr.org/en/tags/professors-0