

Wage gap still significant at Canada's universities

By **QUADE HERMANN**

TORONTO (CUP)—The situation for women faculty teaching at Canadian universities has improved in the last 40 years but there's still a long way to go, a recent study indicates.

Although the wage gap between male and female faculty has narrowed, the inequities are still considerable, the study suggests.

"The status of women has improved, but remains inferior to men," said Michael Ornstein, a professor York University's Schulich School of Business and a co-author of the study.

The study, which analyzed Statistics Canada data gathered by universities

between 1957 and 1994, found the average pay of female faculty went from \$5,600 in 1957 to \$63,200 in 1994. The average pay for male faculty increased from \$7,000 to \$74,500.

That meant the wage gap between men and women teaching at Canadian universities closed considerably, from 23.5 per cent in 1957 to 8.1 per cent in 1994.

But even with this advance, the study estimates that in 1994 it would have cost \$49 million to correct pay inequities across the country.

Among the study's other major findings:

-- Over the last four decades, the number of full-time female faculty members across Canada increased from

less than 5,000 to more than 36,000.

-- The largest increase in women faculty was in the humanities, rising from 10.3 per cent to 28.7 per cent.

-- In engineering and the applied sciences, female faculty increased from 1.1 per cent to 5.4 per cent, a significant relative progress that is nevertheless shadowed by "a large degree of continuing male domination."

-- There has been virtually no progress in increasing the number of female faculty in agriculture and the biological sciences.

At York University, the wage gap between male and female faculty is easy to see.

Each year, the univer-

sity posts the names and salaries of staff who earn \$100,000 or more. Of the 81 names on the list in 1997, 13 were women. Five of those were ranked professor or associate professor and the rest held administrative posts. By contrast, 44 male professors or associate professors were on the list.

But change is coming, says Henry Mandelbaum, executive director of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. Just as the pool of qualified women increased in the '60s and '70s, the hiring binge of the same decades ceased, he says. As men who were hired during those decades retire, women will have more positions to

apply for.

"It will provide opportunity for young women to be hired," he said.

Last week, York and the University of Toronto announced they plan to hire between 250 and 500 new faculty in the next few years.

The study, released last month, is believed to be the first systematic examination of the impact of gender on the situation of female faculty in Canadian universities.

Ornstein says he and co-authors Penni Stewart, of York University, and Janice Drakich, of the University of Windsor, wanted to supplement the existing research on the experiences of female faculty in Canada.

Suzuki joins Ontario anti-smog campaign

By **TRACY TATKA**

TORONTO (CUP)-- David Suzuki has joined forces with the Toronto Environmental Alliance and the Sierra Club of Canada to try to persuade incoming provincial candidates to reduce air pollution.

In response to the 1,800 premature deaths attributed to smog in Ontario last year, the team of environmental heavy weights launched their campaign last week.

The group is calling for a 75 per cent reduction of sulfur dioxide from the air, a 6,000-tonne cap on emissions from nitrogen oxides and a virtual elimination of mercury emissions by 2005.

To bolster its campaign efforts, the group has also issued a non-partisan challenge to make a reality what has been promised in the past: clean air.

The coalition doesn't blame past governments for the current state of air quality. Instead, it plans to target incoming candidates to make them responsible.

"It's hard to hit the invisible boxer in the ring," said Lois

Corbett, executive director with the Toronto Environmental Alliance.

The group's ultimate aim is to ensure that whoever wins the next provincial election will be held accountable to better air quality standards.

Increasing those standards is essential to improving the health of Ontarians, the group says.

According to the Ontario Medical Association, smog-filled air, especially on hot and sunny days, contributes to an increased risk of illness, asthma attacks and cardiorespiratory problems.

The association notes medical problems such as these have already cost the province \$11 billion in health care costs to date.

And Ontario spends about \$1 billion a year on respiratory health care costs, including smog-inflicted asthma, the association says.

Corbett says pollution-related medical problems are a crisis.

"(It's) a provincial tragedy and one that those running for office must address," Corbett said.

Suzuki, a world-leading ecologist, says Ontario can significantly improve its air-quality by taking into account the coalition's recommendations.

"This is an opportunity for Ontario to lead Canada in emissions reductions and move towards a cleaner, healthier future," he said.

"You don't mess with air because it's so fundamental," warned Suzuki. "It keeps us alive."

Relying on public support and pressure, the coalition will try to persuade the provincial government to take action and help erase past mistakes.

"We had a similar demand, across society, to move on acid rain in the 1980s," said Elizabeth May, director of the Sierra Club Canada.

The group doesn't plan to support any one candidate in the provincial election, which is expected to be called this spring.

Instead, they have chosen to publish each candidate's stance on air-pollution, including what his or her plans are to reduce it, leaving the voter to decide who has the best proposal.

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