

U of I receives passing grades in gender equity

By Lyle Muller

Gazette Johnson County Bureau

IOWA CITY — A group of University of Iowa female faculty and staff gave U of I administrators a passing grade, but a low one, for handling gender equity at the university last school year.

The Council on the Status of Women, in a report released Wednesday, gave former U of I President Hunter Rawlings' administration a below-average D-plus for overall leadership during the 1994-95 school year.

It wasn't because of lack of effort, the group said. The effort was good enough to earn an above-average B for general climate for women on campus, the council's report said.

WOMEN GRADE U OF I

1994-95	
Campus Climate	B
Salary Equity	C+
Recruitment and Retention	C
Sexual Harassment	C-
Overall Leadership	D+

Source: U of I Council on the Status of Women Gazette graphic

But the results did not measure up to progress on other university campuses, said council Chairwoman Beverly Marshall-Goodell, program coordinator for the U of I Women in Science and Engineering Program.

The council, a 20-year-old organization that deals with women's issues on campus, graded the U of I in five areas. Besides leadership and campus climate, the areas and grades were: salary equity, C-plus; recruitment and retention, C; and sexual harassment, C-minus.

This marks the first time the Council on the Status of Women has issued such a report card. Marshall-Goodell said her group wants to issue one annually.

U of I Affirmative Action Director Susan Mask downplayed the grades and said she focused instead on specific concerns the council raised. She said she viewed the report as positive.

"I think we're working toward the same goals," Mask said.

Marshall-Goodell said the report is supposed to

CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE - October 12, 1995

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be a progress report, not a personal criticism of U of I administrators.

The report praised a study conducted by the U of I provost's office in an effort to bring women's salaries in line with men's salaries at the university. It said the low mark for leadership was based on the following:

- What the council called a lack of overall leadership in strategic planning in the promotion of gender equity.

- A classroom materials warning policy that council members say promotes homophobia, despite denials by the State Board of Regents, which demanded a warning policy.

- The U of I's role as defendant in a sex discrimination

lawsuit, a portion of which three former dental hygiene professors won in federal court earlier this year.

- No female faculty being awarded a Faculty Scholar fellowship last school year.

- Inadequate progress in a mentoring program for junior female faculty.

- No woman from outside the U of I being appointed to a deanship or vice presidency.

The grading was done before the regents hired Mary Sue Coleman, the University of New Mexico provost and vice president for academic affairs, as Rawlings' successor.

Women made up 34 percent of the U of I's 3,500 faculty members in the 1994-95 school year,

down 1 percent from the previous year. Among the 1,320 tenured faculty members, 16 percent were women, up 1 percent. Of 482 tenure-tracked faculty, 21 percent were women, the same as in the previous year.

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