



Faculty Perceptions of Institutional Climate & Advancement Opportunities: Key Findings of the Pre-Test Survey Report

January 2010



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Introduction

Funded by a 5-year National Science Foundation institutional transformation award, the [ADVANCE Program at Brown University](#) seeks to increase the retention and advancement of women faculty in science and engineering by making available those mechanisms that promote career success for all faculty scientists—mechanisms including mentoring, grant seeking support, and tools for becoming leaders in academic and scientific communities. ADVANCE at Brown awards grants for research and professional development, sponsors seminars and public lectures, provides sponsored project support and networking resources that enhance opportunities for collaboration.

These findings come from the survey distributed in Fall 2008 by the ADVANCE Programⁱ. ADVANCE's external evaluator, Group Dimensions Internationalⁱⁱ, developed the instrument and analyzed the results. The survey was administered to tenured and tenure-track faculty in the biological, life, and physical sciences and explored perceptions of women and men at the beginning of the Program's increased presence on campus (a "pre-test")ⁱⁱⁱ.

Key findings include:

- Strong differences exist between women's perceptions and men's perceptions of key issues, especially those regarding equitable opportunities for advancement and fair treatment in the tenure and promotion process.
- In general, women see their advancement as more gender-based than men do.

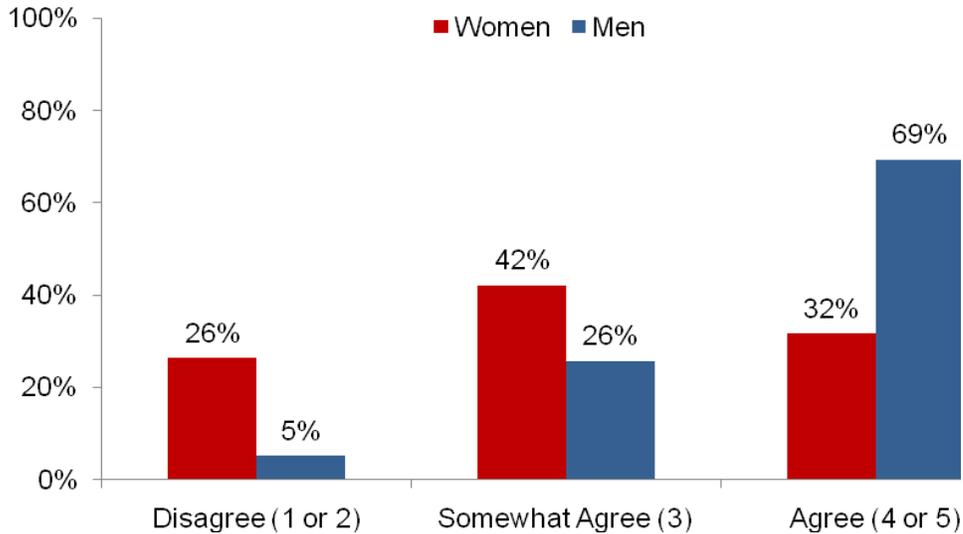
External evaluator's conclusion:

Based upon this feedback, ADVANCE at Brown should continue its core programming to improve gender sensitivity, fairness, equity, and transparency in all tenure and promotion processes, and strengthening of mentoring programs. Building women's networks across disciplines, programs, and various parts of the University will continue to be important.

Perceptions of Institutional Climate

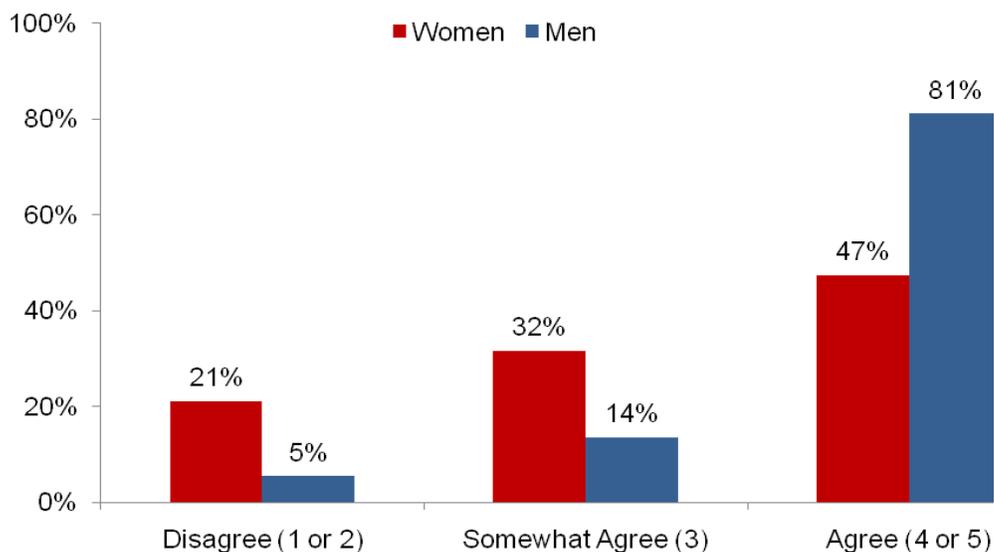
Women's responses differed from men's responses on the questions regarding perceptions of a positive working environment for women faculty.

Q32a: *The work environment at BROWN is positive for women faculty.*



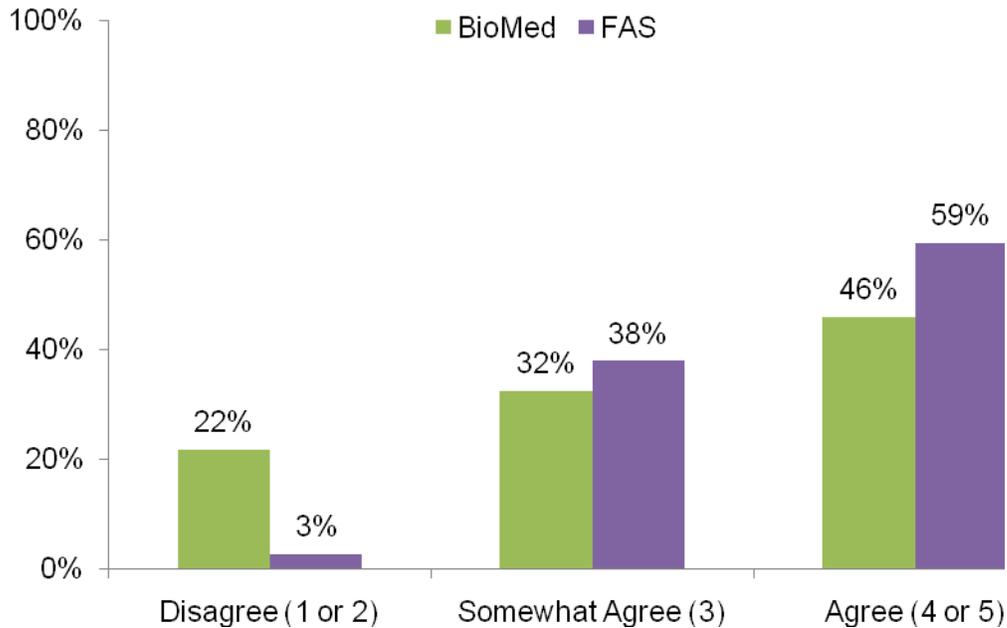
Similarly, women respondents were less likely than men respondents to characterize the departmental work environment as positive for women faculty.

Q33a: *The work environment in your DEPARTMENT is positive for women faculty.*

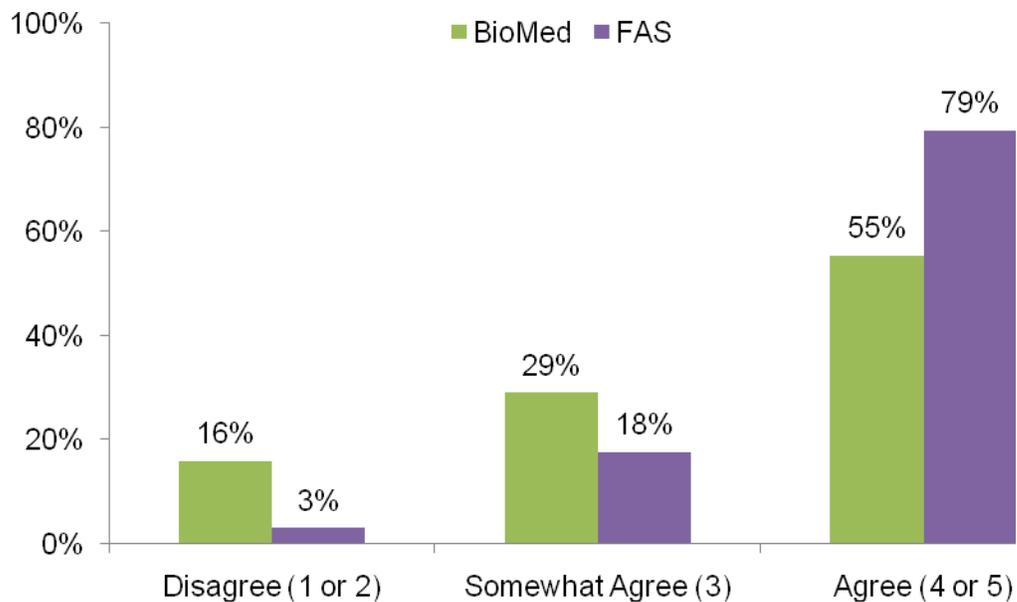


Respondents from the Division of Biology & Medicine were less likely than respondents from the Faculty of Arts & Sciences to agree that university and departmental work environments are positive for women.

Q32a: The work environment at BROWN is positive for women faculty.



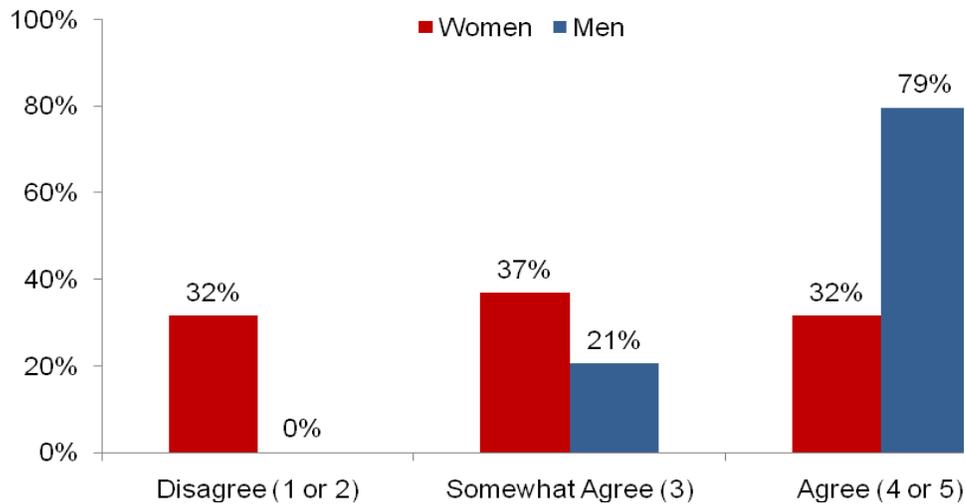
Q33a: The work environment in your DEPARTMENT is positive for women faculty.



Perceptions of Promotion and Advancement Opportunities

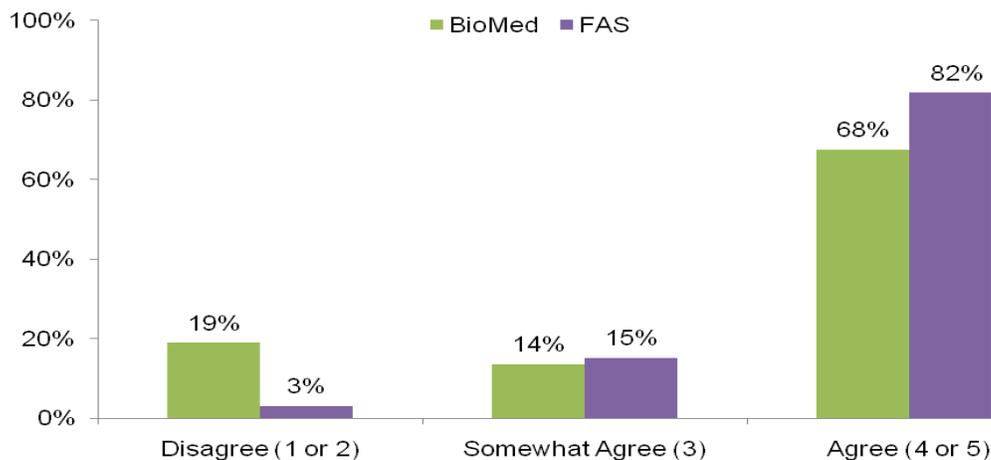
Women respondents were less likely than men respondents to agree that promotion decisions are made without regard to gender at both the university and departmental level.

Q32b: Promotion decisions operate without regard to gender at BROWN.



Respondents from the Division of Biology & Medicine were less likely than respondents from the Faculty of Arts & Sciences to agree that promotion decisions are made without regard to gender at both the university and departmental level.

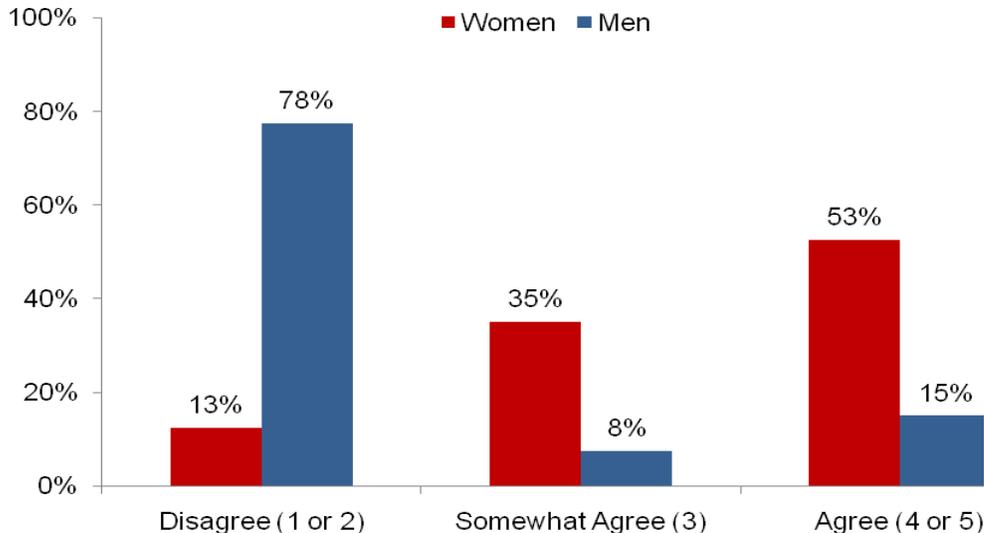
Q33b: Promotion decisions operate without regard to gender in your DEPARTMENT.



Perceptions of Work-Life Balance

Women respondents were more likely than men respondents to perceive a difference in the commitment to their careers of women faculty with children.

Q34b: To what extent do you agree with the following statement? Women faculty with children are SEEN AS LESS COMMITTED to their careers than faculty women without children.



ⁱ For questions or concerns about this report please email [ADVANCE Program](mailto:advance_program@brown.edu) <advance_program@brown.edu>.

ⁱⁱ The ADVANCE Program has a contract with Dr. Janet Billson, Director of Group Dimensions International and Adjunct Professor of Sociology at The George Washington University, to serve as External Evaluator for the duration of our project. Dr. Billson conducted the research and authored this report. Kyra Mancini of GDI served as Senior Research Analyst for the report.

ⁱⁱⁱ The survey elicited a 29% response rate. Survey respondents included:

- 49% women and 51% men
- 45% full professor, 27% associate professors, and 25% assistant professors
- 50% from the Division of Biology & Medicine and 50% the Faculty of Arts & Science