



The Academic Game of Thrones: Scholarship as Bloodsport

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I just finished reading the *Game of Thrones* series by George R.R. Martin, and I was struck by a parallel between its dystopic fantasyland and the academy. I do not have cable, satellite TV or Netflix so I have not seen the show. Based on the content of the addictive books, I'm not sure I want to see it.

If you are not familiar with *Game of Thrones*, here is a quick overview without any spoilers: Everyone wants to be King (or Queen). That strong desire to rule (to be "in charge") leads those close to the King to constantly jockey for position. The tale contains twisting plots with betrayals, double-crossing, and triple-crossing. Heads roll, characters disappear, new characters emerge, and dead characters often become the frozen undead "Others" (zombies!). Some of my favorite *Game of Thrones* quotes are, "When you play a game of thrones you win or you die. There is no middle ground," "The answer is flying not crying... Every flight begins with a fall," and "A bruise is a lesson... and each lesson makes us better." It's pretty gruesome. But it is also a metaphor for life in academia.

"Why are you at Western Carolina University?" "Are you *really* happy there?" "Where the heck is Cullowhee anyway?" are the three questions I am asked repeatedly at the annual meeting of the Literacy Research Association (LRA). In 2009, I accepted a position here at WCU: I thought the faculty were friendly and collegial, the support systems in place seemed strong, and the atmosphere was relaxed and at the same time productive. This mid-sized regional campus appealed to me because of the opportunities to collaborate on research projects both within and beyond our University without the publish-or-perish *pressure* to do so. Yes, as a tenure-track faculty member I am happy. I am *really* happy with my decision to work at WCU.

As a doctoral student and instructor at an R2 institution, I experienced and witnessed situations that reminded me of the *Game of Thrones*. The competition for publications, turf wars, jockeying for position, and disappearing faculty members made me reconsider my original goal of holding a position at a research-intensive institution. The lure of a 2/1 teaching load with a semester off for writing every fourth or fifth year is hard to ignore, but it comes with a hefty price that I decided I was not willing to pay. I realized that I wanted to be on a campus that offers a collaborative environment for *colleagues* instead of playing an academic version of *Game of Thrones*. At WCU, I teach, engage in service to local educators, and conduct my research without pressure. I don't have to play the *Game of Thrones*.

Since 2004, the LRA has been my research home. It provides me with stimulating professional development and opportunities to collaborate with like-minded colleagues on cross-institutional, national research projects. I have had the great privilege of working with masterminds - rock stars - in the fields of teacher education and reading research. While these research projects are enlightening, rewarding, and push my thinking forward with every step, they also provide another lesson in the R1 and R2 *Game of Thrones* mindset.

Let me explain. I was lead author on a manuscript I designed and drafted from one piece of an on-going, longitudinal study. When a co-author decided I was not moving the manuscript along fast enough, I experienced a hostile takeover and was demoted to second author. On another manuscript, I retained my lead author status, but I

noticed the co-authors were jockeying to be closer to the top. If you miss a deadline, you may be out of the author line-up. Rework a colleague's part of the manuscript and suddenly you are promoted in the author list. Share an idea and someone else may publish it without consulting or including you. "When you play a game of thrones you win or you die. There is no middle ground" – *Cersei Lannister* (Martin). While I have technically "won" by being part of some amazing research projects, I have also fought many battles to keep co-authors (colleagues!) in the line-up and have found myself serving as negotiator (call me *The Godfather*) to move manuscripts forward while keeping the peace among group members.

As a faculty member who feels lucky to be at WCU, I am committed to preserving our focus on teaching, scholarship and service. As various units across the campus revise their tenure and promotion standards, I hope we will preserve our mission at WCU to serve the region and protect against the *Game of Thrones* mentality. I am a researcher who teaches to support my research habit, and I find the collaborative atmosphere in my program, department, and college refreshing.

Responses to the January Faculty Forum about Gender (In)Equities and Compliance by Laura Wright and Hal Herzog

As you will see below, we received an unusually large number of responses to the January issue. In fact, this Forum received the largest number of responses in its 27 year history. I have arranged them in order of length, shortest to longest. A limited number of printed copies will be distributed to departments. Take your time. Every response is well worth reading from Gael Graham's 22 words to Jayne Zanglein's at 1423 words.

Gael Graham, History: I really don't have anything to say in response to Laura's well-written and researched article, other than heaving a large, useless sigh.

Tom Ford, Psychology: I would like to express my appreciation for Laura's and Hal's commentaries. For me the commentaries were a much needed reminder that gender inequality in salary is an important injustice that should be kept at the forefront of our attention at WCU until we actually take it seriously.

Tony Hickey, Anthropology & Sociology: We have discussed whether we have a gender equity problem here at Western forever. I remember Jack Wakeley raised this issue when he came in the late 80's, and Henry Mainwaring had a committee looking at inequity in Arts and Sciences. Both Laura and Hal are compelling....so when are we going to do something? Equality is damn near impossible but what we have here is inexcusable.

David McCord, Psychology: Human history would suggest (arguably, of course) that gender-based salary differentials derive from ancient patterns of division of labor as well as characteristics of labor itself (e.g., physical capabilities required). Modernity in general, and technology more specifically, have rendered these factors irrelevant for most of us. Of all occupational categories, there are probably none in which equality in pay is more obviously warranted than ours (professors). And, as thought-leaders in our societies, we should certainly lead the way in establishing full and absolute gender equity in salary.

Chris Cooper, Political Science: What's there not to agree with? Laura hits a number of important points, including the fact that gender inequity can only be remedied through policy change. It's convenient to suggest that we can ameliorate this problem by adjusting attitudes, but these attitudes are deeply ingrained (and we all have a difficult time seeing our own shortcomings and biases). If the solutions are about policy, then that also means that all of us can and should be a part of the solution. Hal's points, too, are indisputable. The legal standard is important, but it should not govern us—it's too low a bar. What should govern us instead is a sense of what is truly equitable.

Mickey Randolph, Psychology: As I considered my response to the Faculty Forum piece on gender inequity, I realized that I could do no better than my two colleagues Drs. Wright and Herzog. Dr. Wright made two points that resonated with me: "Male full professors at WCU earn – get this -- \$25,363 more than their female counterparts", and "Women earn 87 cents for every dollar earned by men."

The title of Hal Herzog's ('unreasonably low bar') was especially eloquent when you look at the (bar) graph. It has been interesting listening to explanations of the data – the one most often repeated is that we are "compliant" – I'm not really sure that is sufficient considering the issues my colleagues brought up.

I look forward to the next university led meeting which will further discuss this issue and possible solutions. I would like to encourage faculty and staff to attend the meeting – this is an issue that not only impacts women on campus, it should concern us all.

John F. Whitmire, Jr., Philosophy & Religion: Please allow me to concur with Laura Wright's and Hal Herzog's assertions in the Faculty Forum piece from last month, that whereas the Gender Equity study appears to demonstrate the University is in legal compliance on gender equity salary issues, that is also a relatively low bar to aim for. There is more that all of us can do in order to achieve a more equitable work environment, and Laura has helpfully pointed to a number of these things. I'd like to re-emphasize just one.

As Anne-Marie Slaughter has recently argued, "real equality means valuing family just as much as work," and we ought to be measuring male-female equality not only in terms of the number of women serving as presidents, CEO's, and full professors, and whether their salaries are equal to their male counterparts – valuing women in traditionally male terms – but also "recognizing that the work that women have traditionally done is just as important as the work that men have traditionally done, no matter who does it... Breadwinning and caregiving are equally necessary for human survival." The importance of valuing both kinds of work as genuinely important, and of de-gender-norming our traditional categories that privilege breadwinning over caregiving, has obvious social implications for both same-sex as well as different-sex couples. As Laura argues, our moral responsibilities may well extend beyond advancing and paying women equitably, to the choice of at least some women *and* men to take parental leave when that is appropriate, in order to demonstrate that caregiving is as legitimately valuable human work as is breadwinning. I hope that her piece will encourage all of us to look for our own blind spots in how the choices we make demonstrate our values, and how those choices contribute to shaping both our familial and work environments in incredibly important ways.

Marsha Lee Baker, English: In one of my first-year classes last week, we were discussing a recently published text that raised concerns about the rights and treatment of women in America, including stereotyping, sexual assault, and income. A few students expressed serious doubt that income any longer remains unequal among men and women in the United States. When I shared with them a few examples of salary inequities among Western faculty, as recently reported in the “Gender Equality Salary Survey,” their reactions followed this sequence: (1) Disbelief. “They must not have compared the same work, experience, knowledge, or *something* that would explain the difference!” (2) Disdain. “If that’s true, it’s horrible! That should *not* be happening anymore!” (3) Outrage. “Then why aren’t we seeing a lot of news coverage about it? Why aren’t people protesting on campus? What are they going to *do* about it?” Writing this anecdote now, I’m struck with its similarity to Kubler-Ross’s five stages of loss and grief. Students certainly conveyed the first stages of denial, isolation, and anger. Then they looked at me for, what next?

Bargaining is the third stage, and I’m glad that faculty are speaking up to not accept the offer of “in compliance.” Indeed, compliance was not why faculty urged a comparative study of salary based on sex. We didn’t ask, is Western in compliance with a law? We asked, is Western paying its faculty men and women equitably, ethically?

Bargaining will continue between faculty and administrators. None of it will get us anywhere, however, if we aren’t first sure that everyone comes to the table holding the common belief in equal pay for equal work. Further, everyone needs to be willing to re-examine the individual and collective assumptions and actions occurring in our particular work settings. We need to replace stage four, depression, with collaborative encouragement to transform circumstances into a lively, livable work environment. We’re no longer stuck in some version of stage five, acceptance. Insightful, compassionate, hard-working people have helped bring us to this moment of public knowledge and action. Onward!

Gayle Wells, Teaching and Learning: Growing up in the South, I learned that certain subjects were taboo - religion, politics, weight, age and salaries. Coming to WCU from a private college, it was a great surprise to me to discover that our salaries are public information. If we choose to look, we can compare salaries by department, rank, gender, and age or —even worse - by our perception of who is working the hardest. All this comparison creates a bigger problem for the University—a problem of morale.

I suspect that most of us really like our work. We like our students, our colleagues, and our University; actually, we have the best job in the world. Let’s face it—we spend our time thinking about, reading and writing about, and talking about our passions. Not too many people can say that. It’s the intrinsic value we find in our day-to-day work that keeps us motivated. That moment in class when a student responds to the material and the proverbial “lightbulb” pops up over her head—that is a priceless moment. If we could, most of us would come to work every day just for THAT moment. But, we live in the real world—the world of mortgages, braces, college tuition, and the ever-present fear that we won’t have enough money to retire when the time comes. This makes us stressed about money, which makes us compare our salaries, which creates a morale problem on campus.

The fact that we have a gender gap just adds fuel to the fire. In 2015, there should not be a gender gap at WCU. As Laura Wright points out, women at WCU are making roughly \$2000 less than their male counterparts at the same rank. Women are doing the exact same jobs on campus as men, and

they should be paid the same. Salary differentiation and salary compression are two areas that must be addressed and fixed. The first step in solving a problem is admitting that you have a problem. The university has done that. Now we have to solve this issue because it's more than just a numbers problem. It's a morale problem.

When morale suffers, there can be dire consequences. Good faculty and staff may leave the University for higher salaries. We have all seen this happen in the last few years. Or, even worse, good faculty and staff may stay, but disengage from the University. To be a true educator means you are engaged. To be engaged, you have to be committed. When faculty emotionally *check out*, the whole system suffers.

I have spent most of my career dedicated to public health, and my discipline focuses on the Dimensions of Wellness that encompass six different areas. To neglect one of the dimensions of wellness — emotional health — is to risk total well-being. The same idea applies to the University. To fail to recognize the morale issues related to salary inequity is to seriously jeopardize the well-being of the institution.

As a woman, as a faculty member, and as a citizen of WCU, I think we have to go beyond the taboo of talking about salaries. It's time to make them more equitable among all faculty. The health of our University depends on it.

Kadie Otto, Sport Management. *A Tale from the World of Sports & Ethics*: “Line up to get your uniform!”¹ Coach Law barks. All players dutifully line up. He gives shirts and shorts to some players (who, as it turns out, have blue eyes). The remaining players (those with brown eyes) are given a shirt only.² A brave player with brown eyes, we'll call him “Justice”, although his full name is “Justice E. Fairness (“E.” for Equality), speaks up, “but Coach, we don't have a proper uniform”. “No worries, we're within two standard deviations of compliance,” Coach Law assures. “So what am I to do, go on the court with no shorts? Seriously?” Justice quips. Quizzically, Coach Law ponders the question as two scenarios play out in his head.

In his first vision Coach Law imagines subbing Justice into a game. “Now entering the game, #1, Justice Fair—,” the announcer's voice screeches to a halt as a bare-naked-bottom-of-a-boy runs onto the court. The fans' cheers freeze like raindrops turning to snow. All that can be heard is the rapid fire of the cameramen snapping pictures of the half exposed boy. The next day the front page of the newspaper reads, “WCU Player Enters Game Half Naked, University Officials Cite Compliance”.

“That's not going to look good—half my team dangling up and down the court short-less. Ugh!” Coach Law shakes the picture from his mind like a wet dog after an unwanted bath. With that, a second vision appears. The regular season is over and somehow, even with guys playing with no bottoms, WCU makes the tournament. The team's leader, Aware, points out that some of the guys have had to play the entire regular season without shorts. Indeed, it's rather arbitrary that he got a full uniform solely because his eyes happen to be blue. Aware suggests that *now* is the time for the *entire*

¹ Marx delineated between a “basic need” and a “scarce benefit”. Clearly, a uniform is a “basic need”; so too is equal pay.

² The lyrics of Bob Marley's “War”, on his 1995 album *Natural Mystic*, are particularly fitting here: “Until the philosophy which hold one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned... That until there are no longer first class and second class citizens of any nation... Until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes... That until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all, without regard to race” [and sex (author added)].

team to be fully uniformed. The guys start to mumble and rumble and something out of Orwell's *Animal Farm* begins to stir. The facts are the facts: After multiple requests, and even with all of the media exposure, WCU has failed to provide *all* members of the team a *full* uniform. The players represent a unified front. Their decision is final. It's game time. The official tosses the jump ball into the air. The opposing player leaps. And in that moment all of the WCU players walk off the court. A ghostly silence blankets the arena. With their backs turned, their message comes into focus. White athletic tape covers the backs of their jerseys, and with a black sharpie the players have written: "No shorts. No play."³

It appears that, like Coach Law, WCU recognizes the importance of adhering to laws; as such, it could be making its "moral" decisions based on what it's *required* to do.⁴ However, when said system perpetuates injustice, it is the duty of "the morally aware"⁵ to act in ways that are beyond the system.⁶ Failure to afford equal pay suggests partiality, lacks systematic consistency, and disregards the duty to adhere to well-established moral principles.⁷ A "good" WCU is one in which both female and male faculty are fully clothed.

Yanjun Yan, Engineering & Technology: I joined WCU in fall 2013, and at that time I was the only female faculty member in the Kimmel School. Now we have two women faculty members in our college. Perhaps because I am in the traditionally male-dominated major, I am encouraged to comment on the January Faculty Forum about Gender Equity in salaries at WCU regarding the "GENDER EQUALITY SALARY SURVEY". After some recollection of my life experiences, I do feel that there are a couple of events that I would like to share, and I believe that I am not alone in those experiences.

I still remember that on Aug. 26, 2013, a few days after I arrived on campus, I got a campus email about the AAUW (American Association of University Women) fall kickoff event with a suggested book to read. Being very new here and curious about everything, I excitedly signed up. At that night on Sept. 5, 2013, we talked about a book, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* by Sheryl Sandberg, but that gathering turned out to be not a typical book-club social; rather, there were heated discussions on issues that were related to women. As early as in that gathering, the attendees were already expectant of the results from this salary survey, since this project was initiated in 2011 and all the data were collected in March 2012. However, the results were not available until Oct. 29, 2014. In this much-anticipated report, the salary gap at WCU was stated to be within two standard deviation and hence in compliance. No matter what the conclusion is of such a report, the findings in this report are not unique to WCU. According to a recent *Inside Higher Ed* article⁸,

³ Kohlberg stage 6 – universal principles (specifically, a moral duty to protest unjust laws). If the faculty wish to engage in similar fashion, Coulter parking lot might be a good spot as it affords plenty of space.

⁴ Kohlberg stage 4 – concern for social systems.

⁵ One might argue that institutions of higher learning are among "the morally aware" since they purport to espouse the high-minded values of truth, wisdom, justice, and equality.

⁶ Kohlberg's level III - post-conventional, focusing on what one *should* or *ought* to do; also Kant's categorical imperative.

⁷ Rawls' logical moral reasoning criteria.

⁸ <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2015/01/28/berkeley-finds-faculty-salary-gaps-gender-and-race>

The University of California at Berkeley has found -- and pledged to take action on -- gaps in the average salaries of female and minority professors compared to white male professors. Underrepresented minority faculty members trail their white male counterparts by 1 to 1.8 percent, on average. The gaps between women and white males were larger, between 1.8 and 4.3 percent.

To make a fair comparison, we can read page 5 of our report: “At WCU, women earn 87% of salary compared to men,” which translates to a 13% difference, a much larger gap than the 1.8%-4.3% difference at UC-Berkeley. UC-Berkeley has pledged to take action on their salary gap issue. The question to us is, are we going to do anything about this 13% gap at WCU.

When I read Laura Wright’s commentary in the January Faculty Forum, one paragraph literally jumped out that I could very much relate to: “Offering is the easy part. There’s more to consider, both for the potential female hire and for the person doing the hiring. Even if you do offer women and men the same thing, there’s plenty of evidence to suggest that women don’t negotiate, so men will still make more.” For the record, when I got the offer from Kimmel School, I did not negotiate my salary. One of my colleagues, however, said that he negotiated it when he got his offer, and I don’t think that he was the only one who made that choice. Why didn’t I negotiate? I will explain below, or maybe I am justifying.

In a typical offer to a tenure-track, assistant professor position in engineering, there would be salary, start-up funds, course release, and office/lab space with computer/equipment, etc. Before my interview at WCU, I had an offer from another university that I hadn’t signed yet. I, of course, was in conversation with them regarding their offer. In retrospect, it is interesting even to myself that I did not ask them for more salary, but I asked them for more start-up. The department head there could not get me more start-up, but he kindly and unexpectedly got me more salary without my asking. That process surely was negotiation, but I did not negotiate my salary, and I do not know whether a male colleague would conduct a negotiation in the same way.

Using that offer as a comparison, I made mental notes on the offer from Kimmel School: salary (similar, check), no start-up (flag, think again...) but strong department and college support on research and travel (need to confirm), course release in my first year (similar, check), and everything I would need in an office (similar, check).

What finally convinced me to accept the WCU offer was the leadership, faculty, and students here. At that time, I did not know how much effort people had spent to create such an environment, but when I visited here, I was deeply impressed by the collegiality and vision of the department and college. I accepted the WCU offer without a second word on my salary.

The argument I got on why we didn’t offer start-up here was that faculty would be strongly supported if our projects were well-designed and widely utilized, and we do not want to see some professors who have to use up their start-ups to accumulate something that no one else really uses later on. To a large extent, this is true to me. Despite a salary that I did not negotiate, I feel extremely blessed and grateful to have had colleagues, department heads, and deans (I do need to use plurals as we have had leadership changes in the past two years and all of them are equally supportive) to help me revise my proposals in multiple rounds and secure what I now use as my start-up funds. I would say that a welcoming environment such as in Kimmel School where I feel genuinely supported and appreciated is worth more than a few thousands dollars, but why can’t we have both?

Salary negotiation is a big deal, and yet I have treated it as if it was a topic that should not be mentioned. On the other hand, if the negotiation was not about “me,” but about my students or my research, the things that I feel responsible for like a mother who is responsible to take care of her

children, I was so much more comfortable to talk about those. I know in my heart that I am not alone in this. When Sheryl Sandberg accepted her offer from Facebook, she almost did the same thing I did, aka, not to negotiate. What made a difference was that she had a mentor who strongly encouraged her to negotiate, and she asked tentatively. Sure enough, she got a much better salary than she expected, in the same way I did not expect a higher salary from another university!

So, what needs to be done? Laura Wright has proposed several actions that are very feasible to do, and I would like to second those to raise awareness on this issue further.

Men and women are perhaps psychologically different while approaching this matter, and we can all do our part to make these changes happen. I am proposing this because I do not think that the hiring leaders at WCU are intentionally taking advantage of women faculty/staff, and therefore, with all the good intentions to promote gender equality and diversity on campus, we should make our actions more effective to lead to those positive changes: As Laura said, this is not simply a women's issue. Men and women, faculty and administrators, should work together to ameliorate the inequities.

Do I regret that I did not negotiate my salary? The answer is yes and no. I regret that I would never know what would happen if I negotiated, but I do not regret my salary, as I knew it was a comparable offer. However, what will I do if I am in a position to negotiate my salary again? You bet that I will negotiate! And, I encourage all the women to do the same.

Jayne Zanglein, Business Administration & Law, *We Care, But Not That Much*: “Equal Pay for Equal Work.” Need I say more? Not “pay that is within two standard deviations” of a male professor’s pay, as stated by the Gender Salary Equity Report.⁹ As the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals recently noted, “Even a dollar's difference based on sex violates both Title VII and the Equal Pay Act.”¹⁰ It also violates basic notions of fairness and equity.

WCU’s 2014-2015 EEO Plan states that if an annual review of compensation shows that “on average, females and/or minorities are being paid less within the same salary band and/or job title, and the difference in pay cannot be justified, Western will put a plan in place to rectify the difference in pay for the protected class member(s).”¹¹ The University had three options to choose from when calculating whether pay inequity existed: “the Any Difference Test; an 80% Test; and a standard deviations test.”¹² WCU selected the standard deviation test, a test that posits that perfect parity will never exist, even in the absence of discrimination, and therefore, correction is needed only if there are statistically significant differences (defined as equal to or greater than two standard deviations).¹³ As Hal Herzog observed,¹⁴ WCU used this test even though few¹⁵ job groups examined were large enough to warrant the use of regression analysis.

Despite the fact that the study concluded that no faculty were two or more “standard deviations from the mean salary for her/his respective similarly situated employee group,” WCU awarded equity raises last spring. I do not know how many salary adjustments were made, or what factors the university used to decide whether to make an adjustment but I received one.¹⁶ The raise brought me up to the

⁹ Henry Wong & Gregor Koso, Gender Equity Salary Survey, at 15 (2014).

¹⁰ *King v. Acosta Sales & Marketing, Inc.*, 678 F.3d 470, 473 (7th Cir. 2012).

¹¹ WCU, 2014-2015 EEO Plan, at 86.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Hal Herzog, “In Compliance” Is An Unreasonably Low Bar, Faculty Forum, Jan. 2015.

¹⁵ Only 16% of the job groups (5 out of 30) were larger than 30. *Wong & Koso*, at 29.

¹⁶ My guess is that I was within two standard deviations until I was promoted to full professor, which was after the report was issued. Plus, I asked for a raise.

average salary of a male full professor at the *university*, but still 16% less than the average male full professor in my *college*.¹⁷ Still, it is progress.

Inequities persist in other areas. More male faculty members have administrative titles than women (46 male, 13 women).¹⁸ More women are lecturers or instructors than men (24 men, 27 women), but the women earn 2-5% more than men.¹⁹ Different disciplines earn more than others because the market places a greater value on that discipline—hence, the difference in salary between finance and modern foreign languages, which are both valuable professions. Faculty members with the same degrees earn different wages depending on which college they are in. It appears that females are hired at lower ranks than men, which means that it will take longer for them to catch up with a man who has comparable skills and experience, but a higher rank. Likewise, it appears that women also tend not to apply for promotion to full professor as often or as quickly as men. It takes women 7.27 years to become tenured, as opposed to 5.91 for men, even though more men than women are hired as fixed term employees.²⁰ All distinguished professors are male but there are two endowed professors: one male, one female.²¹

These disparities have an enormous impact not only on the financial well-being of faculty members, but also their psychological health. An earlier faculty forum explored the reasons that faculty work at home rather than in the office.²² There are many reasons for this, including efficiency, convenience, burnout, pay inequity, and discouragement over meager cost of living adjustments and raises. Pay inequity can decrease motivation and productivity. Why publish an extra article if it consumes your weekends and summers?

Over recent years, the demands on faculty time have increased. We have larger classes, more students who present special challenges,²³ more committee work, more engagement activities, less secretarial support, more paperwork and reporting requirements, more academic dishonesty,²⁴ less parking spaces²⁵, and more videos to watch on information security. We are expected to spend quality time supervising independent studies, honors contracts, undergraduate research, internships, advising, and field trips, all without any additional pay. Some faculty members don't get load credit for each hour they teach. For example, music faculty get .66 hour of load credit for each hour they spend teaching ensembles, labs, or private lessons. They also have a greater load than most other faculty: they are required to teach somewhere between 11-13 credits a semester. If they teach more than 13 credits (which can easily be 18 hours a week), they are not paid an overload.

Neither starting salaries nor titles are uniform. For example, there are department heads, chairs, program directors, program coordinators, and miscellaneous other titles that may or may not entitle the faculty member to additional compensation. Some faculty members are asked to work on projects over the summer for extra pay, while others are expected to work without compensation for weeks after graduation. Some faculty members are given release time for a task that takes 200 hours, while others

¹⁷ In the College of Business, where I teach, women full professors make more than men full professors. I am not sure why. Perhaps it is due to longevity.

¹⁸ *Wong & Koso*, at 29.

¹⁹ *Id.* at 13, 30.

²⁰ *Id.* at 12.

²¹ *Id.*

²² Catherine Carter, *Where We Live and What We Do*, Faculty Forum, Sept. 2014.

²³ Victoria Faircloth, *The Challenges—and Rewards—of Teaching WCU Students With Disabilities*, Faculty Forum, Oct. 2014.

²⁴ Catherine Carter, *Academic Dishonesty*, Faculty Forum, Oct. 2012.

²⁵ Bill Yang, *Parking Blues*, Faculty Forum, Oct. 2013.

are given releases for work that takes 50 hours. Some faculty are given release time to work on scholarly or creative activities; most are not.

These small injustices add up to death by a thousand cuts. Is it any wonder that faculty express concern over the administration’s statement that a two standard deviation difference in pay is perfectly legal? It may be true, but is it the best way to build a healthy and productive workforce? Is it fair?

Let’s look at a concrete example. Assume a male and female are identical in all respects except for gender and pay. They have the same work history and educational background, the same job and job performance, but the man makes \$68,667 and the woman makes \$59,551.²⁶ They both work at WCU for 20 years and are in the Teachers Retirement System. They are solid teachers and productive scholars who are committed to service. WCU is the only employer for whom they have worked. To keep it simple (and perhaps realistic), they never get raises, promotions, cost of living adjustments, or extra pay of any sort. They both retire at 66 and live for another 20 years. They receive no COLAs in retirement.

At death, the female employee will have made about \$270,000 less than the male employee, solely as a result of pay inequity while working for her only employer, WCU.

	Male	Female	Difference
Salary ²⁷	\$68,667 x <u>20 years</u> \$1,373,340	\$59,551 x <u>20 years</u> \$1,191,020	-\$182,320
TSERS Retirement ²⁸	\$18,746 x <u>20 years</u> \$374,920	\$16,257 x <u>20 years</u> \$325,149	-\$49,771
Social Security ²⁹	\$19,992 x <u>20 years</u> \$399,840	\$18,108 x <u>20 years</u> \$362,160	-\$37,680 -\$269,771

The Bottom Line?

The female employee has worked the equivalent of 4.5 of her 20 years at WCU for “free”.³⁰ That’s 22% of her time. If we altered the scenario by one factor and made both of our hypothetical faculty members administrators, then the woman would have only “given away” only 4% of her time.

The gender equity issue is about more than gender. It’s about fairness and treating all employees at WCU with dignity and respect. The administration’s statement that “we are in compliance because we are within two standard deviations” reminds me of a banking law professor I had years ago, who often recited his bank’s pat response to a borrower’s tale of financial woes: “We care, but not that much.”

²⁶ These are the average salaries for a male and female faculty members at WCU. *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ <https://orbit.mynretirement.com/Orbit/Info/Pages/PublicCreateEstimate.aspx>

²⁹ <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/quickcalc/>

³⁰ \$269,771.20 / \$59,551. Even if retirement differentials were not considered, the woman would have worked the equivalent of 3.06 years for free.

Editor's Note: The Faculty Forum is published and distributed on the third Monday of each month during the fall and spring semesters (except holidays). Please consider contributing to campus conversations with a lead commentary or a response. Time is running out for this academic year, with only two issues remaining.

Lead Commentary. This is an essay written by a faculty member addressing an issue, hot topic, or project of interest to the general faculty. Send me your ideas for the next two issues.

Responses. These are faculty comments about and reactions to the previous months' FF. They are often substantive, even critical responses to the essay of the previous month. The **Responses** section is a great way to engage in discussion around campus.

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