



The Experiences of African American Women as Engineering Faculty

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Agenda

- Introductions
- Learning Outcomes
- A Look at the Numbers
- Cold Hard Facts
- Challenges
- Putting a Face on it
- Wrap Up
- Q&A

Motivation for Session

- “With the exception of a few personal reflections, little is known about the quality of the collective experiences of Black women academics in sciences and engineering. However, one might extrapolate knowledge about the common experiences of women in the sciences⁴ from what has been found about American women (usually White). One must remain open to the possibility that problems encountered by these women are also part of the experiences of women of color in the same fields.”

Learning Outcome Goals

- To provide participants firsthand experiences of African American women faculty in engineering.
- To raise participants awareness about the challenges faced by African American women faculty on a day-to-day basis.
- To provide recommendations for faculty, administrators and institutions on creating a supportive environment for African American women faculty in engineering.

A Look at the Numbers

Taken from

1. 2000 US Census
2. ASEE, Profiles of Engineering and Engineering Technology Colleges, 2005 Edition
3. National Center for Educational Statistics

General Population Statistics

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Women in the US | 50.4% |
| African Americans in the US | 12.9% |
| African American Women in the US | 6.5% |

Faculty Stats all Fields

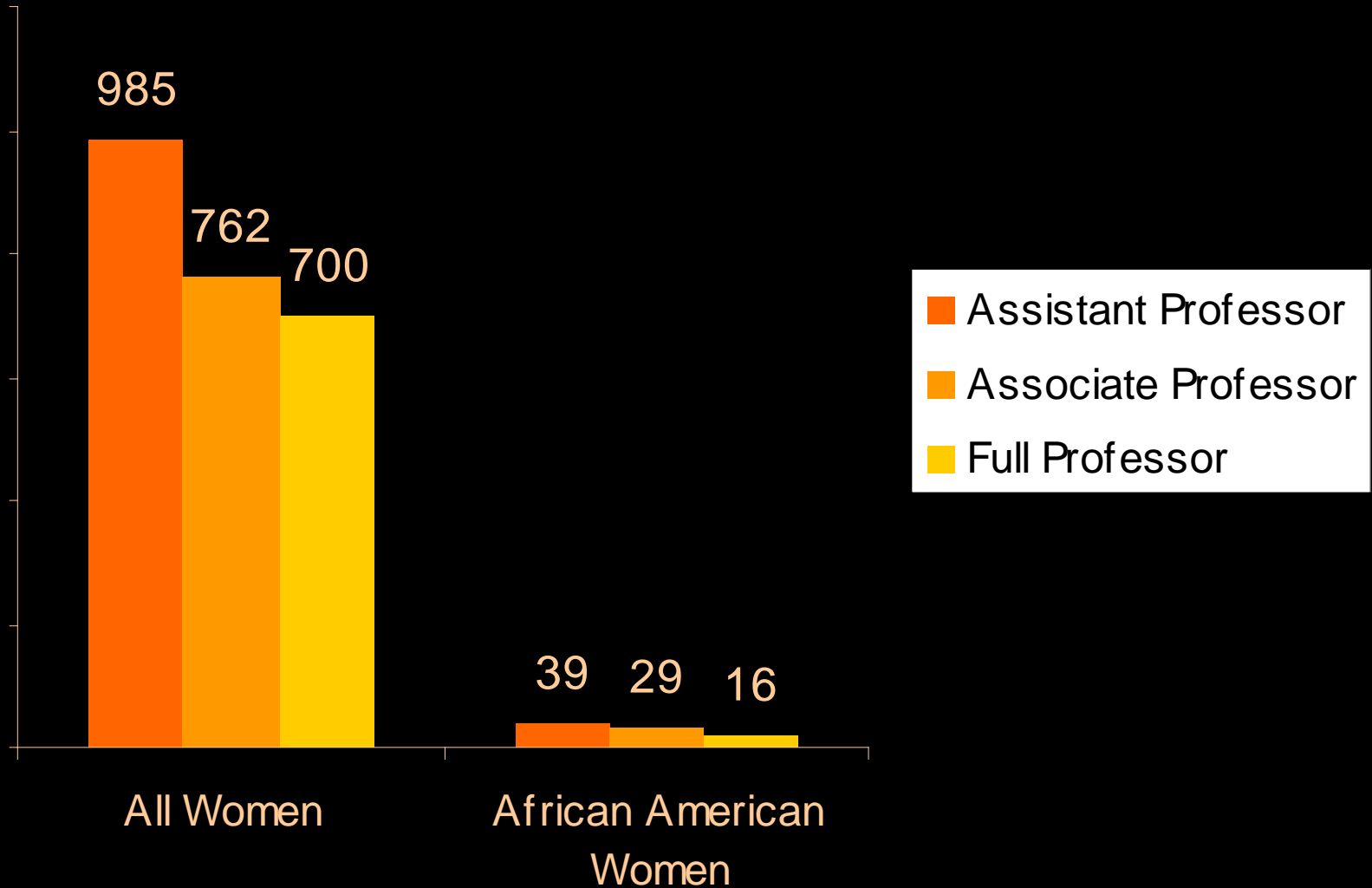
| | Women | African American (M&F) | African American Women |
|--------------|-------|------------------------|------------------------|
| All Levels | 39.7 | 5.4 | 2.8 |
| Tenure Track | 25.5 | 3.6 | 1.7 |

All Figures are Percentages

Engineering Faculty Stats

| | All Faculty | All Women | African American Women |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Assistant Professor | 5338 | 985 | 39 |
| Associate Professor | 6092 | 762 | 29 |
| Full Professor | 11582 | 700 | 16 |
| Total | 23012 | 2447 | 84 |

Engineering Women Faculty



Data Source: ASEE Profiles of Engineering and Engineering Technology Colleges, 2005 Edition

Cold Hard Facts: All Women

- Feel less supported and valued in their academic units
- Perceive that compensation and non-research supports (e.g. office and lab space, clerical support) are less equitably distributed
- Are less likely to be employed in tenure-track positions than men who are similarly situated.
- Women who are married and have children are less likely to be employed in tenure-track positions than men who are married and have children.
- Are less likely to earn tenure than their male counterparts.
- Are more likely to be employed in junior ranks and are less likely to hold the rank of full professor than are men.

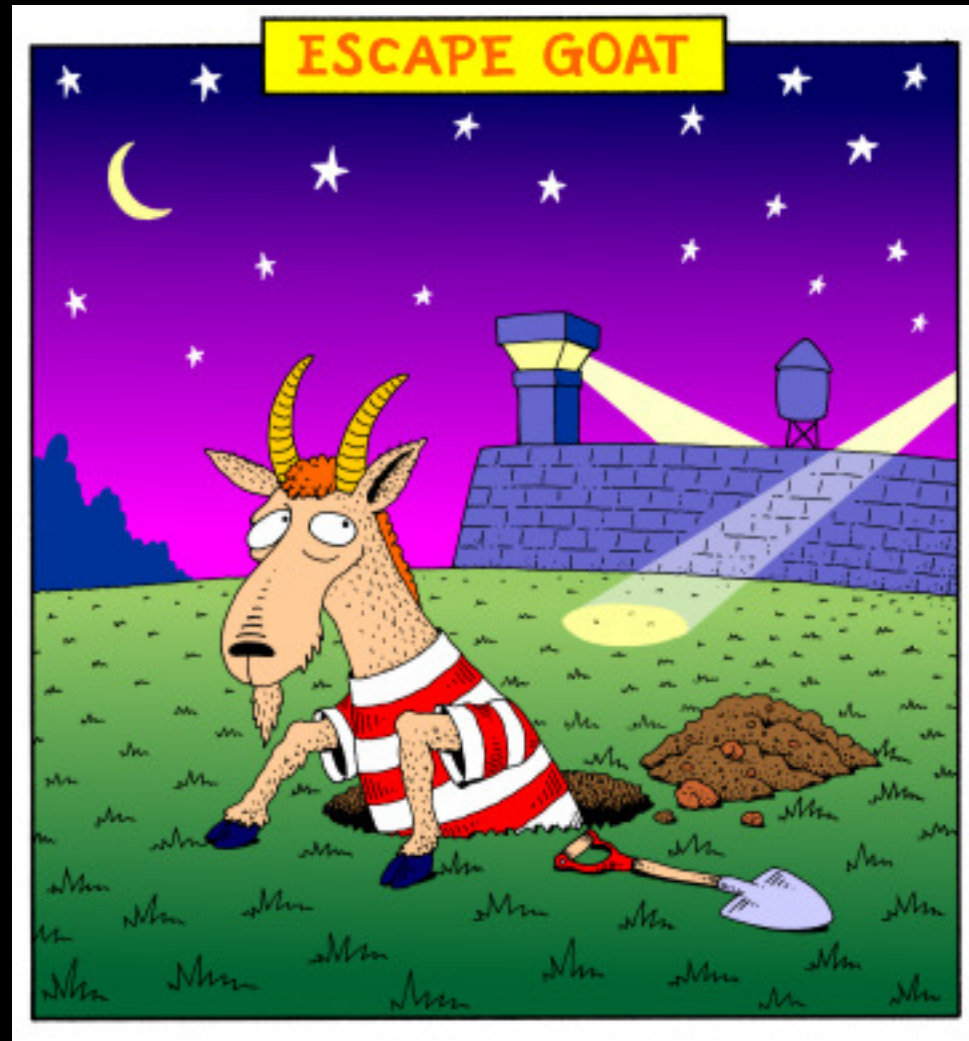
Challenges Facing Faculty of Color

- "Cultural Taxation"
 - expected to handle all minority affairs and increased service requests
- "Catch 22 Bind"
 - Often viewed as Silent and Non-Threatening and Invisible or Vocal and Perceived as Visible and Threatening.
- Perceptions of Being Incompetent "Affirmative Action Hires" therefore feel they must constantly prove themselves
- Occupational Stress
- Sexism and Racism
- Tenure practices
- Teaching
- Left Out of Informal Networks

Challenges Facing Faculty of Color

- Pioneerism
- Marginalization
- Isolation
- Living in Two Worlds
- Expectations and Evaluations
- Lack of Mentoring

It's Not About Blame



Recommendations