

From the Desk of the Chancellor – September 11

When we are planning the next 20 years, we should consider the incredible changes that have occurred in the past 20 years. A clear example is the changing roles and opportunities for women.

Members of the undergraduate Class of 2016, entering college this year, most of them born in 1994, have seen a woman lead the U.S. State Department for most of their lives. During their lifetimes, women have always piloted war planes and space shuttles. With Marissa Mayer as Yahoo's new CEO, the Fortune 500 now has 20 female top executives, a new record.

Some of those changes are closer to campus. This fall, for the first time in the 133-year history of our IU School of Dentistry, the incoming class of dental students has more women than men. Sixty female students and 44 male students were accepted into the Doctor of Dental Surgery Class of 2016, an unusually high percentage of women compared to other dental schools in the U.S. This fall, we have 17,309 women pursuing degrees at IUPUI and 13,142 men.

Women are aspiring to higher and higher levels of college education at IUPUI and across the nation.

This trend raises numerous issues for the future of IUPUI and Indiana:

- While women are a majority of our undergraduate students, they reported significantly higher levels of negative experiences than men in the areas of negative or disparaging comments, not being taken seriously, and offensive language or humor (State of Diversity Report, 2012).
- While the percentage of females in executive/administrative/managerial positions increased substantially in 2012 (and now exceeds the comparable percentage for IUPUI's peers), the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty who are women is lower than the average for IUPUI's peer institutions. (State of Diversity Report, 2012)
- The declining percentage of male students and their lower completion rates -- particularly for African American males -- is a trend that has very serious implications for our community.

Thus, as we consider what our goals should be and what the key issues are for the future, we need to do the serious thinking required by the implications of the very positive growth in opportunities for women, the quality of experience of our female students, the need to continue recruiting and retaining women to the faculty, and the negative consequences of poor graduation rates for some men.

This week's probe -- what strategies should we be considering as we seek to make sure both opportunity and success increase for women and men at IUPUI?