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HEADLINE: Despite Gain in **Degrees, Women** Lag in Tenure in 2 Main Fields

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BODY:

Although more women are earning doctorates in science and engineering, a new survey of science and engineering faculties at the nation's top 50 research universities found that women remain scarce in tenured, or tenure-track, positions.

In many fields, including biology, chemistry, math, economics and computer sciences, the survey found, there are far fewer women even in entry-level assistant professorships than would be predicted from the doctorates now awarded to women.

In computer science, for example, women earn 20.5 percent of the doctorates, but make up only 10.8 percent of the assistant professors.

The survey, conducted by Donna J. Nelson, a chemistry professor at the University of Oklahoma, includes data on every discipline for which the National Science Foundation ranks the 50 universities that spend the most research money.

Over all, it found, only 3 percent to 15 percent of full professors in the top engineering and science departments are women.

"It is likely that a woman could get a bachelor of science without being taught by a female professor in her discipline," the report said. "If the student is a woman of color it is probable she will earn her Ph.D. without ever seeing a minority female professor in her field."

Even in fields where women earn most of the doctorates, they are underrepresented on the faculty. Women earn 66.1 percent of the doctorates in psychology, but hold 45.4 percent of the assistant professor jobs.

The situation is far bleaker for minority women, the study found. In the top 50 computer science departments, there are no black, Hispanic or American Indian women in tenured jobs, or even on the tenure track. Among all the physical

science and engineering departments, there was only one female full professor who is black.

While engineering faculties still have relatively few women, they have made the most progress. The shares of chemical, civil, electrical and mechanical engineering doctorates awarded to women all increased by at least 50 percent for the decade ending in 2002 over the previous decade, and there is a close match between the share of Ph.D.'s earned by women and the proportion of women who are assistant professors.

"This survey shows how broad-based the problem is, that it's not just a matter of time before it's solved," said Marcia Greenberger of the National Women's Law Center. "Even with a modestly improving pool of students, we're not seeing the kind of increased faculty presence we would expect."

The report is expected to add fuel to the push for diversity in the sciences, an issue that began making national headlines in 1999, when the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in response to complaints by Dr. Nancy Hopkins, a biologist, acknowledged that it had a history of pervasive, if unintentional, discrimination against female scientists.

Since then, there have been a number of hearings and studies and calls for increased efforts to support women and minority scientists, but progress has been spotty and slow.

"If significant progress is to be made within the next couple of decades, new and totally different approaches to solving problems facing women and minority faculty will be needed," Dr. Nelson said. "We're hoping that with the participation of groups like the National Organization for Women and the National Women's Law Center, groups that have experience in helping women in business and journalism and other fields, we'll be able to go in and tackle the problem head-on."

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