Oral Defense Announcement
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Education with an emphasis in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

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The Effect of Union Affiliation on Salary for Female Community College Faculty

Date: November 21, 2019
Time: 1:30 – 3:30 PM
Place: 101 WEB

Abstract

There is a substantial pay disparity between the highest and lowest paid full-time community college faculty members, more so for women. Faculty unions, which are common at community colleges, are believed to increase pay equity, although research on unions is limited. This study provided evidence addressing gaps in the literature regarding the community college workforce and unionization in higher education. No previous research has been conducted at the community college level examining specific union affiliation and the role it plays in salary.

The purpose of the study was to examine salary variables for female community college faculty members employed in union environments in Illinois. The research questions focused on 1) the influence of background attributes, union affiliation, and institutional characteristics on base salaries and 2) the possible difference in base salaries between AFT- and NEA-affiliated institutions.

The study utilized multiple linear regression to explain the unique contribution made by each independent variable to the 9-month base salaries of 1,861 full-time female faculty members employed in 33 community college districts in Illinois during Fiscal Year 2017. The independent variables included specific union affiliation, teaching area, educational level, tenure status, years of experience, the institution's Carnegie classification, presence of a ranking system, gender of the college president, and the number of full-time faculty.

Each of the nine independent variables were statistically significant predictors of salary and the regression model accounted for approximately 50% of the variance in salary. The findings revealed a statistically significant difference, $p < .05$, between National Education Association salaries ($M = $76,148) and American Federation of Teacher salaries ($M = $72,707). The findings also revealed that faculty members working at suburban colleges, teaching in the areas of Business and Liberal Arts, and working at institutions led by female presidents had higher salaries.

Implications of this study may affect administrators, faculty, and union leaders. Knowledge regarding increased earning power between national unions affects faculty considering unionization. Knowledge about salary differences in teaching areas affects administrators, faculty, and union leaders in regard to fairness in compensation. Female community college faculty salaries reflect systemic pay inequity and must be addressed.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

Patricia G. Boyer, Ph.D. - Chairperson
Judith A. Cochran, Ph.D.
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