

## POLICY MEMORANDUM

### EQUITY FOR HISPANIC FACULTY IN TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION

BY

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The Independent Equity Committee, a group of eight full professors from the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at Austin, issued its 2019 equity assessment on Hispanic faculty to assist the university in preparing a plan of action. The Committee members ascribe to the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity that the university promotes in accordance with stated equal employment opportunity laws and policies and its principles of fairness, transparency, and honest collegiality. Encouraged by the response of university administrators to the Gender Equity Report of 2008, which examined disparities between female and male faculty, we adopted many of the same categories of analysis, recommendations, and plan of action. Furthermore, we demonstrate that seemingly neutral policies, rules, practices, and systems of management have produced disparate impacts on Hispanic faculty. The Hispanic Equity Report provides a clear analysis of public data on compensation, governance, and advancement. Since colleagues in other universities claim similar problems, university leaders and policy makers should encourage institutions of higher learning in Texas to conduct comparable equity assessments and adopt plans of action to remedy underrepresentation and to improve inclusion and equity.

### BACKGROUND

In response to a petition by three Hispanic Professors to their History department, colleagues agreed to an equity assessment. In May 2018, the departmental Committee reported equity problems in pay, access to the governance system, and faculty hiring and retention. Some reforms occurred, including some merit raises and a revamped governance system, although pay disparities and lack of representation in standing committees, program management and endowed chairs continues. Professor Alberto Martínez, the Chair of that departmental Equity Committee, and other Latino faculty from history reached out to colleagues in the College of Liberal Arts and discovered that inequities exist in multiple departments. The Independent Equity Committee subsequently issued the Hispanic Equity Report on October 8, 2019 (See attached Report).

### FINDINGS

1. Hispanics are strikingly under-represented among the faculty;
2. Every year, the university's method of Holistic Admissions serves to enroll a *far lower* percentage of Hispanic and Black students than the method of Automatic Admissions mandated by the Texas State Legislature.

3. On average, the university pays substantially lower salaries to Hispanic full professors even despite higher levels of scholarly productivity;
4. From 2010 to 2018, Hispanic faculty received the lowest rates of retention and promotions to the ranks of Associate Professor with tenure;
5. Hispanic faculty were less likely to be granted honors such as professorships and endowed chairs, as well as teaching awards; and
6. Disparities in compensation correlate with the lack of Hispanic faculty in leadership positions as administrators, deans, and department chairs.
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The President and Provost of the University of Texas at Austin have agreed in principle with our findings and have initiated some reforms that promise equity to Hispanic faculty. The Independent Equity Committee is collaborating with them in several ways, including the recent submission of individual requests for equity raises by thirty-seven Hispanic faculty with impressive records of scholarly production. These statements point to significant inequities in pay and opportunities for advancement to positions of leadership in their department and colleges.

We take the University of Texas at Austin's slogan to heart—"What starts here, changes the world"—and propose that other colleges and universities conduct equity assessments to determine possible solutions regarding inequities affecting other under-represented groups, especially Hispanics, the largest minority group in Texas.

1. The IEC supports current efforts by the University of Texas at Austin to develop a plan of action on equity;
2. Equity assessments at the University of Texas should incorporate the experiences of Latinas/os as students, staff, administrators, and workers;
3. All colleges and universities in Texas should conduct equity assessments that should minimally include the categories of gender, ethnicity, and color;
4. Equity assessments in Texas should additionally consist of full compensation data; and
5. The Committee on Higher Education in the Texas Legislature should consider a bill proposal to fund colleges and universities to conduct equity assessments on salaries, promotions, and inclusion in positions of leadership, to act on such findings.

## THE INDEPENDENT EQUITY COMMITTEE

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