



ADVANCE BU



Recommendations for Promoting Equity in Service



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BRADLEY University

Service Load Disparities at Bradley (2019 & 2024)



- **Women** tend to do more **low-profile, time-consuming service** while **men** spend more time on **higher-profile college** and **University service**.
- Both men and women said that even when **women** are not directed to do lower-level service, there is **often an unspoken expectation** that they do so.
- **Different perceptions**: In 2019, 70% of women vs. 11% of men perceived that women are discriminated against in service duties (45% vs 19% in 2024 survey).
- **Women** described a **“double bind”** when it comes to service—if they say “yes,” they have less time for research; if they say “no” they are seen as “not team players.”



Personal & Institutional Costs of Workload Inequalities

- Career and earnings **stagnation**
- **Friction** in personal & professional relationships
- Job **dissatisfaction**
- **Exhaustion** and burn-out
- Employee **turnover**



Non-promotable tasks (NPTs)

A task that “matters to your organization but it **will not help advance your career**” (Babcock et. al 2022)

- Not visible
- Doesn't require your specialized skills/expertise
- Doesn't provide valuable skills or connections
- Not formally evaluated and rewarded

Many “service” tasks in higher education are very important, but are still NPTs.



Is the service load disparity just at Bradley?

- No. Multiple studies at US colleges and universities have found **faculty women spend more time** than faculty men **on NPTs**. Likewise, **faculty of color** spend **more hours** per week on NPTs than white faculty.
 - Guarina & Borden (2017) N=5000
 - Misra et al (2011) N=300
 - Mitchell & Hesli (2013) N=1400
- Similar findings from studies of TSA agents, lawyers, engineers, investment bankers, HR professionals, others



Why do women do more non-promotable service?

- Multiple studies confirm that:
- **Women say yes** to more service because they experience more **social pressure to say yes**
 - Gender norms
 - Women are penalized more for saying “no”. Tasks considered “optional” for men are often expected/required for women (Heilman & Chen 2005).
- Women are more likely to say yes because **we they are asked more often**
 - Women are seen as **“best bet” to say yes**
 - Women are seen as **“good fit” for NPTs**
 - Women are **“victims of their own success/competence”**



Suggested Departmental Changes

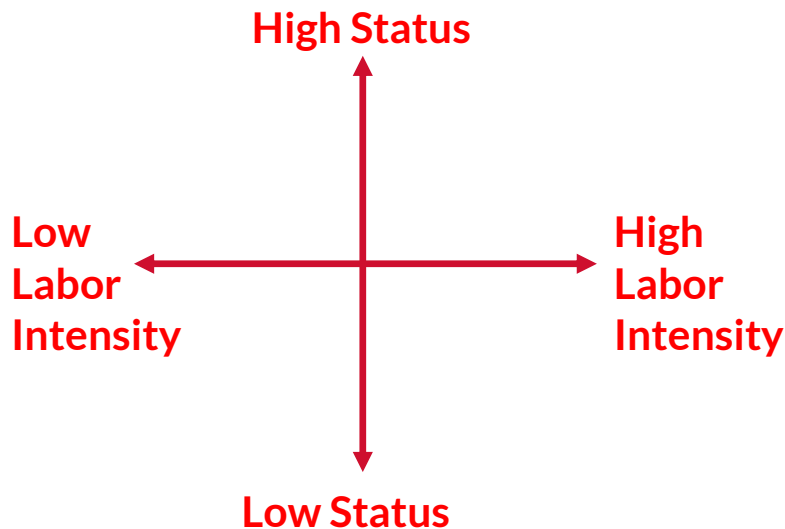
- Track service work in a visible way (see Grid →)
- Work as department to set **standards** for service and **enforce** them with rewards and penalties
- **Redistribute/reassign** existing NPTs for equity
- **Switch** from **volunteering** for NPTs to **rotation**
- Reconsider what is and is not **promotable work**
 - **Eg. Perhaps coordinating the Graduate program is an extension of teaching; or writing the Program Review is applied scholarship**



Status/Intensity Grid for Service

Get the facts:

Draw the Grid on a unit whiteboard (or shared Google doc). Faculty post colored sticky notes (or type in doc—one color for each person) noting each of their service tasks over a semester. Any inequalities will be visible.



Change Policies and Practices:

Instead of asking for “volunteers,” rotate time-intensive tasks, and/or use a service roster. Consider creating a service “credit” system to adjust for variations over time.

Set clear expectations: Units should set clear expectations for service, including type, number, and time required for each service commitment.



References Cited

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Questions, comments, or suggestions?

We'd love to hear from you.

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Advancing and Maintaining Equity