

## An Overview of Women in U.S. Academic Medicine, 2005-06

Progress toward gender parity of students, residents, faculty, and leaders in academic medicine has been of interest to medical schools and teaching hospitals for decades. Despite improvement in some areas, many observers remain concerned with the representation of women at all levels in academic medicine. This *Analysis in Brief* provides an overview and analysis of 2005-2006 data gathered from sources across the AAMC: the Student Records System, GME Track, the Faculty Roster, and the *Directory of American Medical Education*. It reports percentages of men and women in the pipeline of students and residents; examines gender disparities in areas such as faculty hires and promotions; and provides breakouts of the representation of men and women in leadership positions. The data from which this report is drawn can be found at [www.aamc.org/members/wim](http://www.aamc.org/members/wim).

### Applicants, Students, and Residents

Since 2002-03, the number of applicants and enrollments to medical schools has gradually increased. The percentage of women applicants reached a high of 50.8 percent in the 2003-04 academic year. Although the number of women applying to medical schools continued to increase in 2004-05 and again in 2005-06, the number of men applicants increased even more (Table 1). As a result, the percentage of women in the total applicant pool was 50.4 percent in 2004-05 and 49.8 percent in 2005-06. Of the 99,395 physicians in 2005 U.S. residency training programs, excluding combined specialty programs, approximately 42.5 percent were women. This increase from over a decade ago, when the corresponding figure was 34 percent, is largely due to the increased number of women graduating from medical schools in the United States and abroad. The proportion of women residents in each specialty has changed little over the past few decades.<sup>1</sup>

### SNAPSHOT

In 2005-06, women represented:

50% of applicants to medical school  
48% of first-year students  
49% of medical students  
49% of graduating medical students  
42% of residents and fellows

32% of medical faculty members  
38% of assistant professors  
28% of associate professors  
16% of full professors

19% of division/section chiefs  
10% of department chairs

43% of assistant deans  
31% of associate and senior  
associate/vice deans  
11% of medical school deans

**Table 1. Changes in Applicants to Medical School, 2002-03 to 2005-06**

Year	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total applicants (% women)	33,625 (49.2%)	34,791 (50.8%)	35,735 (50.4%)	37,364 (49.8%)
Change from previous year	-1,235	+1,166	+944	+1,629
Women	-162	+1,116	+346	+602
Men	-1,073	+50	+598	+1,027

<sup>1</sup> Magrane DM, Lang J, Alexander H. *Women in U.S. Academic Medicine, Statistics and Medical School Benchmarking, 2004-2005*. Washington, DC: AAMC, 2005.

**Table 2. Women in Leadership Positions in U.S. Medical Schools, 2005-06**

Leadership Position	Count	Percent
Division/Section Chief	887	19
Department Chair	303	10
Assistant Dean	254	43
Associate Dean	306	32
Senior Associate Dean	98	27
Dean	14	11

**Full-Time Medical Faculty**

Of the 118,700 full-time faculty in the AAMC Faculty Roster as of May 2006, 32 percent were women. Twenty-nine percent of women faculty had ranks of either full or associate professor, compared to 52 percent of men. The representation of women varies across departments. Women account for 22 percent of M.D. faculty in pediatric departments and for 2 percent of M.D. faculty in orthopedic surgery departments, with these two departments marking the high and low representation of women physicians in clinical departments.

**Academic Leadership Positions**

Over the years, women have gained greater representation in executive positions in medical schools in the United States. In 2006, women were represented in administrative leadership of medical schools by a variety of appointed positions (Table 2). Every U.S. medical school now has at least one woman department chair or a dean. However, the representation of women in senior leadership positions is less than might be expected from the progress made in academic advancement through the ranks. For example, although 16 percent of full professors are women, only 11 percent

of medical school deans are women. Nevertheless, the current number of women deans represents a doubling since 1999.

*Department chairs*

In 1998, 28 medical schools reported no women department chairs. In 2006, five schools reported no women department chairs and 28 reported only one. Also in 2006, of the 2,925 department chairs in 125 medical schools, 10 percent were women—13 percent of basic science chairs and 8 percent of clinical department chairs.

*Decanal positions*

The 1,898 decanal positions (vice, associate, and assistant deans) vary from full-time to part-time and are appointed at a variety of levels within the organizational structure of the 125 U.S. medical schools. Women account for 27 percent of senior associate deans and 32 percent of associate deans. Forty percent of women assistant, associate, or vice deans report directly to the dean of the medical school, compared to 48 percent of men in similar positions. Sixteen schools report no women deans in a direct reporting relationship with the dean of the medical school. All of these 16 schools have at least one woman department chair.

**Summary**

Overall trends indicate that the percentage of women among medical school applicants, students, residents, and faculty continues to increase. Although women make up a greater percent of residents than a decade ago, there has been minimal change in the percentage of women choosing particular specialties. While women are represented in the positions of associate and vice deans roughly in proportion to their representation among the senior faculty, women are underrepresented among department chairs and medical school deans.

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