Seminar—Gender Bias in Student Evaluations

Kristina Mitchell
Director, Undergraduate Studies
Director, Online & Regional Site Education
Department of Political Science
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Monday, April 23
12:20pm-1:15pm
GOS 8-2300

All are welcome to attend!

Abstract: Many universities utilize teaching evaluations as part of consideration for tenure, compensation, or other employment decisions. But in doing so, universities may be engaging in discriminatory practices against female academics. Dr. Kristina Mitchell will present her research that explores the relationship between gender and teaching evaluations using both content analysis in student evaluations (both formal university evaluations and informal online evaluations), and quantitative analysis of students’ ordinal scoring of their instructors. She and her co-author found both that the language students use in evaluation comments regarding male professors is significantly different than language used in evaluating female professors, and that a male instructor administering an identical online course as a female instructor receives higher ordinal scores in teaching evaluations, even when the questions asked relate only to the content of the identical courses. Dr. Mitchell discusses the real-world consequences of these results: both in potential discrimination in employment decisions against women in higher education, as well as in the interactions and language that women in higher education must endure that their male counterparts rarely do.

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