

Does Learning Come in **Pink and **Blue**?**



Gender and Learning

Dr. Laura McCullough, University of Wisconsin-Stout

Welcome!

* How can we help women succeed in their education?

Women & Education

- * Women are an important part of the US workforce
- * Education provides important opportunities for women
- * Need to ensure women succeed in college

US Women's Education

- * Women are 50.4% of US population
- * 57% of college attendees in 2015 were women
- * 57% of women in the US are in the labor force
- * 70% of women with children under 18 participate in the labor force

Activity

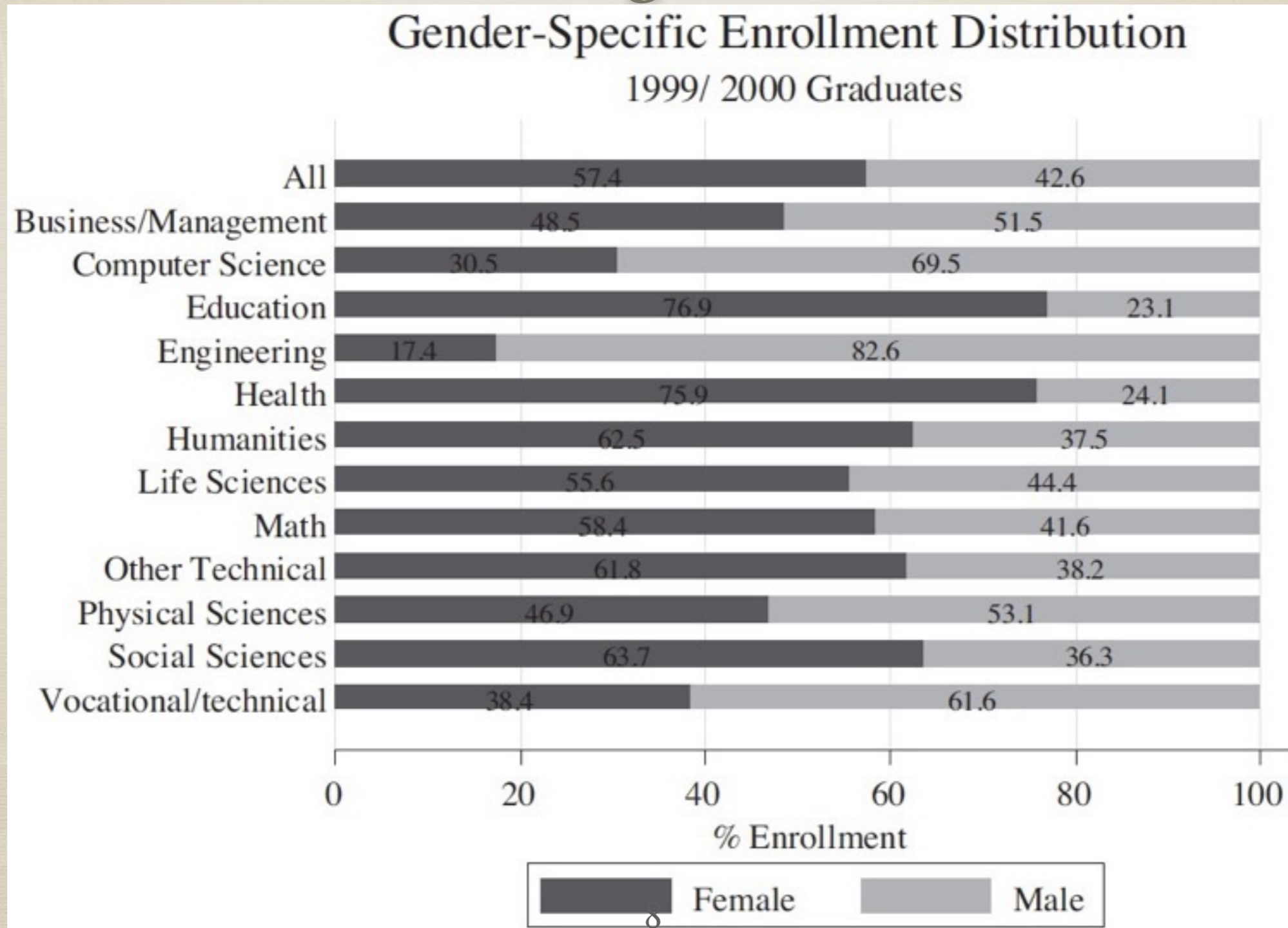
- * At your table, discuss what you think affects women's success in education at UVU
- * Write down ideas at table

- * Break out your ideas into three categories:
 - * pedagogy & curriculum/classroom factors
 - * internal/self factors
 - * external/societal factors

Pedagogy & curriculum: gender differences

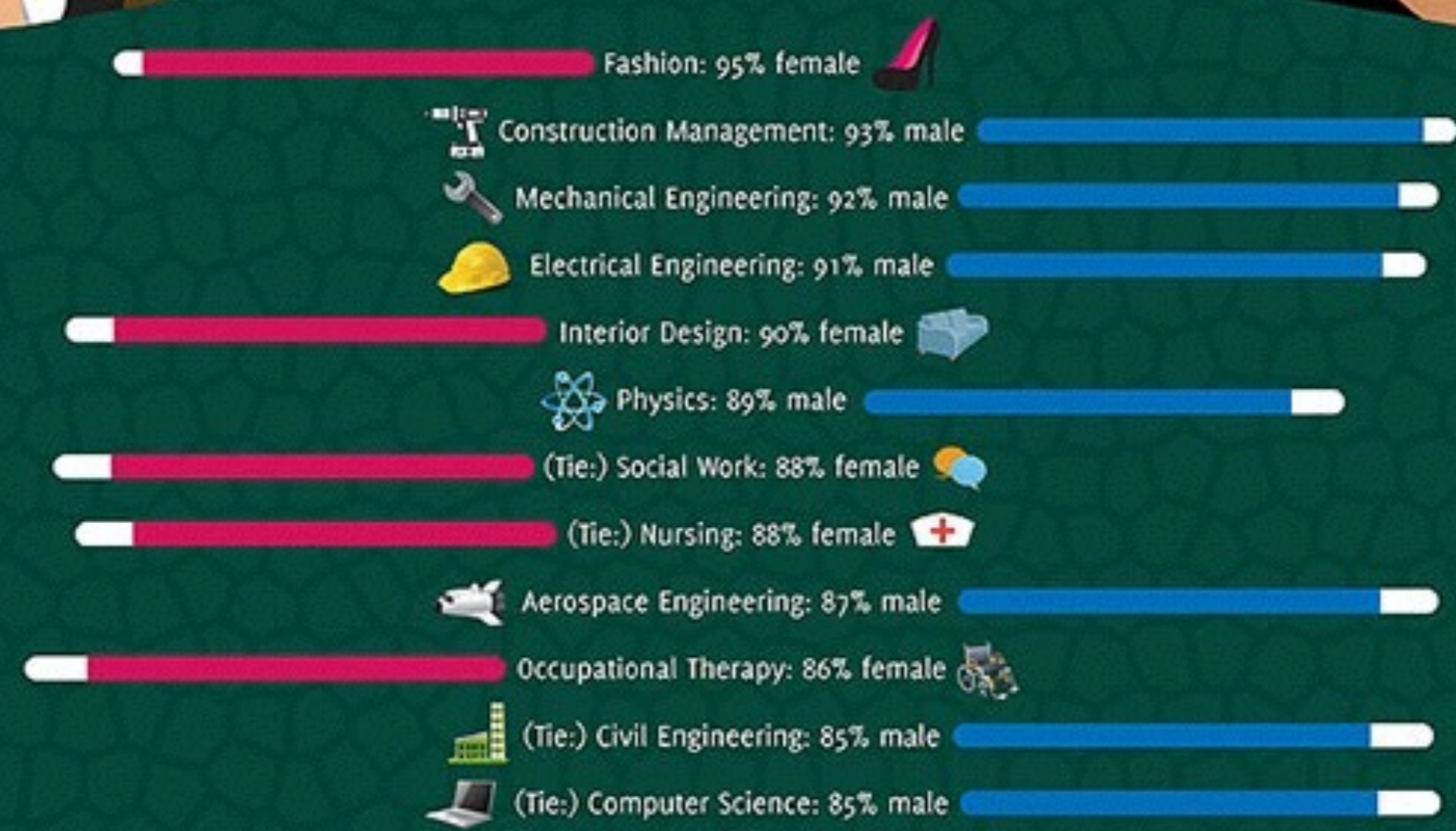
- * Larger classes may bias grades towards men
- * Females earn higher grades in college
- * Some majors are strongly gender divided

Gender distribution of majors





College Majors With the Biggest Gender Gap



Pedagogy & curriculum: gender differences

- * Teachers are more likely to:
 - * call on males more often than females
 - * attribute good ideas to men
 - * ask men abstract questions, ask women factual questions
- * Teachers are less likely to elaborate on points made by men

Pedagogy & curriculum: gender differences

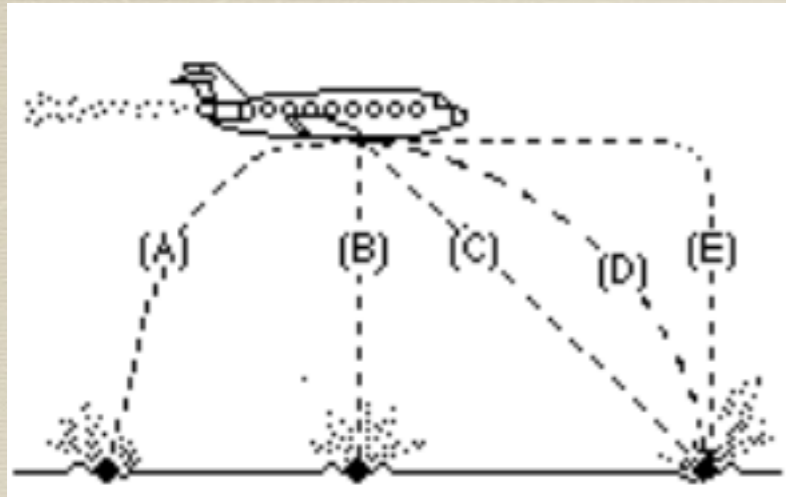
- * Male students talk more frequently and longer than female students
- * Male students less likely to raise hand to be called on, more likely to call out answer
- * Female students likely to be interrupted
- * Female speak more quietly and in shorter chunks
- * Females more likely to express hesitation, uncertainty

Pedagogy & curriculum: gender differences

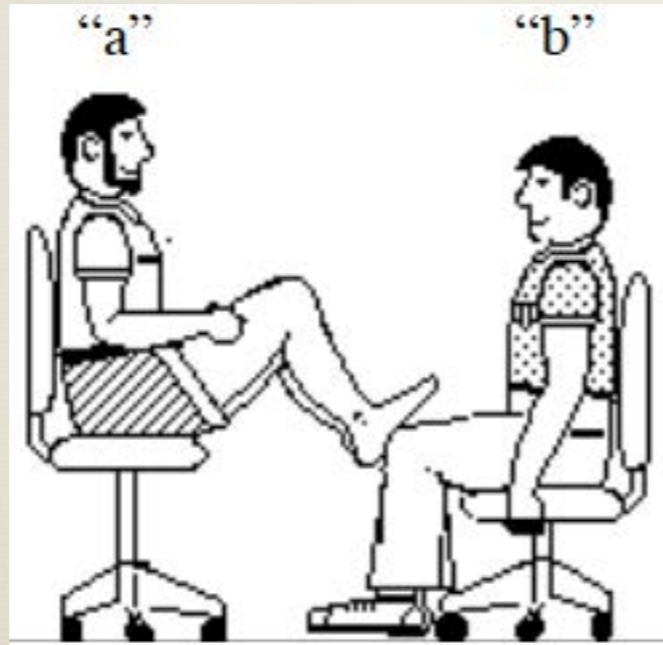
- * Test format (multiple choice/essay)
- * Contextual factors

Example

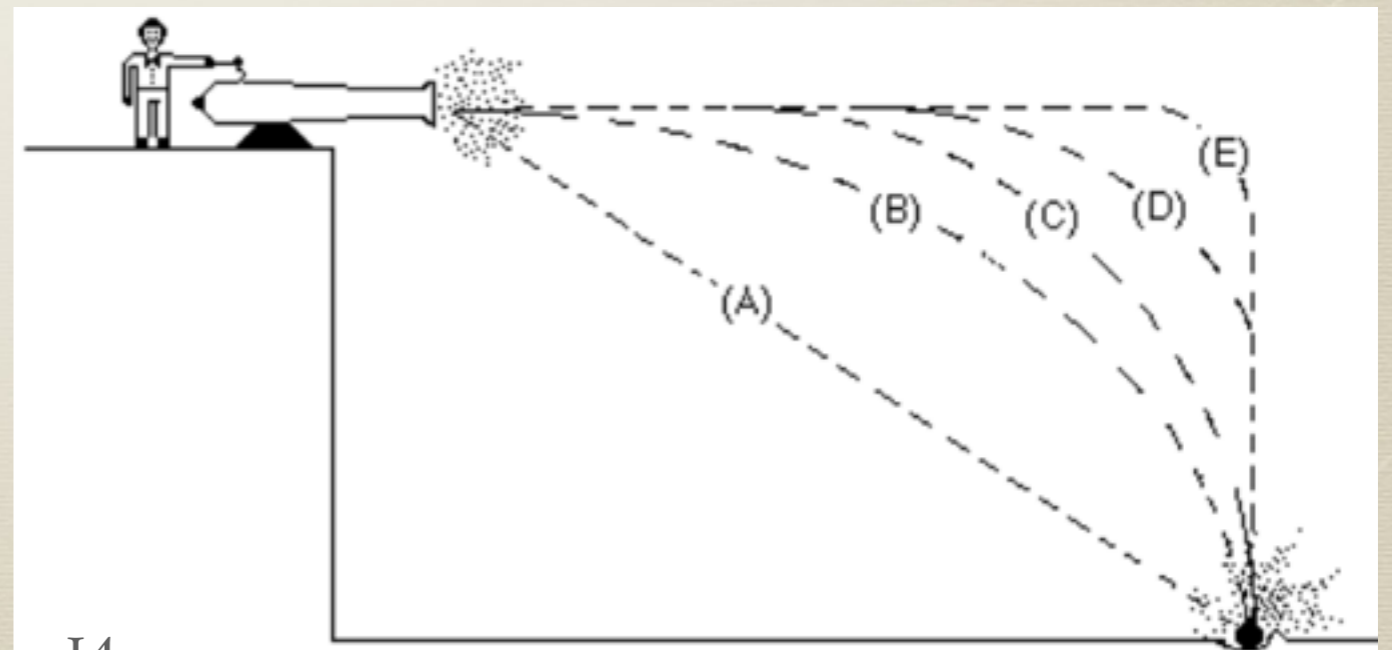
a large truck collides with...



a hockey puck sliding with constant speed...



a boy throws a steel ball..



a boy swings on a rope...

Feminist pedagogies

- * Traditional classrooms have been built by men for men
- * Hadn't changed in centuries
- * Need to account for social aspects of education
- * Focus on student agency not instructor dominance

Activity

- * Table talk:
 - * Which factors did you come up with?
 - * Which factors surprise you?
 - * Which do you think are most relevant to your students?
 - * Which factors would you like to learn more about?

Internal/self factors: gender differences

- * Self-concept: males more likely to have independent SC, females more likely to have inter-dependent SC
- * Self-esteem: males tend to have higher self-esteem
- * Academic entitlement: males tend to exhibit more AE than females

Internal/self factors: gender differences

- * Growth vs. fixed mindset: gender differences in the two groups
- * Learning styles: Males more likely to prefer an abstract conceptualization style (thinking over feeling, objective over subjective, theoretical)—matching traditional pedagogy; Females more spread out among the four learning styles

Internal/self factors: gender differences

- * Attitude and motivation
- * Differences in memory tasks
(different processes but similar abilities overall)
- * Women better at note taking

Examples

- * Male student this semester always asking to take tests outside of normal proctoring hours
- * Majority of SF/F writers who requests blurbs are male; despite nearly even proportion

Activity

- * Table talk:
 - * Which factors did you come up with?
 - * Which factors surprise you?
 - * Which do you think are most relevant to your students?
 - * Which factors would you like to learn more about?

External/societal factors: gender differences

- * Stereotype threat
- * Implicit bias
- * Microaggressions

External/societal factors: gender differences

- * Advising
- * Parental expectations differ for men and women; parenting style can affect student's career locus of control

Example

- * Grad student peer worked with advisor who treated women differently; worked on project, not credited

Activity

- * Table talk:
 - * Which factors did you come up with?
 - * Which factors surprise you?
 - * Which do you think are most relevant to your students?
 - * Which factors would you like to learn more about?

Case Study

- * “I got the 2nd highest score on my first undergrad E & M test, but the professor assumed I was another person in the class (who did poorly) and told me I should drop the class. I was so afraid of him afterward that I struggled with E & M until grad school (where I did my Ph.D. in plasma/E&M theory). I almost forgot it all until I went back to visit my undergrad department - I walked down the hall where the evil prof's office used to be, and I felt my stomach turn. Took me a few moments to figure out why.”

Women's Education at UVU

* How can we help women succeed at UVU?

UVU successes

- * Inclusion & Diversity core theme
- * Women's Success Center
- * Office of Teaching and Learning
- * Minor in Gender Studies

Suggestions for UVU

- * Train SCOTs in classroom gender equity and send them out for specific observations
- * Find programs with highest rates of graduating women and see what makes them successful
- * Find programs that are losing women fast and see where the problems are
- * Exit interviews for female students: form? in-person?
 - * Do in-person interviews for some sample
- * Be sure to include men in every step: must be joint effort or barriers will never fall

Look to the future!

- * Imagine what you want UVU to look like in five years for your female students
- * Find ways to make this happen: grants, scholarships, foundation donations, on-campus expertise, external speakers

Activity

- * What ideas do you have for making positive change?
- * Who do you know who could help you?
- * What would you need to succeed?

Let's do it!

- * Volunteer to compile ideas?
- * How can you continue this after today?
- * Don't forget to celebrate your successes!

I wish you success!

Thank you!