

THE ACCREDITATION OF GENDER



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- If oil once was the prime engine of extraordinary, rapid development in many Arab countries, the region's ability to manage without oil is the central economic question.

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- My thesis is that if accreditation is not part of the solution in the Middle East, it is part of the problem.

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- The 2002 Arab Human Development Report:
- a prosperous future for the Arab world depends on the total empowerment of women, “taking advantage of all opportunities to build [women’s] capabilities and to enable them to exercise those abilities to the full.”

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- Levity about gender is a great *American* tradition. Might I welcome you to 1970's women's lib?
- Or, as I often heard it—women's *lip*?

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- Change does not happen simply because it is wanted.

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- Higher education is particularly suited to ensuring women's empowerment and participation, not because it is any more noble (though maybe it is) than other institutions or even because it may be more "protected" from social buffeting, but because its quality can be assured in a straightforward, no-nonsense, yet adaptive manner.

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Quality is not synonymous with equality.

- Accreditation is not neutral.
- It can work for and support quality and quality assurance practices.
- It can also work against female empowerment even as it professes the opposite.

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- Higher education in the Middle East has to say and do something different if it wants to equalize roles for women in national leadership and professional positions.

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Not enough states would ratify a simple constitutional statement that said women had equal rights in America.

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Title IX

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

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- In 1972, 44% of Bachelor's degrees went to women; in 2000, 56%⁵
- In 1972, 17% of Ph.D.'s went to women; in 2002, 51%⁶
- In 1972, 09% of medical degrees went to women;⁷ in 2000, 43%⁸

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- In 1971, 7% of law degrees went to women; in 1994, 43%
- In 1970, 8.7% of full professors were women; in 1999, 20.8%
- In 1971, 30,000 women participated in college sports; in 2001, 163,000, a 403% increase

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- ❑ In business, 8% of the undergraduate degrees awarded in 1962 went to women, but 47% by 1992.
- ❑ Today, the number of female students in high school sports is over 2.8 million; in 1971, there were only 300,000 women (7.5% of high school athletes).
- ❑ In 2001-02, women made up about 60% of undergraduates, and more women than men earned Ph.D.s for the first time in American history.

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- Men, as it turns out, have not suffered.

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- In 1998, 49.5% of all female faculty were employed part-time, and only 52% of women were tenured compared to 71% of men
- In 2001-02, 60% of assistant professors hired at research universities were men, even in fields in which women earn more Ph.D.'s.

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The smartest and most educated women in academe continue to find themselves relegated to poorer positions, prospects, and salaries.

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- “Unfortunately, the statistics show that women still lag behind men in nearly every aspect of faculty and administrative employment at educational institutions.”

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- The percentage of women receiving bachelor's degrees in computer science actually decreased 28% between 1984 and 1998.

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- Chemistry:
- 43.1% of the Bachelor of Science recipients are female whereas 87.9% of the faculty is male

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Duke University Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering:

“Like many other women engineers, I considered engineering as a career because I had an engineer—my father—in the family. We must reach a point in this country where we do not have to rely on family members to interest girls in engineering, and where we are committed as a society to the participation of girls and women in engineering.”

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An employment level of 15 to 30 per cent female faculty establishes a solid baseline from which to tackle deep rooted issues. It is at that stage—when women no longer jeopardize their careers if they speak out—that women “begin to impact their department’s culture, policy, and agenda.”

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Title IX Means Test for athletics:

- ❑ A) the percentages of male and female athletes were about the same as the percentages enrolled, or that
- ❑ B) the school has a consistent pattern of expanding opportunities for female students, or that
- ❑ C) the school is “fully and effectively” meeting the interests of its female students to participate in athletics.

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- The government office charged with Title IX's enforcement **never** penalized or withheld federal money from a school for violating Title IX.

- Accrediting organizations in the United States **never** mention the law or its intent in their standards.

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A tremendous aspect of segregation is that it is terribly expensive, but if educational systems provide equal funds, as some Arab countries seem to do far better than other countries, then a critical mass of women already exists.

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These undergraduate Middle Eastern women, similar to the smaller percentage of women in top tier U.S. colleges, constitute the elite who will fill the Middle Eastern professional and leadership positions if women fill them at all.

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- And though it must be lonely at the top, there are Arab women in leadership positions in education in the Middle East.
- What they need are friends.

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If accreditation is to have an impact on the goals for women articulated in the Arab Report, it has to be different than it is now.

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The standard does not speak directly to gender, and in practice “diversity” is interpreted as nationality and university affiliation, **not gender**.

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2002 – 2004 U.A.E. Accreditation

- 17 committees
- 332 committee members
- 25 women



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The fact is that recruitment by familiarity
is the rule.

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So, the chief question is not how quality assurance agencies can re-orient their roles to improve the record on enforcing standards—but will they?

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If diversity in nationality and educational background is a quality issue, then should not gender be included as well?

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The accrediting agency has an obligation to address gender issues positively

- in its own staffing,
- in its Visiting Committees, and
- in its published standards.

That is not a “neutral” stance but a proactive one.

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The Arab Report:

- “Discrimination is worse in the case of young females.”

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It would be doubly tragic if the institutions and agencies with the power to encourage and support young women undermine their efforts rather than help them learn to lead.



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THANK YOU

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March 2005