



***Choices and Responsibilities:
Higher Education in the Knowledge Society***

Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE)

“Where are the Boys? Gender Imbalance in Higher Education”

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The gender breakdown in higher education in Canada and other western countries has switched from an imbalance in favour of men to an imbalance in favour of women over the last two decades. Programs to attract women into higher education have worked very well. At the University of Guelph for example, 70% of the students are women. Should educators be concerned about this phenomenon? Are there short- and long-term negative effects of gender imbalance? If so, what can and should educators do about the imbalance? Should programs to attract men into higher education be implemented? What accessibility steps can be taken to create a gender balance in higher education? This paper explores the changes in the gender profile at universities and colleges in Canada, the United States, and other countries. Potential economic, social, and political causes and effects of gender imbalance are proposed. Accessibility techniques that could be used to create gender balance in university and college programs are explored.