Male-Female Wage-Gap: A Comparison of Different Employment Classes

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Richard V. Foster, AB McNair Scholar, Economics

Dr. Jeffrey Waddoups, Faculty Mentor, Department of Economics - Dr. Heather Lusty, Faculty Mentor, Department of English
Dr. Thomas Carroll, Faculty Mentor, Department of Economics (Retired)

ABSTRACT
This study is being conducted and presented in two parts. The first part, this report, is a statistical examination of the male-female wage gap. By evaluating the average (mean) differences between men and women within the workplace, pay differential trends can be ascertained and examined to support the need for additional study. The second stage, to be conducted Fall 2014 at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada, will use regression analysis to differentiate between explained and unexplained portions of said pay-gap to better understand how the remaining gap is related to discrimination. The data analyzed will establish baselines for both real and nominal wages, then examine classes of worker, e.g., governmental, private for-profit companies, or private non-profit companies, and finally, look at the effect of union coverage of the gender pay-gap.

INTRODUCTION
Historically, women have always been paid less than men for equal work. Over the last half century, the pay-gap between the sexes has narrowed significantly. However, in the last few decades, the narrowing of this gap, or “convergence,” has slowed. During the 1980s, the overall gap decreased 9%, compared to the 1990s during which the overall gap decreased by an additional 3.5%. The primary question to be considered is: In the last fourteen years, are there segments of the workforce that have made significantly more progress at closing the pay-gap than others? Secondary concerns include whether there have been substantive changes to the pay-gap, what trends have emerged over this period, and whether there is a need for further research.

DATA ANALYSIS / METHODOLOGY
The data source used to examine this research topic is the Monthly Earnings Study of the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is conducted by the Bureau of Census, on behalf of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data set was selected for the quantity of characteristic variables as well as the large number of collected observations. The period of the data set covers 1999 to 2013. This time period was selected because it covers a contemporary period that is not well documented, and it includes the variables of union coverage and union membership, characteristics that typically tend to be significant when examining other compensation-related labor economic topics.