A/Prof Ivona Hideg, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada

Abstract: Although sexist attitudes are generally thought to undermine support for employment equity (EE) policies supporting women, we argue that one form of sexism – benevolent sexism – may actually increase support for EE policies by invoking a sense of compassion. In a correlational study (Study 1) where we measured benevolent sexism and an experiment where we primed benevolent sexist stereotypes (Study 2), we show that benevolent sexism is related to greater support for an EE policy and that this effect is mediated by compassion. In Study 3, we identify a key boundary condition of the positive effect of benevolent sexism: the type of position for which EE policies promote the hiring of women. In particular, we find that the positive effect of benevolent sexism on support for the EE policy via compassion extends only to EE policies that promote the hiring of women in more feminine, and not in more masculine, positions. Thus while benevolent sexism may promote EE policies and appear to promote gender equality, it may subtly undermine it by potentially contributing to occupational gender segregation.

Presenter: Ivona Hideg is an Assistant Professor of OB/HRM in the School of Business and Economics at Wilfrid Laurier University. Ivona's main areas of research include gender and cultural diversity and equality in the workplace and emotions and emotion regulation in the workplace. Her research has been published in top-tier refereed journals such as Academy of Management Journal, Journal of Applied Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Psychological Science.

Date: Wednesday 26 November 2014
Time: 12:00-1:00pm followed by Sandwich Reception
Venue: BUSN 142 Sir Rod Eddington Case Study Room
RSVP: Siew.Wade@uwa.edu.au by 21/11/2014
For more information: Gillian.Yeo@uwa.edu.au on 6488 1875