

Multiple Approaches to Recruit and Retain a Diverse Faculty

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Introduction

The goal of the ISU ADVANCE program is to investigate the effectiveness of a multilevel collaborative effort to produce institutional transformation that results in the full participation of women faculty in science, technology, engineering and math fields in the university.

One key aspect of our program focuses on transforming departmental structures, practices, and cultures using Collaborative Transformation.

Our Collaborative Transformation participants:

- Nine focal departments, including Ecology, Evolution & Organismal Biology (EEOB), from three colleges.
- Department faculty that work together with social science researchers.

Training for Departmental and College Partners:

- Workshop on Unintentional Biases for focal department ADVANCE Professors, Department Chairs and college Equity Advisors.
- University-wide workshop "Practical Tools for Recognizing and Reducing Unintentional Bias"

The Collaborative Transformation Process:

1. Focus groups meet with facilitator to discuss department culture, practice and structure.
2. Department report is prepared to "mirror back" to department ways workplace climate influences how positive their climate is and how effective the department's recruitment.
3. Needs assessment meetings conducted by ADVANCE Professors are tailored to meet the needs of individual departments.
4. Collaborative problem solving sessions include department faculty and ADVANCE program leaders.



Focus group meetings were organized by rank so that Assistant Professors (shown here) could have candid conversations with the facilitator.

Reference:

Bird, Sharon R. and Florence A. Hamrick. 2008. *ISU ADVANCE Collaborative Transformation Project: First Round Focal Department Synthesis Report*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University ADVANCE Program.

Summary of Results

Departmental results from focus group interviews were summarized in an EEOB Departmental Report. We found six major issues (listed below) that affected faculty members' ability to conduct their best work. These issues were important to EEOB, but they also were found to be important issues for the other two departments. The first four of the issues do not specifically address gender or race, but these issues often have a disproportionate effect on faculty in underrepresented groups. Each of the three focal departments has developed strategies for change to address the issues identified in their departments.

Issue #1: Spatial proximity of faculty affects collegiality, mentoring, and sharing of information.

Strategy for change:

- Create spaces and opportunities for faculty to interact face to face.



Faculty meet during a weekly EEOB coffee hour, which provides a venue for informal discussions.

Issue #2: Perceived gaps exist between stated department ideals and actual practices.

Strategy for change:

- Share information on averages and ranges of work for faculty of all ranks.



Department chair meets with junior faculty to share information about tenure and promotion.

Issue #3: Assistant and Associate Professors need clear understanding of expectations for tenure and/or promotion.

Strategy for change:

- Share departmental information regarding average faculty productivity by rank.
- Discuss expectations for promotion from Associate to Full Professor.
- Revise university's faculty mentoring program.

Issue #4: Faculty freedom to express views in important departmental discussions.

Strategy for change:

- Reiterate best practices to ensure less assertive voices are included in faculty discussions.
- Use secret ballots for controversial decisions.

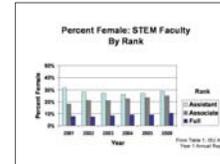


Departments should consider using a *process monitor* in faculty meetings to assure all voices are expressed and respected.

Issue #5: In STEM disciplines, women and underrepresented faculty of color make up a small proportion of STEM faculty, especially at the rank of Full Professor.

Strategy for change:

- Using specific criteria to screen candidates for faculty positions.
- Inviting women and young scholars of color to present seminars.
- Participating in discussions and presentations that highlight studies of unintentional bias.



In STEM disciplines, women constitute a small percentage of faculty, especially at the rank of Full Professor.

Issue #6: ISU's family friendly policies are supported, but not well known, and parental leave provisions are considered well-meant but impractical.

Strategy for change:

- Discuss department-specific policies for release time and course coverage.
- Expressed support for those who use these policies by chairs and upper level administrators is needed.



UNINTENTIONAL BIAS: OUR THEME FOR WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

Evolutionary biologist Marlene Zuk spoke about Gender, Science & the Myths of Merit at a networking event. A workshop, focused on *Unintentional Bias*, included a Reader's Theater with actors from STEM departments.



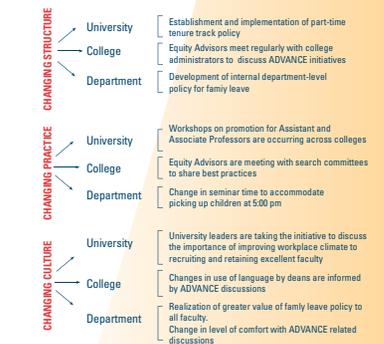
Interventions

ADVANCE Professors (department level), Equity Advisors (college level), and members of the ISU ADVANCE leadership team meet regularly to plan activities from the top down and the bottom up. They also share successes and challenges.



Outcomes:

Outcomes of the ISU ADVANCE program can be measured in terms of changing structure, practice, and culture. Changes are being initiated both from the bottom up (department) and from the top down (college or university).



Unintended Lessons:

- Foundation** → Time-intensive efforts to prepare protocols and educational materials at the beginning of the ADVANCE Program have laid a solid foundation for the program.
- Leadership** → Interactions between the ADVANCE Professor and department chair are key to effectiveness of departmental Collaborative Transformation efforts.
- Visibility** → Collaborative Transformation efforts in departments are "invisible" to many faculty on campus. There is a need for greater visibility across the university.