Strategies to Advance and Empower STEM Women through Networking, Training and Structural Change

Iowa State University Experience

Elisabeth Huff Lonergan, PhD
ISU ADVANCE Faculty Fellow – ISU Provost’s Office
Professor – Animal Science
What is ISU ADVANCE?

- A university-wide program
  - reflects the commitment of Iowa State to:
    - Recruitment
    - Retention
    - Advancement of women faculty and faculty of underrepresented groups on the entire campus.

- Originally funded by a highly successful NSF grant that focused on STEM departments
  - the program has now been institutionalized by Iowa State University and is being extended to bring positive benefits to ALL departments and disciplines
  - ISU chose to focus on those aspects of the NSF funded project that were most impactful
Original ISU ADVANCE Approach

- **Top Down**
  - Policy Changes
  - Conference on Flexible Careers
  - Faculty Satisfaction Survey
  - Search Strategy Resources

- **Bottom Up**
  - Collaborative Transformations
  - Department Reports
  - Actions to Transform Culture

Department committees/ISU ADVANCE
Institutionalization

• Funded by NSF 2006-2012
• Institutionalized by the Provost’s Office in 2012
• Overseen by a new Faculty Fellow Position – ADVANCE Faculty Fellow
  – Reports to the Associate Provost for Faculty
ADVANCE Faculty Fellow

• What is my job? – a few highlights

  – Face of the ADVANCE program for Iowa State University

  – Work with department chairs and deans to identify specific needs including training, resources, and sustained support in recruitment, retention advancement of women and underrepresented groups.

  – Develop programming and materials to support the success of Iowa State University in its efforts allow maximum success for women and underrepresented groups, and in the end, all faculty on campus

  – Coordinate the activities of the Equity Advisors across campus

  – Coordinate the Department Enhancement Program (DEP)
    • formerly known as Collaborative Transformation
Goals of the Current ISU ADVANCE Program

- Increase the representation of faculty from underrepresented groups at the senior faculty level and in leadership ranks.

- The goals and programs are focused on the success of faculty in all departments.

- Institutionalize positive change across the university – this will contribute to the success of ALL faculty and will continue to make Iowa State University a highly desirable workplace.

- One of the keys to the success of this program includes the work done by the Equity Advisors that are embedded in Colleges.
Equity Advisors

- Play a central role in implementing programming at the college level for ADVANCE
- Resource for colleges and departments

- They provide consultation on issues such as:
  - hiring best practices for creating a diverse candidate pool
  - mentoring,
  - professional development,
  - promotion and tenure issues
  - and climate within the colleges

- These are issues that have been shown to have a dramatic impact on the recruitment, retention and advancement of women and underrepresented groups – but also truly affects all faculty
Equity Advisors

– training of search committees on how to conduct the most effective and inclusive faculty searches they can.

– Work with other EAs to develop University wide programs on issues related to faculty success

• Examples of recent activities have included workshops on Mentoring and on Promotion and Tenure
Equity Advisors

• Equity Advisors are to be in all colleges
• Currently EAs are in place in:

  • College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
  • College of Engineering
  • College of Human Sciences
  • College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
  • Library
  • College of Design
  • College of Business
  • College of Veterinary Medicine
Department Enhancement  
(Formerly known as Collaborative Transformation)

• Goal
  – to enhance departmental structures, cultures and practices
    • further faculty members’ satisfaction with their careers at ISU;
    • Promote faculty productivity as scholars
    • Facilitate faculty contributions to departmental efforts to recruit, retain and promote excellent faculty members of all academic and social backgrounds.
  – Aid in preparation for departmental review/accreditation
  – Aid in response to departmental review/accreditation
  – Aid in leadership transition

• Funded by Provost’s Office and by Colleges in which Departments are located.
Department Enhancement

• Structure
  – Trained facilitators interview faculty in peer groups
    • Interview focuses on aspects of department culture that impact faculty work
    • Report is generated by facilitator
      – Reflects what faculty said
    • Department committee reviews the report
      – Removes identifying comments
      – Works with facilitator to identify
        » Ways to continue to promote practices that are effective
        » Ways to improve aspects of the departmental culture that detract from faculty members ability to do their best work
      – Department Committee shares the final report and their recommendation with the department
      – Department owns the report
ISU ADVANCE

• Continued to maintain a “top down-bottom up” approach
• Now provides assistance to the entire campus
• Major strength is in the network of Equity Advisors
Contact Information

• http://www.provost.iastate.edu/isu-advance