Using Climate Data at The University of Texas at El Paso to Institutionalize Change

What is the climate at the institution for females, including underrepresented minorities?

- Work life survey conducted in first and last years of grant (spring of 2004 and fall of 2007)
  - Based on survey instrument developed by the University of Wisconsin Madison
  - Survey established a baseline for issues concerning recruitment, retention and departmental, college and overall university climate and culture
  - Administered to all tenured/tenure-track faculty and full time lecturers in the 18 ADVANCE departments in Physical Science, Life Science, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Engineering, and three departments with an underrepresented proportion of females in the College of Business
  - In Spring 2004, the survey was administered for the 1st time as a paper survey
  - Faculty were told that it would only be reported in the aggregate
  - In Fall 2007, the second wave of the survey was administered, this time via the web
  - 126 responded under the first wave (46%) and 149 responded to the second wave (49%)
  - Bonferroni method of comparing multiple means was used, with a standard alpha level of .05 used in the analysis - significance levels at p<.01 (highly significant), p<.05 (significant) and p<.10 (somewhat significant) were shown
  - A similar survey was used in both administrations of the instrument, with the same analysis methodology
  - All analysis was disaggregated by gender, ethnicity (White, Hispanic, Other), position (Professor, Associate, Assistant, and Lecturer) and departmental discipline (STEM or Social or Behavioral Science – SBS)

- Results of the spring 2004 survey validated anecdotal comments that the climate for women in the 18 ADVANCE departments at UTEP was not ideal for either recruiting or retaining women – the results showed that females were significantly more likely to feel that:
  - They were isolated in their departments
They lacked a voice in how resources were allocated
Their department chair did not involve them in the decision-making process
They were dissatisfied with the way their careers were progressing at UTEP
They were unsupported in their advancement towards tenure and promotion
They lacked understanding of the criteria for tenure and promotion
There was not a strong fit between the way they did research, teaching, and service and the way it was evaluated for tenure

Will implementing initiatives change the climate?

- The ADVANCE initiatives were intended to improve climate for women, including underrepresented minorities

  - To increase faculty diversity, UTEP ADVANCE established four integrated and mutually supportive components:

    1) A policy and recruitment process that proposes faculty support and retention policies, supports recruitment efforts, and provides research support
       a. Dual career policy and funding assistance
       b. Start up funds
       c. Monitoring of “short list”*
       d. ADVANCE PI meeting with all female recruits*
       e. Graduate assistants
    2) A faculty development process that helps faculty define a holistic and balanced academic career
       a. Faculty Mentoring Program for Women
       b. IMPACT
    3) A collaborative leadership process that works with departments to remove barriers to recruitment, retention, and advancement of women faculty by assessing departmental climates and sharing best practices that encourage diversity and promote leadership
       a. Chair Chats
       b. Women Faculty Forums
       c. ADVANCE Female Faculty Interviews*
    4) An evaluation process that includes both formative and summative assessment and review
       a. external advisory board
       b. external evaluation consultant*
       c. internal evaluation
The need to have more “boots on the ground” led to adding an Associate Vice President of Faculty, an Associate Dean of Faculty in each College, and a Faculty Fellow in each College

* Initiative added after the ADVANCE grant began

- The survey results also pointed to the need for additional ways to build community – through a research database and the need for leadership training
- The Faculty Fellows helped diversify the team, build buy-in, and placed ADVANCE in the colleges

- Results of the fall 2007 survey showed changes in the climate of the 18 departments across the board

**How do we sustain this?**

- The comparative data from 2004 to 2007 is being used to document project impact, further influence change, and promote institutionalization of ADVANCE initiatives
  - High level results were presented to the University President, Provost, Deans, Associate Vice President of Faculty, Faculty Fellows and other key UTEP administrators, as well as UTEP’s external Advisory Board
  - The 2004 survey was also presented to the Faculty Senate
  - A journal article is being planned for publication
  - Survey results will be posted on the UTEP Website and a link provided to the NSF ADVANCE website for Assessment Data of Climate Surveys
  - An email will be sent to the faculty surveyed in 2007, informing them of the improved UTEP climate and the link to the survey results on the UTEP ADVANCE website
  - Comparative data will be included in the final NSF ADVANCE report
  - The Path Forward Committee is using the comparative data to argue for institutionalization