Mentoring Senior Faculty:
Highlights of the Mizzou ADVANCE Mentoring Program

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Goals

1. Provide one-on-one and workshop mentoring to improve the opportunities for tenured STEM women to reach next level of promotion (i.e., full or leadership, if desired)

2. Improve the retention of women at the post-tenure level

3. Train a cadre of mentors on gender equity issues and best practices for promoting the careers of women faculty

4. Create a ‘culture of mentoring’

5. Create a program that is scalable and sustainable
Program

• One on one mentoring between associate and full professors and mentors
  – Pairs are not from the same department

• Year One:
  – Matches: 19 pairs, all mentees were women
  – Workshops: work/life balance, gender schemas, preparing a promotion dossier, women in leadership, socials (no speaker), negotiation workshop.

• STRIDE, Interactive Theatre, Institutional Data
Our Organization

- Steering Board (10 members) offer guidance and feedback
- Co-P.I. and Program Director run the program, organize workshops
- P.I. meets with Program Director weekly to go over events, troubleshoot
- Monthly updates on program
Adaptation: Matching

• Enhanced the application form
  – Not open-ended
  – Asked for specific needs that address people’s individual needs/skills although we recognize these will change as the year progresses

• Incorporated a slate of mentors- that is, offer mentees a choice of mentors.

• Reasons for changes:
  – Response to last year’s matching process
    • Dependent on personal knowledge of people and less knowledge about what mentors needed
  – More sustainable and transferable
Adaptation: Training

• Initial mentor training focused on importance of ADVANCE and some gender equity theory

• Mentors wanted more nuts and bolts information about:
  – Various definitions of mentors and mentoring
  – How to troubleshoot (i.e., someone who won’t take advice)
  – How to deal with lack of their own knowledge
Points for Discussion

- Distinctiveness of mentoring tenured faculty
- Difficulty of attracting men to mentoring program
Distinctiveness of Mentoring Tenured Faculty

• Mentees:
  – Normative for junior faculty to receive mentoring; infrastructure of support (e.g., assigned mentors in department, colleague circles, etc.) but nothing for senior faculty
  – Senior faculty know the institutional culture
  – We are doing research to find out precisely how mentees used their mentors; past uses:
    • Accessing campus resources is more difficult and less available for tenured faculty (i.e. no targeted grants, etc.)
    • Post tenure careers become more open, more negotiable than pre tenure years

• Mentors:
  – Structural considerations:
    • Mentoring is understood as hierarchical, occurring along a vertical line
    • Mentor/mentee relationships in the case of tenured faculty is more like horizontal in nature
    • Difficult for mentors at time who felt that they had more experience with mentoring junior faculty (who were ready and expecting it) than mentoring senior faculty
    • New norms
  – More unexpected issues might be raised—careers take turns after tenure, not as predictable
  – Mentees not from their department and/or college
    • Mentors felt a lack of knowledge, which some found frustrating
    • Benefit was that mentors and mentees made new connections to others across campus
Difficulty of Attracting Men to Mentoring Program

- Participate in programs/workshops but not one on one program
- Mizzou ADVANCE considered a grant for women
- Non normative for senior faculty to receive mentoring; it is even less normative for men to expect or want it
- Hits up against the myth of the lone scientists, the independent researcher
- Feel less need than women because they tend to have better internal networks and relationships, and possibly more satisfied with how processes and information works
Sustainability

• Institutional commitment necessary

• Good training for mentors, P & T committees, Deans, so knowledge and practices are shared among many faculty – not dependent on specific individual running the ADVANCE program
Multiple ways to evaluate mentoring program:
- NMSU ties to climate survey and has comparison groups
- We have some comparative data because our program has interviews with 25 women and 25 men, not all of whom are in the mentoring program, but no real plan to compare
- NMSU tries to use objective data (i.e. outcomes):
  - Productivity
  - Grant applications
  - Publications
  - Number of women retained (compared to non participants)

We are doing qualitative interviews:
- Identify their specific mentoring needs
- Identify how they used ADVANCE to meet these needs
- Assess their view of the success of the program (including new collaborations, expanded social networks, reduced social isolation)
• Reduced isolation

• Improved opinion about the climate