

**“What Counts as Success?
Recognizing and Rewarding Women Faculty’s Differential Contributions in a
Comprehensive Liberal Arts University”**

**NSF ADVANCE: INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY**

**INTERIM REPORT – YEAR FOUR
SEPTEMBER 2019-APRIL 2020**

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Executive Summary

The overarching aim of the SU ADVANCE program is institutional transformation in the form of:

1. Cultural shift around the faculty activities that count toward tenure and promotion (with a specific emphasis on promotion for women faculty in STEM and SBE fields);
2. Procedural change in the form of revised promotion guidelines that clearly include mission-related activities as valued and articulate paths toward promotion; and,
3. Structural change to include formal mentoring and training for both faculty and administrators as a basis of sustained education and support for the multi-track promotion policy.

Finally, we aim to ensure that our institution transformation efforts, as well as our responses to evaluations and feedback, are rooted in data from our ongoing participatory action research (PAR). A hallmark of SU ADVANCE is our commitment to generative learning and ongoing program elaboration in response to feedback from varied groups across multiple levels of the institution as well as from an expanding network of national groups and consultants. The result has been elaborated themes reflective of our campus community; opportunities for cross-sharing of these emergent themes; and expanded teams/participation, with opportunities to model effective cross-communication.

Our project requires a critical mass of highly informed faculty and administrators who understand and support the project and can serve as campus-wide ambassadors. To this end, we have intentionally convened various groups, some on multiple occasions, for generating engaged awareness and investment.

It is important to note that two events impacted our programmatic activities during the period covered by this report. The first was our 3rd Year NSF Site Visit in October 2019. The second was the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent move to remote instruction and work at Seattle University, which necessarily impacted the work of SU ADVANCE.

For the September 2019 to January 2020 time period, our major activities centered on:

1. Preparing for and hosting our 3rd Year Site Visit from the National Science Foundation, which took place in late October 2019;
2. Continued meetings and products of the Task Force for the revision of the Promotion Guidelines for Full Professor;
3. Continued meetings and products of the "Mentoring the Mentors Program" working group (henceforth, renamed the "Leadership Formation Institute," in response to site visit feedback);
4. Responding to feedback from the Site Visit team in a manner that was in line with our Participatory Action Research model;
5. Ensuring that SU ADVANCE objectives around faculty development and inclusive faculty reward systems were incorporated into the university's 5-year Strategic Plan.

The SU ADVANCE 3rd Year Site Visit. Our 3rd Year Site Visit with the NSF Review Team was an opportunity both to gather stakeholders and participants from all over the Seattle University campus (and beyond), to meet with the team, and also to obtain valuable feedback from the reviewers. SU Administrative Leadership, including the President and the Provost, as well as members of the University Strategic Planning Committee, the University Rank & Tenure Committee, and the head of Academic Assembly all attended individual site visit sessions. So, too, however, did a representative sample of SU faculty who were still ranked at the associate level while acting in key leadership and administrative roles; a small group of SU Full Professors who have thought deeply about the promotion process; a group of SU ADVANCE undergraduate interns, past and present; and key institutional staff from the Office of Sponsored Projects, Faculty Services, Institutional Research, and Diversity & Inclusion. The site visit thus served to galvanize many different campus stakeholders around SU ADVANCE. We also benefited from communication and advice from our External Network of Consultants. The entire External Advisory Network (EAN) participated in a conference call meeting in September 2019, to help offer feedback, and many followed up with subsequent emails and phone calls.

Meetings and products of the SU ADVANCE Task Force. This university-level task force is composed of faculty and deans from Albers School of Business and Economics, the College of Science and Engineering, the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Nursing. The Task Force is chaired by Dr. Kristi Lee, Associate Professor in the College of Education, who has expertise in faculty assessment and community engagement. A Task Force working group, composed of Dr. Lee, Dr. Colette Taylor (College of Education), Dr. Jenny Loertscher (Department of Chemistry, College of Science & Engineering), and the SU ADVANCE PI, Dr. Jodi O'Brien, worked over the summer to refine a working draft of the new guidelines. The Task Force met twice in the Fall Quarter 2019.

Meetings and products of the "Leadership Formation Institute" Subcommittee. Concurrent to the Task Force, a working group consisting of Dr. Jean Jacoby (Co-PI), Dr. Jacquelyn Miller (Emeritus, and former Associate Director of the Center for Faculty Development), Dr. Holly Slay Ferraro (Associate Professor, Albers School of Business & Economics and Associate Director of the Center for Faculty Development), Jen Tilghman-Havens (Director, Center for Jesuit Education), Dr. Angelique Davis (Associate Professor, Political Science, College of Arts & Sciences), and Dr. Sarah Trainer (SU ADVANCE Research & Program Coordinator), worked to blueprint a mentoring and leadership formation institute intended to train faculty leaders in mentoring faculty for mission-aligned careers, train faculty evaluators to recognize and support a wide range of faculty activities that "count" (in alignment with revised promotion guidelines); and support faculty in their pursuit of work that they find meaningful that aligns with the university mission. The intent is to build a broad-scale, long-term institute that will serve to reflect larger university conversations and transformation around mission alignment. The timeline is set to correspond with the unfolding of the revised guidelines.

Responding to feedback from the NSF Review Team. Overall, the response from the review team after our site visit was enthusiastic and showed keen understanding of our "audacious project" and Seattle University's "magnificent mission" (quoting a reviewer). They did have

recommendations, advice, and feedback that we have found helpful and are working to implement -- as part of our responsive PAR model. Most notably, this has included the creation of "SU ADVANCE Fellows." Our first Fellows are Dr. Donna Sylvester (Department of Mathematics, College of Science & Engineering) and Dr. Angelique Davis. Dr. Sylvester will work with the Institutional Research at Seattle University in their collection of faculty demographic and climate data and Dr. Davis will work with the Office of Diversity & Inclusion to plan listening sessions, formation opportunities, and mentoring.

Alignment with the new University Strategic Plan. At the university level, much of 2019 was devoted to the development of a new, 5-year strategic plan intended to inform and shape university policy. SU ADVANCE objectives for more alignment between faculty reward structures and work on the one hand and inclusivity and mission on the other were incorporated into the plan.

For the February to April 2020 time period, our major activities were centered on our two main deliverables, while accommodating COVID-19 related institutional changes. Pre-COVID-19, this included work on the following:

1. Meetings of the Task Force for the Revision of the Guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor;
2. Meetings of the smaller "Task Force Working Group," to produce a draft of the proposed revised Guidelines for the Promotion to Full Professor in line with the larger Task Force findings, as well as an online survey draft intended to solicit faculty input on the Guidelines draft;
3. Piloting of the online survey and Guidelines draft amongst the Task Force and amongst SU ADVANCE team members;
4. Revision of the Guidelines draft and the survey in accordance with Task Force feedback;
5. Preparation to present the Guidelines draft to the Seattle University Academic Assembly on March 9;
6. Continued meetings of the "Mentoring the Mentors Program" working group (renamed the "Faculty Leadership Formation Institute");
7. Mapping out six "faculty formation opportunities" for Spring Quarter 2020, to pilot training and mentoring sessions for SU faculty.

As of March 1, SU ADVANCE was thus well-positioned to make significant progress on our two central deliverables re: institutional transformation. Then, COVID-19 disrupted institutions of higher education across the country. With the exponential increase in cases of COVID-19 across Washington state in February and March of 2020, Seattle University moved to remote instruction by the end of March 2020. In response to new public health information and directives from local and state authorities, the university decided to keep the campus closed for the entire spring quarter, with faculty and staff administrative work, teaching, and research all moving to remote bases. Faculty and staff at SU have been instructed to work from home, with additional demands necessitated by the move to online platforms. The broader context outside

the university has also been fraught with shifting challenges and change precipitated by COVID-19, its accompanying social distancing, and the widespread economic fall-out for the U.S.

Our activities over the past four years have included strategic communication across all levels of Seattle University, social science research (participant observation, interviews, and focus groups) with faculty, and efforts aimed at procedural change (revised promotion guidelines and increased opportunities for faculty mentoring), all based on a participatory action research (PAR) model that has allowed us to flexibly incorporate feedback and shift our activities in response. SU ADVANCE is therefore uniquely positioned to think strategically and systematically about what the implications of the profound shifts in faculty work caused by COVID-19 may mean long term, and how this will differentially impact diverse faculty in terms of workload, tenure and promotion, salaries, teaching evaluations, etc. In addition, our PAR model, which emphasizes ongoing, multi-level feedback, allows our program to respond to the current challenges that academics are facing.

Thus, beginning March 1, 2020 through the end of this reporting period, our work has continued to focus on thoughtful roll-out of our deliverables. At the same time, however, we have also been assessing and adapting to the new and still changing circumstances forced on the university – and indeed, on higher education more generally.

For example, after roughly a two-month delay as the university Academic Assembly adapted to the new circumstances, we presented (via Zoom) our proposed revised Guidelines for the Promotion of Full Professor to the Academic Assembly on April 27. We plan to send out the email blast with the Guidelines draft and the online survey in late May 2020, to solicit broader community feedback from SU faculty.

We anticipate that our offering of "faculty formation opportunities" around mentoring, training, and support will necessarily have to accommodate the move to remote instruction and the increased challenges that faculty face as a result of COVID-19 related changes. We still plan to pilot listening session for associate professors who identify as faculty of color later in the Spring Quarter. We are confident that our PAR model and our emphasis on data-driven changes will help us accommodate these necessary changes and delays.