

ADVANCE:
Institutional Transformation
A U.S. program for change

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ADVANCE I.T. Program began in 2001

Goal: Improve the representation and advancement of women in academic science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers

www.nsf.gov/advance

Shift focus from individual

- ✓ **Overarching concerns**
 - loss of social investment in women's education and training
 - increase recruitment of women into the scientific and technical workforce
- ✓ **Prior equity-oriented funding to strengthen individual women's ability to succeed**
- ✓ **Variety of evidence showing that practices and cultures of universities advantage men**

Major obstacles: getting hired

- ✓ **Recruitment practices**
 - limited announcement of openings
 - narrowness of fields sought
 - implicit bias against women
- ✓ **“Two body problem”**
 - more common for STEM women than men
 - wives expected to follow husbands

Major obstacles: career success

- ✓ Isolation
 - Collaboration and communication
- ✓ Lack of “transparency”
 - Rules and informal expectations
- ✓ Inequities
 - Resources and responsibilities

Strategies: a partial list

- ✓ **Collect organizational demographic data**
- ✓ **Do a “climate survey”**
- ✓ **Create networking opportunities**
- ✓ **Create or strengthen formal mentoring**
- ✓ **Incentivize collaboration**
- ✓ **Train leaders and personnel committees**
- ✓ **Cost share for partner hiring**
- ✓ **“Family friendly” policies**

Major drivers of change

- ✓ Recognize outcomes are for all
- ✓ Seriously involve top leaders
- ✓ Broadly share work and commitment
(men and women, disciplines, ranks,
units)
- ✓ Think long term

Indicators of success

- ✓ Increased applications from women
- ✓ Hiring women
- ✓ Promotions
- ✓ Tenure decisions
- ✓ Women in leadership positions
- ✓ Awards and named chairs

Common Challenges

- ✓ **Differences among disciplines and departments**
- ✓ **Tension: choosing strategies**
- ✓ **Changes in leadership**
- ✓ **Data: access and quality issues**

Unexpected benefits

- ✓ **Changing norms across institutions**
- ✓ **Contributions to social science**
- ✓ **Greater retention of couples hired together**
- ✓ **Growing attention to shared challenges:**
 - **International scholarship and gender equity**
 - **Personnel evaluation of interdisciplinary scholarship**
- ✓ **Projects create new stream of leaders**