



Institutional Portfolio
University of California, Irvine
(UCI)

University of California, Irvine ADVANCE IT Project
UCI ADVANCE

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Key Elements of Overall Change Strategy

The project was based on a campus commitment to change the institutional culture to achieve more diversity and gender equity within the professoriate. The lead PI, a biologist, was inspired to develop the proposal based on her own experiences in the sciences where she observed very small numbers of women. The institution was motivated by a concern that it “will lose its competitive edge if it does not address inequities” in the number, rank, salaries, and participation of women in leadership positions.

The project goals were

- “to increase the recruitment of women into Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology disciplines,
- to provide a network of support and guidance through to tenure,
- to monitor progress by collecting and analyzing data about the objective and subjective aspects of equity, [and]
- to promote networking and mentoring activities for tenured women to ensure that they develop to their fullest potential.”

The project focused particularly on recruitment, including all aspects from advertising, to developing diverse pools of candidates, to the campus visit. A second focus was on mentoring faculty once they were on campus. These activities were led by Equity Advisors who were faculty members in each STEM school. They had the responsibility to maintain constant involvement with all aspects of conducting searches, recruiting faculty and mentoring early career faculty.

Relevant Elements in the Institutional Context

- Campus growth and the potential of hiring up to 70-80 new faculty per year for a decade presented an opportunity to develop UCI into a diverse, flexible, and innovative institution.

- UCI is a de-centralized institution with no College of Arts and Sciences. Disciplinary areas have their own schools, and each school reports independently to the provost and executive vice chancellor. Because each school differs in terms of diversity and equity issues, a plan based on “one size fits all” was not attractive. Instead, the focal point of the strategy was to place Equity Advisors in each college.
- From the start, the presence of an executive vice chancellor who was deeply committed to a diverse and flexible institution was a critical contextual variable aiding the success of UCI ADVANCE. An annual pay equity study had been initiated just prior to the beginning of UCI ADVANCE and was continued.
- Carnegie classification: Public RU/VH, Comprehensive doctoral with medical/veterinary.

Scope of the ADVANCE Initiative

UCI ADVANCE focused on all 11 schools of the institution, including arts, biological sciences, health sciences, education, engineering, business, humanities, information and computer sciences, law, physical sciences, social ecology, and social sciences. While the emphasis was on women, the program also collected data on faculty ethnicity. Some programs were targeted for men and women, and some specifically for women. At the origin of the program, state law prohibited the targeting of women (this law has changed now). Overall, practices that help women were seen as practices that help men also.

Program Elements

- ***Equity Advisors.*** In each of the eight STEM schools, a faculty member was appointed as an Equity Advisor. The responsibility of each Equity Advisor is to plan and execute an equity program specific to the needs of the college. They assist search committees to develop diverse pools of excellent candidates, including women. Equity Advisors have considerable authority and must sign off on each stage of a search process. They focus on recruitment of the pool of candidates, selection of a short list, and arrangements for campus visits. They also ensure that policies on work/life issues are made known to faculty, and they proactively investigate inequities. Advisors meet monthly with the ADVANCE program director; currently they receive stipends of \$15,000 per year for three-year terms, after which they can be re-appointed. The provost later supported Equity Advisors in all non-STEM schools as well.
- ***Mentoring.*** Equity Advisors have the responsibility to plan mentoring opportunities for faculty within their school and design specific activities to fit their disciplines. Equity Advisors may meet individually with early-career faculty members, coordinate and design mentoring for current and new faculty, bring groups together to discuss the tenure process, for example, and lead career workshops on the tenure process and family-friendly policies. Equity Advisors also conduct mid-career reviews with faculty who are preparing for tenure review.
- ***Workshops.*** Workshops were offered to faculty and administrators on best practices for search committees and for mentoring. These workshops have included lecturers and events, such as a lecture by Professor Joan Williams from UC Berkeley and a session with the University of Michigan CRLT Players to dramatize gender issues (see Brief 13).
- ***ADVANCE Term Chairs.*** During the grant period, two distinguished tenured faculty members in the sciences were appointed to five-year terms as ADVANCE Chairs. They served as ambassadors of the program and then became members of the Advisory Board, helped with mentoring activities, and assisted with fundraising to create an endowment for ADVANCE program activities.

Outcomes

- After a decade, the number of women faculty increased. In 2001-02, the percentage of full-time faculty at all ranks who were women was 24%; in 2007-08, the figure was 30%. Among assistant professors, 31% were women in 2001-02, rising to 43% in 2007-08. At that time, the promotion of tenure-track women from assistant to associate professor had improved but was not at parity with men.
- Institutionalization has occurred, as UCI ADVANCE continues under the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor. The university now pays the annual cost for the Equity Advisors across all schools (currently twelve, at a cost of \$180,000). Equity Advisors continue to monitor searches and provide mentoring for faculty members, with attention to specific needs in disciplines.
- After a decade of work, the number of women faculty is noticeably increased.

Research Team Observations

- The Equity Advisors are a distinctive approach among ADVANCE institutions and are seen as the key factor for making an impact in the lives of individual faculty members.
- A critically important element in the project's success and its institutionalization was a senior, powerful administrator with deep commitments to equity and diversity, who supported the PI in getting the grant off the ground. Success of the program was further aided by the efforts of a senior administrator who could allocate institutional resources.
- This program took a specific focus to address recruitment through Equity Advisors and has become institutionalized within the university structure.

For Further Reading

The website of the UC Irvine ADVANCE Program for Equity and Diversity describes its current work. <http://advance.uci.edu/>

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