

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

**NSF ADVANCE: INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY**

**INTERNAL EVALUATORS ANNUAL REPORT – YEAR FIVE
JULY 2020 – MAY 2021**

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A Descriptive Foundation of the SU ADVANCE Program

The Seattle University NSF-funded ADVANCE-IT Program has completed year five of the five-year grant period. The overall goal is institutional cultural, procedural, and structural transformation that more clearly integrates the values-based educational mission of this Jesuit university into our promotion standards, perceived expectations, and leadership formation.

This internal evaluation report focuses primarily on Phase II & III activities and progress made by SU ADVANCE from July 2020 through June 2021 toward achieving its aims. As SU ADVANCE moves through its fifth year, it is in its stride. It is successfully transitioning from focusing on Phase II Procedural Change to Phase III Adaptive Transformation (i.e. the structural change advocated in the original proposal), and onward to Phase IV Partnerships, Programing, and Institution Building. The arc of SU ADVANCE from its beginning to now (June 2021) finds its activities and accomplishments being more intentionally inclusive of the full range of SU faculty life, work, and experience with an eye toward implementation and sharing products beyond the SU community.

The report timeframe includes several important steps taken toward accomplishing SU ADVANCE deliverables and includes specific achievements as well as a major milestone achieved. While the report follows the progression of activities and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic as in past Internal Evaluator (IE) reports, it also references several points of continual improvement, an outgrowth of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, which have resulted in the expansion and refinement of SU ADVANCE activities. The iterative cycle of SU ADVANCE's approach and its non-linear character were well captured in its most recent team meeting (May 24, 2021), where co-PIs O'Brien and Jacoby presented a clear overview of where SU ADVANCE has come from and how it is pivoting to an active phase of implementation, while keeping in clear view Phase III Adaptive Transformation. They have articulated a new conceptualization of an implementation strategy that they characterize as 'cross-level integration'. As the PAR approach demonstrates, prior phases are not 'finished' per se but continuously referenced in an iterative fashion that concretely assists in the building of and refinement of further phases of activity.

In short, SU ADVANCE has positioned itself well to take on the tasks of implementation and institutionalization of the learnings, findings, and accomplishments established in previous years and is well positioned to do so through the recently approved NSF ADVANCE 6th Year, No Cost Extension (2021-2022).

Overview of Seattle University ADVANCE-IT

This report addresses the same three basic questions about the SU ADVANCE-IT Program as contained in prior reports:

1. Is the Program doing what it said it would do to carry out its aims?
2. What is the Program team learning as they are delivering its events and activities?
3. How is ongoing learning informing and shaping the team's decisions regarding future activities and structures of events?

The aim of SU ADVANCE 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 associate women faculty in STEM and SBE fields (Phase One).
2. Procedural change in the form of revised promotion guidelines that clearly include mission-related activities as valued and articulated paths toward (Phase Two).
3. Structural change to include formal mentoring and training for both faculty and administrators as the basis of sustained education and support for revised tenure-track promotion policy (Phase Three).

SU ADVANCE utilizes the Participatory Action Research (PAR) model as the basis for its program and research activities. With PAR, SU ADVANCE's aims and activities are simultaneously being shaped by its own activities, ongoing social science research, and feedback from internal and external sources. Such a multi-level iterative process is difficult to image in two-dimensions. SU ADVANCE's original organizational structure and its evolution likewise reflects PAR's iterative and intersectional feedback processes.

Summary and Recommendations

Moving into Implementation: Reimagining the Professoriate at SU and Beyond

SU ADVANCE continues to mature as an organization that has become part of the everyday life of the professorate at SU. Success in finalizing revised promotion standards for full professor and their approval by the AcA, the continuing outreach to the campus faculty, in particular BIPOC faculty and women, the ongoing research on the impact COVID-19 is having on faculty, and the development of training for holistic faculty development are all strong indicators that SU ADVANCE will achieve its primary aims.

Evidence of future sustainability of the Program can be found in SU ADVANCE leadership's permanent membership in several university level standing committees such as the Provost's Council, Academic Assembly, and the University Strategic Planning Council. The implication of such membership is that the Program will last far beyond its five or six years of official NSF involvement. While work remains to be done to solidify SU ADVANCE's presence and transformative impact at Seattle University, these are leading indicators that such permanence is achievable and likely.

Accomplishments and Synergies

SU ADVANCE has made important strides in achieving its aim of institutional transformation through procedural and structural change. As outlined above, all phases of the grant are active in one way or another. As fits the PAR approach, accomplishments in Phase I, II or III interact in such a way to bring iterative progress to the whole program. As noted in this and earlier evaluations, it is extremely difficult to capture in an image or outline exactly how this process works. SU ADVANCE has worked to refine its organizational chart and Logic Map in 2019 (Appendix 1 & 2). While no further refinements have been made, the resultant products helped clarify for SU ADVANCE and community, its role and rationale in practical terms (i.e. revision of promotion standards) and in structural terms related to the integration and implementation of SU ADVANCE into the ongoing life of the university. The sustainability of SU ADVANCE appears secure at this point. One potential factor regarding the Program's sustainability lies in the reception of the SU ADVANCE work and accomplishments by the incoming president-elect.

Recommendations

- 1) Continue to build toward additional structural change; support for continuous improvements to the website library, faculty demographic data, faculty fellows, and student internship program.
- 2) Work with the office of the Provost to ensure continued support in the coming year.
- 3) Meet with the incoming president-elect.
- 4) Continue to develop Phase IV aims and activities.