

**YEAR 2 EXTERNAL EVALUATION: SEATTLE  
UNIVERSITY ADVANCE-IT**

**WHAT COUNTS AS SUCCESS? RECOGNIZING AND REWARDING  
WOMEN FACULTY'S DIFFERENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN A  
COMPREHENSIVE LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY**

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Submitted By:  
Mariko Chang Consulting, Inc.  
Mariko Chang, PhD  
Sadie Davis, MPP  
[www.mariko-chang.com](http://www.mariko-chang.com)

## Executive Summary

Seattle University (SU) has completed its second year of a five-year NSF-funded ADVANCE-IT grant, “What Counts as Success? Recognizing and Rewarding Women Faculty’s Differential Contributions in a Comprehensive Liberal Arts University.” The overall goal is institutional cultural and structural transformation that brings the promotion standards, perceived expectations, and mentoring processes fully into line with the values-based educational mission of the university.

The three project aims are to achieve institutional transformation in the form of:

- 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;
- Procedural changes in the form of revised promotion guidelines that clearly include mission related activities as valued and articulate paths toward promotion;
- 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.

This external evaluation covers the period of September 2017 through January 2019, the majority of which could be considered the grant’s second year of funding and timed to reflect the ending of the grant’s first phase (information gathering and strategic communication) and the transition into the second phase (applied transformation). For simplicity, this reporting period is referred to as “Year 2.” Drawing upon both quantitative and qualitative data, this report highlights progress toward the goals of SU ADVANCE and offers recommendations to facilitate long-term impacts.

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### Significant Year 2 Activities:

In Year 2, the SU ADVANCE team continued to engage in efforts to increase awareness of ADVANCE, disseminate information, and gain input into ADVANCE programs. The SU ADVANCE team engaged in regular meetings with the new provost, other campus leaders, and relevant stakeholders throughout the university. In addition, the internal evaluator conducted a faculty survey to measure the impact of SU ADVANCE’s communication efforts and to gather information about service activities. The team also gathered data through 76 individual interviews with faculty and two focus groups, and began to analyze faculty service statements included in successful promotion files. Initial results from these data indicate the lack of alignment between faculty perception of what is rewarded in the tenure and promotion process and types of service that faculty engage in. Results will provide vital information to guide Phase 2 efforts, including the work of the newly formed Task Force on Promotion Guidelines and the Mentoring the Mentors Program. SU ADVANCE is collaborating with Loyola Marymount University on the development of the Mentoring the Mentors program and engaging them as a limited comparison institution for the social science study.

### Key Recommendations:

#### *Data and Assessment*

- The university needs to invest in their own institutional capacity to compile and regularly review data on key faculty demographics such as the faculty composition by gender and

unit, rates of promotion, and length of time at the rank of associate professor. The SU ADVANCE team should be involved in discussions of institutional capacity-building and decisions about which data to collect and report, and how they will be used to guide institutional decision-making and accountability.

- Work with the evaluators to develop a logic model to guide Phase 2 activities and assessments.
- Strategize how to efficiently analyze the large amount of interview data collected by the social science research team.

#### *Collaboration and Partnership Development*

- Reach out to other ADVANCE institutions seeking to better document and incorporate service into their rewards structures, such as the University of Massachusetts Lowell to share strategies and learn from each other.
- Seek strategic engagement with the Academic Assembly.
- Strategize how best to leverage the support and enthusiasm of campus leadership, especially as the team works toward drafting policy changes.
- As possible, continue to delegate responsibilities among a wider group to increase engagement across a broad group of stakeholders. This will support continued campus engagement and the process of institutional transformation.
- Continue to work strategically with Loyola Marymount University to develop the Mentoring the Mentors program and as a limited comparison institution for the social science study.

#### *Professional Training*

- Chair professional training at the university is currently underdeveloped; Seattle University should consider investing in department chair training to help onboard chairs and provide them with the resources to be effective. Should the university proceed to offer chair training and leadership development, consider whether there are ways to strategically align aspects of Mentoring the Mentors with these efforts.
- Engage the support of the internal and external evaluators to ensure a robust assessment of the Mentoring the Mentor program takes place to guide refinement and inform sustainability decisions.

#### *NSF 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Site Visit*

- Work closely with the internal and external evaluators to plan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Site Visit by NSF. The team might consider a leadership retreat focused on preparation for the site visit and/or engaging other ADVANCE institutions for guidance.
- Consider utilizing the External Advisory Network to help prepare for the site visit. For example, other institutions found external advisory member feedback on the site visit presentation was extremely useful.

In conclusion, Seattle University ADVANCE made important progress in Year 2 as it transitioned into its second phase. To provide an effective foundation for applied transformation, SU ADVANCE strengthened programmatic support and raised awareness within the university via strategic communication and information gathering. The team also continued to successfully

apply the participatory action research approach, wherein there is continual feedback between information gathering activities and strategic communication. Prior to the NSF 3rd year site visit, SU ADVANCE will want to focus on fully analyzing research data, launching the Task Force on Promotion Guidelines, developing the Mentoring the Mentors program, and beginning to plan for sustainability and institutionalization.