

Advancing and Empowering Women through Institutional Change

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The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

UT System Women's Senior Leaders Network Symposium

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UTRGV ADVANCE Program

Five-Year, \$3.1 million ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant, funded by the National Science Foundation.

Goal: To increase the **representation and advancement** of women faculty, particularly Latinas, in STEM academic careers.

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Issues Driving UTRGV ADVANCE

- 1) **Under-representation of women** in STEM, particularly Latinas, **in tenure-track and senior faculty ranks.**
- 2) **Severe under-representation of women** in STEM, particularly Latinas, **in leadership positions** at the department chair level and higher.
- 3) **Lack of family friendly policies/practices**, work-life support, and awareness of gender equity and diversity issues.

Major **ADVANCE** Initiatives & Components

1. Recruitment
- 2. Advancement**
3. Policy and Climate Change
- 4. Education and Empowerment**
5. Social Science Study



INPUTS

Internal Resources

- Admin.
- Human
- Financial
- Technical
- Physical

External Resources

- NSF Funding
- External Evaluators & Advisors

Environment & Context

- Internal
- External

INITIATIVES & OBJECTIVES

Recruitment

Enhance recruitment efforts

Advancement

Strengthen faculty development & leadership

Policy & Climate

Enhance policies for faculty support and improve departmental climates

Education & Empowerment

Promote awareness & empower stakeholders to address gender equity

Social Science Study

ACTIVITIES

Search committee training and diversity; online portal; expanded advertising & outreach; enhanced start-up packages and onboarding

New programs: Leadership Institute, Administrative Fellows, and RA Support; Enhanced existing programming: grants, mentoring, programs for 1st- & 2nd- years and new leaders, workshops, and awards

Instituted and/or revised policies for dual careers, family and sick leave, tenure/promotion, and workload

Women's Faculty Network; implicit bias & best practices training for Search and Tenure/Promotion committees; workshops, seminars, and distinguished speakers; websites, brochures, and media coverage

Investigate the UTPA campus climate pre-, mid-, and post-ADVANCE; increase knowledge about women faculty in STEM fields through quantitative and qualitative studies of women faculty and climate

OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES

Increased number of women applicants and interviewees; equitable salary, start-up packages, and space allocation

Equitable promotion outcomes; fewer years in rank; increased publications, external grants, and awards; increased leadership opportunities for women

Family friendly policies and positive/supportive climate

Empowered and engaged faculty; administrative commitment at all levels; a campus that values and embraces gender and ethnic diversity and equity

GOALS & IMPACTS

- Increase representation of women faculty, especially Hispanics, in STEM fields
- Increase representation of women, especially Hispanics, in STEM fields in senior faculty ranks and leadership roles
- Transform institution with positive workplace and family-friendly climate that attracts and nurtures women faculty

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

APA Psychologically Healthy Workplace

Growth & Development * Involvement * Recognition * Work-Life Balance * Health & Well-being

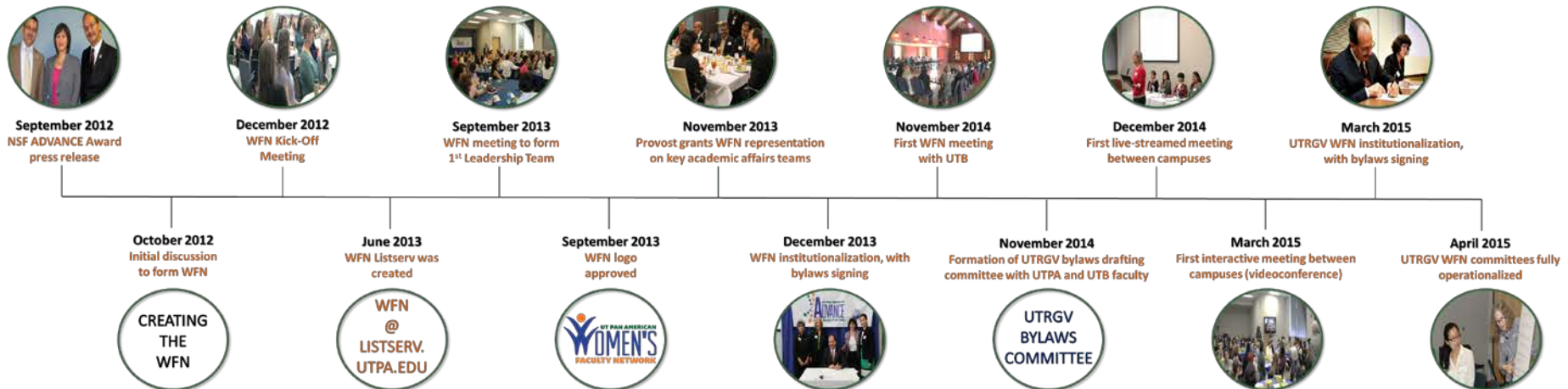
Education and Empowerment

Objective: Promote campus awareness and workplace diversity and **empower faculty and administrators to address gender equity barriers**, with a special focus on empowering women faculty through networking, mentoring, and active engagement.



UTRGV Women's Faculty Network

Mission: To empower women faculty by advocating for opportunities to advance their professional development in research, teaching, and service, while balancing their personal, career, physical, and mental health demands.



WFN Major Activities and Impacts

- **Highly engaged** meetings, workshops & events
- Frequent listserv **communication**
- **Representation** on key Academic Affairs teams
- Scheduled meetings between **WFN Executive Team and the Provost**
- Meetings with **women job candidates**
- **Standing committees**
 - *Ethics*
 - *Tenure/Promotion/Annual Review Issues*
 - *Mentoring, Outreach, and Membership*
 - *Achievement and Advancement*
 - *Wellness*
 - *Women of Color*



WFN Participation among T/TT Women: 2014-15 (UTPA)

Status and Field	Women Faculty	Latina Faculty
All T/TT at UTPA	51%	44%
Tenured	44%	37%
Tenure-Track	63%	60%
All T/TT STEM/SBE	78%	89%
All T/TT Non-STEM	40%	38%

Feedback

- Thank you for such an excellent meeting. It was **very affirming and exciting** to see the presence of such a group and I look forward to future meetings.
- Thank you so much for these updates. It is the only way most faculty members **know what is going on.**
- **Visiting with WFN members during the interview was critical for my decision to come to UTPA...** The conversation was very informative and warm and inviting... It was (is) appealing that the institution is working towards equity and there will be resources that I can draw on for professional development, funds, and other aspects of support. **This was one of the best parts of my interview.**

Additional Education & Empowerment Activities

- **Implicit Bias Training** for Search and Tenure/Promotion Committees
- **Train-the-Trainers Workshop**



- **Workshops/Seminars**
- **Meetings with Key University Administrators**

- **Professional Development**
 - *Grant Writing Panels*
 - *Teaching Workshops*



Moving Forward

- ADVANCE and the WFN will continue to be a **catalyst in transforming and integrating** the legacy institutions into UTRGV.

*Thank you for connecting us to the network. I personally enjoy the opportunity to get to know you and WFN. I especially like the idea of **seeing challenges as problem solving exercises** in the making of UTRGV.*



UTRGV



Lessons Learned

- Design such programs based on the **institutional context, culture, and specific needs** (*There is no cookie-cutter model*)
- **Involve campus stakeholders** (including men) from the inception of the grant
- Buy-in from the upper administration is **key**
- Have **male advocates** within the institution
- **Integrate** ADVANCE initiatives and activities **into existing programs** for stronger impact and long-term sustainability



Lessons Learned – Continued.

- **Recruit diverse faculty** through gender/ethnic-specific advertising venues, conferences, and professional networks (e.g., SACNAS, Women in Higher Education)
- **Dual Career support** is a strong recruitment and retention tool
- **Communicate frequently** the initiatives and **accomplishments** of the program to all stakeholders
- External and internal **networking** is key!
- **Collaborate** with other ADVANCE Programs and Hispanic-Serving Institutions



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Thank you!





Advancement

Objective: Enhance faculty and leadership development opportunities.

ADVANCE Leadership Institute

ADVANCE Administrative Fellows

ADVANCE Summer Writing Retreat

Associate to Full Program

Mentoring Programs

Graduate Research Assistance Grants

Workshops and Seminars



**Associate to Full Program
Session I, September 2015**



**ADVANCE Leadership Institute,
Spring 2013**

**UTRGV Women Leadership
Representation**

2012: 32%

2015: 36%

