



RAMP-UP

Reforming Advancement Processes Through Institutional Transformation Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Department Change Initiative Grants Request for Proposals

Invitation

With funding from the National Science Foundation, RAMP-Up invites proposals from departments interested in initiating changes in departmental culture to better support the advancement of faculty careers. We are particularly interested in supporting the careers of women faculty and faculty of color, but believe that all faculty can benefit from improved departmental culture.

Rationale

Much discussion over the last year has centered on the need to transform the Rensselaer culture to create a more supportive community, especially within departments, the center of most of the faculty's work. This transformation is particularly important for women faculty and faculty of color who often do not have access to the networks so important to their advancement. Departments are invited to develop and lead efforts at improving departmental culture through initiatives that will encourage faculty to:

1. *Initiate the conversation* about department culture and norms of collegiality;
2. Create *icebreaker activities* for faculty to learn about each other's interests;
3. Launch new *social routines*;
4. Create new *common space*;
5. Foster *informal interactions*; and
6. Seed *participation*

Up to \$10,000 will be awarded to departments to carry out proposed activities over the 07-08 academic year.

Eligibility

Departments with significant representation of tenure and tenure-track in engineering, the sciences, the social sciences, or other NSF-funded area and that have a history of recent hires of women faculty are eligible to apply.

Pre-Proposal Retreat

Departments interested in developing a proposal to initiate cultural change are invited to come together to develop ideas in a half-day pre-proposal retreat to be held on the morning of Wednesday, September 19. RAMP-Up will make arrangements for the retreat, cover costs, as well as provide a \$250 honorarium to all faculty participants.

A request to participate in the pre-proposal retreat should be made by the department head or other senior faculty member and sent in email to Cheryl Geisler (geislc@rpi.edu) no later than September 13. This request should include the names of the faculty who have committed to participate in the retreat.

Full Proposal Content

Full proposals should be submitted electronically to Cheryl Geisler (geislc@rpi.edu) no later than October 5, 2007. In no more than 2 pages, the proposal should:

1. List the names of the faculty who have agreed to be involved in these efforts.
2. Review the history of recent hires, departures, and promotions, with a particular focus on women and minorities.
3. Describe the current state of cultural climate in the department (norms of collegiality, routines for interaction, etc.).
4. Assess the strengths and weakness of the department culture to support the advancement of faculty careers.

5. Provide a budget and plan for the proposed initiatives.
6. Affirm the commitment of the department to participate in two facilitated department meetings during the course of the year.
7. Agree to participate in assessment of the outcomes of the proposed initiatives.

Proposal Review

Proposals will be reviewed by the RAMP-Up! Advisory Board. Criteria for review include 1) the level of committed participation, 2) the quality of the proposed initiatives, 3) the feasibility of the plan, 4) the potential for improving department culture, 5) the potential for impact on women and minorities, and 6) sustainability after the current funding. Results will be announced on October 15, 2007. Please feel free to contact members of the RAMP-Up! Advisory Board to discuss proposal ideas. Members include:

Cheryl Geisler, Co-chair (geislc@rpi.edu)
Deborah Kaminski, Co-chair (kamind@rpi.edu)
Kristin Bennett, Science (bennek@rpi.edu)
Jim Napolitano, Science (napolj@rpi.edu)
Joyce Diwan, Science (diwanj@rpi.edu)
Keith Nelson (nelsoj@rpi.edu)

Susan Sharfstein, Engineering (sharfs@rpi.edu)
Jose Holguin-Veras, Engineering (jhv@rpi.edu)
Antoinette Maniatty, Engineering (maniaa@rpi.edu)
Linda Layne, H&SS (laynel@rpi.edu)
Ken Durgans, Provost's Office (durgak@rpi.edu)
Mark Holmes (holmes@rpi.edu)