



RAMP-UP

Rensselaer's NSF-funded Project for Institutional Transformation

Interim Report

For January 15, 2007

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Cheryl Geisler
Deborah Kaminski
Elizabeth Carrature

NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Award 054835
Questions can be directed to Cheryl Geisler at geislc@rpi.edu.



Communication			
G O A L	<p>Communicate RAMP-Up objectives and activities to the campus community and beyond in a way that demonstrates leadership support, generates community interest, and contribute to the national discussion on women's advancement in the academy</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>Elizabeth Carrature developed and launched a NEW WEBSITE based on feedback from Joan Ruskus (Appendix A). The website more clearly communicates RAMP-Up mission and objectives, has a more appealing look, and more complete information needed for the external review.</p> <p>Deborah Kaminski gave a PRESENTATION AT THE P&T RETREAT (see Institute Advancement Reform below) based on our newly completed baseline data (see Appendix B) to show that retention is a serious threat to the strong pattern of recent hires of women.</p>
		P L A N N E D	<p>We are considering co-sponsoring a visit of the CRLT PLAYERS in March with Union College in Schenectady as part of a Second Year Celebration.</p>

Faculty Workshops			
G O A L	<p>At the level of the individual, we will be reaching out across the university with Faculty Workshops, both to those who are candidates for advancement and those who are decision-makers in the advancement process.</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>In cooperation with Ken Durgans, Vice Provost for Institute Diversity and member of the RAMP-Up Advisory Board, JOANN MOODY was brought to campus for a two-day series of workshops, the first day (Dec 13) on advancement processes and the second day (Dec 14) on recruitment.</p> <p>As part of JoAnn Moody's visit, we held a WORKSHOP FOR MENTEES with Career Campaign Award Winners from last year as well as women considering applying for this year. We have videotaped the session and will be using parts of it in our future efforts. All women were invited. Ten women attended despite a snow storm. Evaluation data was collected but has not yet been analyzed.</p> <p>As part of JoAnn Moody's visit, we also sponsored a WORKSHOP FOR MENTORS in the late afternoon. Unfortunately the severe snowstorm closed the institute early for all but non-essential functions. Nevertheless two faculty members attended (one a senior women from mathematics, the other the associate dean from the School of Engineering), and we had a lively discussion that even went overtime. We will be arranging with Dr, Moody for a follow-up conference call.</p>



		P L A N N E D	<p>The SPEED NETWORKING EVENT we had planned for the end of this semester has been delayed to spring in favor of the Moody visit. The Faculty Coaches will be working to restart the mentoring initiatives in School of Engineering and School of Science with SCHOOL-BASED WORKSHOPS ON MENTORING. In both schools, the deans have put into place a program of assigned mentors this year, but little was done to train or follow up. Based on feedback we have heard, we believe that mentors need information and training.</p> <p>Strong interest was expressed by many women faculty following the Women's Retreat in September for a follow-up series of get-togethers organized around stretching exercises lead by the trainer who donated a session at the Retreat. We are considering ways in which one of the senior women might organize such a STRETCHING MINDS AND BODIES SERIES to reduce stress and informal conversations on a pay as you go basis for this spring. We expect that such informal occasions will be very valuable for supporting the women on the faculty.</p>
--	--	--	---

Pipeline Hire			
G O A L	<p>At the level of the department, we will be "priming the pump" for women's advancement at Rensselaer with a Pipeline Hire to recruit a senior women faculty member from industry, national labs, or other nonacademic sources</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>The Ad for the Pipeline Search (Appendix C) ran in <i>ASME</i> and <i>Nuclear News</i> in December.</p> <p>We had hoped to get the Pipeline Search Committee together with JoAnn Moody for SEARCH TRAINING, but schedules did not allow this to work out.</p> <p>We have the ASSURANCES OF THE DEAN OF ENGINEERING and the understanding of search committee members that this search is for a senior woman.</p> <p>Two POTENTIAL CANDIDATES have been identified so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Wei, chair of Mechanical, Aerospace, and Nuclear Engineering, invited one potential candidate to campus this month: An active military with a large research program in science technology and engineering for the US Air Force. She looks very strong. • Fred Schubert, Constellation Professor in the second pipeline department, Electrical, Computer, and Systems Engineering, has also identified a potential candidate.



		P L A N N E D	Applications for the position are coming in and the first meeting of the Pipeline Search Committee has been scheduled for January 29.
--	--	--	---

Faculty Coach			
G O A L	<p>At the level of the school, we will be working to institutionalize a Faculty Coach who will sit in on the school-level Promotion and Tenure reviews as a non-voting member and serve as an advisor for individual faculty and for the administrative leadership team.</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>KEITH NELSON has been active in School of Engineering (see his report in Appendix D). Some additional highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nelson sat as a non-voting member on 1 P&T case and had an impact on the discussion. • Nelson met with a woman coming up for tenure and made suggestions on her biographical sketch. • Nelson worked with the Dean of Engineering to bring about the recent decision to move a junior woman from one department to another with a better climate. • Nelson also worked with the senior woman in this same department on concerns over mentoring. The outcome has been the Dean is now serving as this woman's mentor. In recent conversation, she has confirmed a marked improvement in her situation over last year. • Nelson has met with 7 out of 13 women faculty so far and has addressed issues that have arisen in the course of conversation, including securing space for a woman's faculty member's grad students and making an introduction for another woman faculty member to an industry contact. • Nelson worked closely with the dean and the department head as well as the candidate herself to re-strategize a woman's tenure case. The case is now going forward to what looks like a positive conclusion. This woman has also recently received a recent school-based award for research.



		<p>MARK HOLMES has initiated his work as Faculty Coach in Science. Highlights of his activities include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holmes has met with all 11 assistants, with some full professors and with the dean. • Holmes has found that some women are receiving bad advice about activities and, after talking with us, he is planning to give counter advice • Holmes has become aware of one problematic case coming up for tenure soon and uncovered institutional delays in the start-up package that have been the source of many problems. • There were no P&T cases in the School of Science for Holmes to participate in.
	P L A N N E D	<p>The Faculty Coaches are planning to become engaged in the ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS in their respective schools. They will be requesting copies of the annual review material from the junior women (assistant and associate) and sit down with them as necessary.</p> <p>They will also make a point of meeting with NEW CHAIRS (1 in Biology and 3 in Engineering) about the role of the chair in advancement and in annual review.</p> <p>The Faculty Coaches will be organizing the SCHOOL-BASED WORKSHOPS ON MENTORING this spring (see Workshops above)</p>

Career Campaign Awards		
G O A L	<p>At the level of the individual, we will be supporting the advancement of women, including post-tenure and minority women, through the ranks with Career Campaigns.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> C O M P L E T E D </p> <p>A new REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS for the second round of Career Campaign Awards was distributed to the campus (Appendix E).</p> <p>At the recommendation of Dr. Moody, SEPARATE WORKSHOPS were held for Career Campaign Award Winners and their Mentors on Dec 13. Prospective applicants and their mentors were invited to attend.</p>



		P L A N N E D	<p>PROPOSALS are due January 25, 2008. Special efforts have been made to encourage POST-TENURE AND URM WOMEN to apply.</p> <p>Proposals will be reviewed by the Advisory Board and AWARDS made in the context of a to-be-planned ceremony.</p>
--	--	--	---

Department Cultural Change			
G O A L	<p>At the level of the department, we aim to transform the culture of the two pipeline departments to make them more supportive places for women faculty.</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>Seven departments participated in the required PRE-PROPOSAL RETREAT on September 19 (See slides in Appendix F)..</p> <p>Seven departments submitted PROPOSALS.</p> <p>Four were funded by recommendation of the Advisory Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to their own analysis, BIOLOGY has 20+ faculty with 8 new assistants + 2 new fulls; there are 5 women & 1 Mexican American); they have new department head. They see themselves as having a high level of informal interaction among assistants; but less and more formal with associates and full. They proposed to use funding for Weekly Lunches and an Annual Retreat. George Makhatadze, new Constellation Chaired professor, leads the effort. • According to their own analysis, BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING has 10+ faculty with 6 new assistants, including 2 women & 2 diversity hires; they expect further growth. They see themselves as having little formal interactions; they are “dislocated,” that is separated across buildings and they report few informal interactions. They proposed to use funding for Bi-Weekly Lunches, a workshop on department culture, and afternoon get-togethers. Natacha DePaola, Department Head, leads the effort. • According to their own analysis, CHEMICAL ENGINEERING has 14 faculty with 5 assistants, including 2 women & 1 African American; they also have a new department head. They see themselves as having a high level of formal activity; but less informal activity; they are also dislocated. They proposed to use funding for improved informal interactions, targeted recruiting, and the promotion of junior faculty achievements. Susan Sharfstein, Assistant Professor, leads the effort. • According to their own analysis, PHYSICS has 21 +faculty with 2 assistant and 2 associate women, as well as 1 who meets diversity designation; there have been 5 departures in the last few years. They see themselves as having formal interactions regularly



			<p>scheduled but fragmented into specialized seminars, few department meetings. They also have dislocation issues and a lack of common space. They proposed to use their funding for a daily coffee hour, monthly lunches, the refit of a common space, and seasonal social events. Gwo-Ching Wang, Department Head, leads the effort.</p> <p>During the week of November 12, Cheryl Geisler held KICK-OFF MEETINGS with each of these funded departments to introduce the project, describe what was proposed, talk about expected outcomes, and administer the social network analysis questionnaire (see sample in Appendix G).</p>
		P L A N N E D	<p>Each department has invited Cheryl Geisler and Debbie Kaminski to return to REPORT ON THE SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS after the first of the year.</p> <p>Each department will also complete a SECOND SNA QUESTIONNAIRE at the conclusion of their projects to measure improved networking (see evaluation below).</p> <p>We will be working with the leadership team in each department to refine the DEPARTMENT CHANGE TOOLKIT based on their experiences in implementation.</p>

Institute Advancement Reform			
G O A L	<p>At the level of the institute, we aim to reform institute advancement processes to make them more transparent and more fair.</p>	C O M P L E T E D	<p>From the discussion at the Women's Retreat, there appears to be a disjunction between perspectives on the advancement processes that women are hearing from department heads, and the perspective at the Institute level. As a consequence, the Provost hosted a half day P&T RETREAT to bring together for the first time in institutional memory the department heads, associate deans, and deans with members off the Faculty Committee on Promotion and Tenure. This was held on December 13 at an off-site location (see Agenda on Appendix H). Some highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first half of the morning JoAnn Moody facilitated discussions of COGNITIVE ERRORS AND SOLO FACULTY. • Next members of the Institute P&T Committee lead small group discussions on the NEW P&T GUIDELINES. • Finally, the two faculty coaches joined by Sharon Anderson-Gold, department head of Science and Technology Studies, participated in a panel discussion over lunch on MANAGING TRICKY CASES AND GIVING BAD NEWS.



	<p>Attendance was high: 3 of 5 deans, 8 of 11 Associate Deans, 11 of 16 continuing department heads, and 6 of 8 members of the Institute P&T Committee. Evaluation data was collected but has not yet been analyzed.</p> <p>In response to requests from the women in the school of Engineering, Human Resources has now added a BACKUP CHILD AND ELDER CARE SERVICES to the Rensselaer Benefits package (See Appendix I).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">P L A N N E D</p>	<p>At the P&T Retreat, the Provost suggested that the Institute may add more time to the tenure clocks of candidates who have experienced INSTITUTIONAL DELAYS in the implementation of start-up packages. This is being considered in response to problems associated with the rapid expansion of the faculty, especially in the school of science. The Faculty Coach in Science will be monitoring the need for this kind of policy.</p> <p>The discussions over the last three months have identified the following as areas that the Provost will be considering for P&T REFORM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More junior faculty are let go at the THIRD YEAR REVIEW than at tenure, yet the process is under-documented in the faculty handbook, department heads have the sole decision-making authority in the matter, and there is no appeal process. • Assigned mentoring is becoming increasingly common in the university, yet there is no place to report MENTORING ACTIVITIES IN THE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, nor any standard of expectation for performance in this area in annual reviews. • There is INCONSISTENT DOCUMENTATION OF PARENTAL LEAVES are in P&T portfolios, leaving reviewers too much discretion in estimating productivity rates. • FEEDBACK ON ANNUAL REVIEW is undocumented in P&T portfolios, resulting in uneven quality and opening up the potential for inconsistencies between the annual review and the P&T review. <p>Other suggestions that have been made to improve the process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEACHING ASSIGNMENT OF JUNIOR FACULTY ought to be strategically balanced by size and level, insuring junior faculty exposure to grad students. • Junior faculty' requests for specific students to serve as their RESEARCH ASSISTANTS ought to be honored before the requests of senior faculty.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A CAMPUS-WIDE SOCIAL SPACE AND TIME ought to be established to facilitate interactions. • Women need to be appointed to LEADERSHIP ROLES ABOVE THE LEVEL OF THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR (there are none now). • A GUIDE FOR NEW FACULTY ought to be developed. • A GUIDE FOR DEPARTMENT HEADS ought to be developed.
--	--	--

Interventions		
G O A L	We will use opportunities as they arise to advocate for changes in policies and procedures that will improve the campus climate for the retention and advancement of women.	<p>C O M P L E T E D</p> <p>The Provost has renewed his INVITATION to meet confidentially with any woman on the faculty who has concerns about her prospects for advancement.</p> <p>We (Geisler, Kaminski, Nelson, Holmes) have begun to work with three new women who have ADVANCEMENT CONCERNS.</p> <p>The women with whom we began working last year continue to advance; one has just been promoted, two have been given external mentors, and one has been moved to a more friendly department.</p>
		<p>P L A N N E D</p> <p>Four departments have been identified as having PROBLEMATIC CLIMATES for advancement. Three have been funded under Department Change Initiatives; two appear eager to change; one is still developing a sense of its own needs. The fourth, after active interventions by both provost and Dean, has sought RAMP-Up help, and arranged a special workshop with JoAnn Moody. A search for a chaired professorship in this department, for which there are strong female candidates, may also make a significant difference.</p> <p>The PROBLEM OF “DISLOCATED” DEPARTMENTS, departments that are spread out across buildings, has emerged as a recurrent issue for department cultures. Because of dislocations, junior faculty, including many new women, are in danger of isolation. We are still considering the best way to address this issue.</p>



Project Leadership			
G O A L		C O M P L E T E D	<p>The ADVISORY BOARD met to review and make recommendations on the Department Change Proposals.</p> <p>JOSE HOLGUIN-VERAS, member of the Advisory Board, has been instrumental in one of the department interventions</p> <p>LEI CHI, Assistant Professor of management, has agreed to join the project leadership team to work on the social network analysis.</p> <p>The PROVOST has made the establishment of a new Institute for the Advancement of Faculty Diversity concerned with improvement advancement processes as a priority for his performance plan. The Provost believes that this kind of institutionalization is critical, and that our efforts so far have established a strong foundation for this move.</p>
		P L A N N E D	<p>A draft of a PLAN FOR THIS INSTITUTE will be developed for presentation to the Board of Trustees in early January.</p>

Evaluation			
G O A L		C O M P L E T E D	<p>We had a phone meeting with JOAN RUKUS on Oct 13 to prepare for the site visit in the spring.</p> <p>The EXTERNAL EVALUATION of our program began with a three-day site visit by Durland Consulting on December 10-12. They completed 25 interviews with a stratified sample of players.</p> <p>Debbie Kaminski has now completed the BASELINE INDICATOR DATA, with the exception of the starting salary data which we expect to receive shortly. The report can be found in Appendix B.</p>
		P L A N N E D	<p>Durland Consulting will also be synthesizing QUANTITATIVE METRICS, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline indicator data (Appendix B) • An update of the 13+ Club analysis, nearly completed • A timeline of RAMP-Up events (Appendix J) • The social networking analysis data from the 4 cultural change department, nearly completed



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2004 Diversity Audit (Appendix K) Durland's draft report is due January 29.
--	--	--

Dissemination		
G O A L		C O M P L E T E D
	<p>We conduct research to develop methods to document patterns of advancement in the academy.</p>	<p>“The 13+ Club: An Index for Understanding, Documenting, and Resisting Patterns of Non-Promotion to Full Professor,” by Cheryl Geisler, Debbie Kaminski, and Robyn A. Berkley, was published in the Fall issue of the <i>NWSA Journal</i> - Volume 19, Number 3, pp. 145-162.</p>
		P L A N N E D
		<p>Cheryl Geisler will be presenting, “Gender Equity in The Rhetoric Society of American: A Society Colloquy” at the upcoming biennial meeting of the Rhetoric Society of America (Appendix L) Deborah Kaminski will be presenting a poster session at the ASEE on “Evaluation of Social Networks that Support Faculty Career Advancement in Science and Engineering Departments” (Appendix M). Cheryl Geisler will be presenting “RAMP-Up: Writing Our Way to Institutional Reform” as part of a panel, “How Three Compositionists are Helping to Change the Cultural Realities in Science and Engineering” at the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (Appendix N). Cheryl Geisler has been invited by the Organization of Women Faculty at SUNY Albany to speak about the 13+ Club and the Advancement of Women to the Senior Ranks.</p>