

# West Virginia University

## ADVANCE

Year 2016 Evaluation Report – No Cost Extension

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**Evaluators**

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## **1.0 EVALUATION PLAN**

The WVU ADVANCE team is now in their first no-cost extension year. The goal of this year's evaluation report is to consider how the ADVANCE faculty have adhered to the plan for use of their funds during this no-cost extension and to determine how these activities support the two areas **Dissemination** and **Sustainability**, which are the primary focus at this stage of the project.

### **1.1 Data Sources**

The data sources this year are interviews with the ADVANCE Center Director and staff, the no-cost extension plan, articles written by ADVANCE team members, web sites of journals in which articles have been published, and the report from the Center Director.

### **1.2 Analysis Methods**

Interview discussions were used to collect perceptions of various aspects of the activities. Reports and publications, created by the ADVANCE Team and others, related to COACHE, WVU Internal Climate Survey and the pre/post department level survey were examined and pertinent information to answer evaluation questions was noted.

## **2.0 EVALUATION FINDINGS**

The following section outlines the data collected to answer each evaluation question and summarizes the findings to date.

### **2.1 Dissemination of WVU ADVANCE Findings and Practices**

The faculty members involved in ADVANCE have consistently been committed to disseminating their findings and successful practices. Dissemination has been a major emphasis during the past year. As Table 1 shows, the faculty members have achieved success in dissemination, and dissemination efforts are continuing.

So far, ADVANCE has resulted in eleven journal articles, and another three articles are under review. Several others are in the process of being written. While some of the articles have appeared in specialized journals with a small but focused readership, several have appeared in journals with high visibility. *Science*, which published a 2016 article on WVU ADVANCE's contribution to creating a more inclusive academy, is the flagship journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). *Information Sciences*, published by Elsevier, has a very high impact factor of 4.038. It published a 2016 article on measuring consensus within groups. This is an important methodological contribution of WVU ADVANCE. Other noteworthy journals include *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal* (recently acquired by Texas A&M University), *Affilia* (site of two 2015 publications, published by Sage and considered an important journal both for Women's Studies and for Social Work), and *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* (published by the American Psychological Association).

In addition to the three articles under review, a large number of conference papers and presentations suggest that WVU ADVANCE will continue to contribute to the scholarly and policy-related literature. The ADVANCE group's active involvement in seeking new funding suggests that they will remain an active force within West Virginia University as well as collaborating universities.

**Table 1. Summary of Dissemination<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Publications</b>	<b>Number</b>
Refereed Journal Articles	11
Book Chapters	2
Proceedings	5
Total Publications	18
Articles Under Review	3
Grant Applications: Funded	3
Grant Applications: Not Funded	2
Conference Papers and Presentations	36
Invited Presentations	8

## **2.2 Sustainability of WVU ADVANCE**

With NSF funding approaching its end, it is important to examine the potential for the initiatives associated with WVU ADVANCE to be sustained and communicated to larger audiences for an extended period of time. The evaluators' recommendations written for the 2015 evaluation report (pages 93-96) were intended in part to promote the long-term sustainability of WVU ADVANCE, so we will begin by examining evidence that aligns with these recommendations. After discussing actions that clearly align with our recommendations, we will discuss other recommendations where we were not able to note evidence of activity, note some initiatives that were not anticipated by the 2015 recommendations, and offer some more general thoughts about sustainability.

### **2.2.1 Recommendations on which meaningful action has been taken**

The University has established policies regarding parental leave, alternative leave, and extensions to the tenure clock, but the 2015 report noted "some difficulties in applying such policies appropriately to specific situations" (page 93) and added, "Such difficulties may be particularly likely when the policies are relatively new and when the administrators being approached to make decisions have been in their positions only for a short time." To alleviate such situations, we recommended:

1. Workshops regarding new policies be developed and that the administrators (including Chairs, Deans, and Associate Deans) responsible for applying the policies to specific cases be required to attend the workshops.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: WVU ADVANCE Research Products, compiled by WVU ADVANCE, May 2016.

2. Revise forms used for PWAP so that there will be no question about how the policy should be implemented.

We find that considerable attention has been devoted to the concerns addressed by the recommendations. The ADVANCE Director plays a key role in promoting the smooth implementation of such policies. She routinely meets with faculty members who wish to explore the policies and has given presentations to Chairs and Directors. Additional presentations are planned for the June 2016 Chairs' symposia. She has been instrumental in adding extensive clarifying text to Eberly College's promotion and tenure document. Given the external evaluator's personal experience in attempting to communicate promotion and tenure expectations to external reviewers, he finds it particularly noteworthy that the Eberly College recommends that the following statement be shared with external reviewers of candidates whose tenure clocks have been extended:

Please note the Dr. X received an extension to his/her tenure clock by virtue of university policy. Under these circumstances, the criteria for promotion and tenure are no different than for faculty whose tenure clock has not been interrupted. Therefore, we would appreciate that in evaluating this candidate, your evaluation consider the merits of quality and impact, not the time taken to achieve those accomplishments.

We would be encouraged to see additions of similar explanations to promotion and tenure documents prepared for faculty in other Colleges.

Recruitment and hiring have been areas of considerable emphasis throughout the WVU ADVANCE effort. One of our recommendations in these areas appears to have received attention during the past year.

5. The ADVANCE team should continue to work with CEMR on recruitment strategies. It is possible that hiring several women at a time would give these new faculty members a sense that they are not alone, even if they are hired in different departments. One Chair suggested that they may need to offer women more money if they want them to come to WVU.

The ADVANCE Director has met several times with a representative of the Division of Diversity Equity and Inclusion to develop a pilot project designed to better diversify faculty searches. Engineering did experience success in hiring women in 2014-15. Possibly due to a desire to build on this success, the pilot was located in CEMR. While parts of our recommendation (i.e., simultaneous hiring of multiple women in CEMR) may be premature, it appears that particular attention is being given to CEMR.

The evaluators also expressed concern about retention of CEMR faculty in the 2015 report:

6. Despite a lack of voluntary female attrition in 2014-15, retention of females in Engineering must continue to be addressed. There is a need for junior female faculty to be mentored by another professional that understands their unique problems. The mentor would preferably be a woman who does not just address productivity issues, but helps

with all aspects of the struggles that are faced. The Dean makes an effort to get all the women together each year to talk to them directly, but this may not be enough. There needs to be a concerted effort to build community among the female engineers. The successful promotion of four women in Engineering in 2014-15—two to Associate Professor with tenure and two to Professor—may expedite efforts to involve senior faculty in community-building efforts.

Using COACHE data received in October 2015, ADVANCE created an individualized report for each WVU college. This allowed the ADVANCE Director to meet with the Deans (and often others) from each college to discuss overall areas of strength and concern for each college. Whenever a concern was identified, the ADVANCE Director was able to use lessons learned from ADVANCE to suggest potential solutions. Because many of the problems (departmental collegiality, support for work-life integration, promotion and tenure clarity, departmental leadership, mentoring) have implications for retention, the meetings demonstrate a commitment to promote retention. Although our recommendation involved a specific College, we consider the University-wide effort to be appropriate.

The evaluators' ninth recommendation concerned the preservation and ongoing development of several valued aspects of WVU ADVANCE. This was followed by recommendations (10-14) regarding several specific features of ADVANCE. The evaluators believe that significant action has occurred regarding most of those recommendations.

### *Strategic Planning/ Dialogical Change Process*

10. The ADVANCE Team may be considering applying the Dialogical Change Process to other departments at WVU or other universities. While most of the departments' faculty and Chairs were very complementary of the process, there were a few who expressed concerns. Listening to some of the departments, it seems that the biggest concern was that the idea of strategic planning did not fit the department's needs for one reason or another. Some departments were in the middle of turmoil, while others may have just completed a strategic plan the year before. The recommendation is to determine a challenge the department is facing and facilitate the dialogical change process around that challenge.

At the Interim Dean's request, two ADVANCE facilitators held a series of meetings with faculty in a social behavioral science department experiencing high levels of internal conflict. It appears that the facilitation work was designed to speak specifically to the challenges facing this particular department. While the effort was intended in part to develop a "faculty relations and governance" document to guide future decision-making in the department, the facilitators were careful not to rush the process. In fact, the facilitators describe one component of their work as "slowing down [the department's] group processes and putting as much (and sometimes more) emphasis on the processes of decision-making and relationship building as on the products produced or the outcomes of those decisions." This approach probably delayed the completion of a final document, but it has produced a better understanding of possibilities for conflict resolution and a more optimistic view of working climate within the department. To the extent that this change in orientation gains traction, it will prove more beneficial than completing a

document by an arbitrary deadline. While this is a single case, it appears to represent a willingness to modify the dialogical change protocol (while retaining “best practices” gained from prior work with departments) to meet the needs of a particular department.

### ***Workshops***

12. While the ADVANCE office has handed most workshops over to the Vice President for Creative and Scholarly Activities, ADVANCE professionals should be encouraged to provide suggestions about the content and format of workshops. The evaluators are struck by the consistency and longevity of favorable comments they have heard about promotion and tenure open houses in which junior faculty are allowed to see and discuss actual tenure and promotion files. Such workshops apparently have helped several faculty members think about the content of their own promotion files as well as personal strategies for moving toward favorable tenure and promotion decisions. Irrespective of their specific sponsorship, such workshops should continue to be offered on a predictable basis.

WVU ADVANCE has been involved in opportunities for training, professional development, and networking during the year. ADVANCE paid honoraria for eight guest speakers for a major workshop hosted by the WVU Department of Mathematics. ADVANCE also supported the participation by four faculty members from three STEM departments at an Emerging Leaders Workshop held in Wisconsin.

We are not aware of promotion and tenure open houses held during the 2015-16 year, but, as noted with respect to recommendation 13, the ADVANCE Director has continued to be active in these areas, consulting with individual faculty members and presenting to Chairs.

### ***Ongoing Availability of ADVANCE Professionals***

13. It is clear to the evaluators that professionals in the ADVANCE office have established a reputation for their ability to help female faculty members deal with professional challenges and that they will continue to be approached for help. The University should take tangible steps to recognize and reward this important contribution.

The ADVANCE Director has met with faculty members (at their request) about yearly evaluation letters, promotion/tenure reviews, and other personnel concerns. She also will include a section on work-life leaves, evaluations, and promotions at the June 2016 Chairs’ symposia.

### ***Expansion of the Advocacy Group***

14. A small number of male faculty members are taking advantage of training from North Dakota State University to serve as advocates for gender equity in their departments and the University. While those who have taken on the role represent a core of energy and activity, the effort will need to involve a larger number if it is going to have a widespread impact. More allies are needed in particular in CEMR, where only one man appears to have accepted the challenge. The small existing group of advocates

should be supported in their efforts to recruit a larger group of “ADVANCE Allies” who will increase the visibility of the effort.

Thirty-five male faculty members participated in an Advocates and Allies training session in February 2016. The number of men regularly attending Advocates meetings has grown from eight to twenty, so it is apparent that the program is growing and increasing its visibility.

### **2.2.2 Recommendations on which less action has been taken**

We have been pleased to see actions taken that are consistent with several of our recommendations, but for some recommendations we observed less activity during the 2015-16 year. We acknowledge that some actions may not have been apparent to us. We also note that a lack of action in one year does not necessarily preclude action in future years.

In the 2015 report, we expressed concern that strategic plans developed by departments as part of the dialogical change process could be forgotten over time. Two recommendations reflected that concern:

7. Because some aspects of strategic plans may require resources to implement, the ADVANCE office should monitor the extent to which resources are forthcoming and should be prepared to advocate for departments in need of resources to implement approved strategic plans.
8. It also is possible that departments themselves may put strategic plans on the backburner due to day-to-day pressures and demands. The ADVANCE office should work with Deans to monitor the extent to which departments are acting to implement their approved strategic plans.

Such actions may have occurred in the context of routine procedures that we failed to notice, but we take this opportunity to warn against the familiar danger that documents initially developed with great fanfare can quickly find their way to hidden shelves on which they gather dust.

With respect to Recommendation 8, we note that ADVANCE has made a specific request with respect to the Social Behavioral Science department that is in the process of developing an operating document with the assistance of ADVANCE facilitators (discussed above in the context of Recommendation 10): “We are requesting that someone in the Dean’s office read/approve the document and *ensure that the unit continues to utilize it in the spirit in which it was created*” (emphasis added). Such attention would be helpful for other departments, but we do wish to note that monitoring in the absence of support and tangible resources may not be helpful.

We also offered a recommendation regarding the Sponsorship Program, which by all accounts has been successful.

11. The Sponsorship Program has been highly praised by its participants as one of the programs that made a huge difference in their careers. ECAS and CEMR have agreed to institutionalize the program by offering funds that new faculty can apply for as part of their start up package to work with an outside mentor. The money proposed is only one third of the money currently given for the Sponsorship Program and it is not clear if faculty who get the money will be required to be accountable for the activities it is used for. The success of the current program seems to be that there is enough money to do something significant and also that they are being held accountable and the program can show specific outcomes achieved by its participants. The recommendation is there be more money allocated for this purpose and there be clear guidelines and accountability structures in place to maximize the likelihood of success.

As resource allocations and monitoring strategies for the Sponsorship Program change in the future, we hope that attention will continue to be paid on the extent to which it is promoting successful career development.

### **2.2.3 Recent actions not anticipated by the evaluators' recommendations**

It is apparent that that the ADVANCE leadership has taken actions that were consistent with many of our 2015 recommendations. They also have taken some actions that were not anticipated by our 2015 recommendations. In each case, the actions appear to represent valuable innovations.

First, ADVANCE has worked with the Division of Diversity Equity and Inclusion to identify concerns associated with a new on-line application and assessment system for faculty searches. Careful examinations of unanticipated consequences of new systems will help to insure that the intentions associated with the introduction of the new systems will be realized.

Second, WVU ADVANCE is enhancing its impact by creating relationships with faculty members at other universities. This includes both ongoing consultations and assistance with grant development. Such collaborations are helpful both for disseminating information about success achieved at WVU and for setting the stage for comparative research on institutional transformation in a variety of organizational settings.

Third, WVU ADVANCE's faculty have systematically identified five "signature initiatives" – department dialogues, an "advocates and allies" program, a promotion and tenure clinic, an external sponsorship program, and a new consensus measure. These specific initiatives provide a structure through which ADVANCE's innovations can become a part of the institutional culture of WVU. They also provide a framework for developing conference presentations and publications that contribute to the dissemination of findings and "best practices" from the larger effort.

Fourth, based on the success of the department facilitations and the facilitation training done for Montana State, the WVU ADVANCE Team is looking for ways to develop a marketable service related to facilitation. The Director and others will meet with business specialists to examine how to develop a business plan around the facilitation work that they have been able to perfect.

### **3.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The efforts to disseminate information and services to others, as well as the WVU ADVANCE Team's contribution to the literature are impressive. During this no-cost extension year, all members of the Team have continued to meet and have all been engaged in writing and contributing to presentations and articles. The Team has come together as a research group with a bond that will continue even after funding has been expended.

Ultimately, the sustainability of an externally funded project involves the development of ongoing connections between the project's goals and activities and other major established units—both within the organization that houses the project and within related organizations. We see evidence that such connections have been made and are continuing to develop. For example, the ADVANCE Director has been invited by the Vice Provost to present at the Dean's Council. The presentation resulted in an invitation to give a presentation to a College that had not previously been involved in the ADVANCE effort. The Director also has been invited to serve on important committees and working groups that promote connections throughout the University. Ongoing service with the University's Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) is a case in point. The Director's work with WLI has led the Provost to support an ADVANCE Fellow to strengthen WLI's contributions to the University. Because of such efforts, it is likely that key actors throughout the University will continue to define WVU ADVANCE and its faculty as important resources for the support of their work.

As noted in the preceding section, the ADVANCE Director and colleagues are establishing ongoing contacts with faculty members at other universities. Such efforts give the ADVANCE effort national visibility, thereby enhancing its legitimacy within its own university.