Guest Column: Upcoming Workshops, Discussions Offer Support for Women and Minority Faculty

Office of the Provost
February 2016

Research finds that minorities and women often face unique challenges as faculty members, such as lower senses of fit in their departments, greater feelings of isolation, fewer opportunities for collaboration, more trouble finding quality mentors, and bias from colleagues and students.

Moreover, women and minorities are more likely to be overburdened with service, which often is not highly rewarded in tenure and promotion decisions. All of this is important because it can affect career satisfaction, advancement and retention.

In an attempt to address some of these issues and to gather insight from the experiences of our own faculty, we organized the first series of Minority Faculty Career Discussions in the fall, with 35 faculty and postdocs attending the first session.

Three discussions occurred over the course of the semester and focused on topics such as mentoring and balancing service expectations while maintaining research productivity. There also was a question-and-answer session with Provost Andrew Comrie.

Evaluations of the series were generally positive, with 88 percent of respondents agreeing that the career discussions were an effective format and 88 percent agreeing that they’d recommend the discussions to colleagues. As one evaluator wrote, "It is a very good initiative to know the actual needs of faculty members and an opportunity to strengthen bonds among them."

Given this success, we are continuing the series this spring, but improving it based on feedback. Additionally, we’re offering a series aimed at women in STEM, following the same model. Furthermore, the Commission on the Status of Women's Faculty Affairs Workgroup is offering networking lunches on the first Friday of the month from February to April.

While these programs are designed to address common challenges faced by particular groups of faculty, we welcome all faculty from any background to attend. We also have our annual spring workshops on promotion and tenure.

Read more about the programs and topics below.

Minority Faculty Career Discussions

- **Using your annual reviews to prepare for P&T**
  On Feb. 19, from 12-1 p.m., Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Tom Miller will lead a discussion on using your annual reviews to prepare for promotion and tenure. This will complement the existing spring workshops on promotion and tenure and will
include ample time for questions. RSVP here [2].

- **What do you want your heads, directors and deans to know?**
  On March 23, from 3-4:30 p.m., we will gather with the intention of generating a report to be distributed to UA leadership on data and experiences of minority faculty at the UA and nationally. RSVP here [3].

- **Moving into leadership positions**
  On April 14, from 12-1:30 p.m., we will host a panel of UA leaders who will offer advice and strategies to attain leadership positions. There will be ample time for attendees to ask questions. RSVP here [4].

- **Networking happy hour**
  On April 29, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., we will have an informal happy hour networking opportunity at the Auld Dubliner, 800 E. University Blvd. Appetizers will be provided. RSVP here [5].

**Women in STEM Career Discussions**

- **Women in STEM Career Discussions Launch & Getting the Mentoring You Want**
  On Feb. 24, from 1-2:30 p.m., Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Tom Miller will attend to listen and learn from the experiences of women in STEM fields on campus. We will discuss research on faculty mentoring and offer tips to get the most out of your mentoring relationships. We will discuss potential topics for the remaining career discussions based on your feedback. RSVP here [6].

- **Women in STEM Career Discussion 2**
  On March 30, from 9-10:30 a.m., we will host our second Women in STEM Career Discussion. The topic will be determined from feedback in the launch, as well as feedback collected in the RSVPs. Breakfast will be provided. RSVP here [7].

- **Networking happy hour**
  On April 8, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., we will have an informal happy hour networking opportunity at the Auld Dubliner. Appetizers will be provided. RSVP here [8].

- **Women in STEM Career Discussion 3**
  On April 19, from 1-2:30 p.m., we will host our third Women in STEM Career Discussion. The topic will be determined from feedback in the launch, as well as feedback collected in the RSVPs. RSVP here [9].

**The Commission on the Status of Women's Faculty Affairs Workgroup Presents First Friday Lunches**

Lunches are being offered on the first Friday of the month, February through April, to facilitate the networking of faculty from across campus. These networking luncheons can potentially create self-sustaining interdisciplinary peer networks.

In peer networks, faculty members discuss challenges, share information and brainstorm on how to address them. Peer networks also offer collaborative opportunities for both junior and midcareer faculty. Or these luncheons simply offer opportunities to create friendships.
Lunch will be provided, and faculty can stop by between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. as their schedule allows. Faculty are advised to bring their business cards.

RSVPs are required and can be submitted at these links:

- Feb. 5, between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. [10], at Old Main, Silver and Sage Room
- March 4, between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. [11], Location TBD
- April 1, between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. [12], Location TBD

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Source URL: https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/guest-column-upcoming-workshops-discussions-offer-support-women-and-minority-faculty

Links:
[8] https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0pNQPml2z3OPyF7
[9] https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_dbbnAE1iznwyBsV
[10] https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3r2Noe6fymBDIA1