Overview

• Background information about URI

• < 2000: Chilly Climate for women in Engg

• > 2000: The Thaw
  ✓ Increased Administrative support for women in STEM resulting from Faculty Union Grievance
  ✓ Award NSF ADVANCE Grant (2003-08)

University of Rhode Island

• Medium sized University
  - 600 + faculty
  - 12,000 undergrads; 3,000 grads
  * Public Research, Land/Sea/Urban Grant

• Engineering is 1 of 6 URI “Colleges”
  - 8 engineering BS programs (6 MS, PhD)
  - 60 - 70 faculty
  - 850 – 950 undergraduates

• Heavily Unionized University & State
  * active AAUP (Amer. Assoc. of University Professors)

• Small State – all politics are local

The Climate in Engineering Pre-2000
Gender Differences -  
*Female Engineering faculty received...*

**LESS**
- Lab/office space  
  - Size, location, quality  
  - time to renovate/repair  
- Professional respect  
  - Men ⇒ “Dr. Smith”  
  - Women ⇒ “Suzie”  
- Informal access to chairs and networks of support & information  
  - e.g. advance notice of grant opportunities  
- etc.

**MORE**
- Committee work  
- Student advising or outreach activities  
- Unwelcome comments / reprimands  
  - appearance or apparel  
- Unwanted pornography in classroom/labs  
- Denigrating rumors or attacks  
  - job credentials  
  - personal life  
- etc.

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**The Revolving Door – Female Engineering Faculty at URI**

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<thead>
<tr>
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**Pro-active steps taken since 2000**

- Strong, public advocacy from President and Provost Offices in support of women in STEM fields  
- New Engineering Administration  
- Revived Engineering Diversity Committee  
  - Increased efforts and financial support  
  - Increased representation from *outside* of Engineering  
- Support for an NSF ADVANCE proposal  
- President’s 2006-2009 Strategic Plan

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**2003 NSF ADVANCE**  
*Institutional Transformation Grant*  

5 years, $3.5 M

- Recruitment: Faculty Fellows Program  
- Faculty Development  
- Work-Life  
- Climate Change  
- Evaluation/Assessment
ADVANCE Recruitment – Faculty Fellows program (Win-Win)

- ADVANCE benefits from increase in # female faculty in STEM fields
- URI saves money - Grant money provides part of salary and start-up packages for new faculty
- Administration & department maintain control over Fellow hiring decisions.
  - Provost and Deans determined which STEM department would receive Fellow; also, salary & start-up
  - Department selected research area, search committee, and candidate to hire
- Fellows receive extensive incentives & support network

STEM Departments hiring Fellow

- Competed to “pre-book” faculty line
  - First 2 Fellows hired in Engineering
  - Large, Outstanding applicant pool convinced skeptics in several depts.
- Included ADVANCE representative on search committee
- Scheduled each Fellow candidate to have lunch meeting with ADVANCE during on-campus interview
- Participated in ADVANCE workshops
  - Department Strategic Planning workshop
  - Climate Workshop
  - Best Practices for Recruitment and Searches
  - Mentoring

FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM VERY SUCCESSFUL

10 Faculty Fellows: Incentives

- Prestige of affiliation with NSF
  - Reputation ADVANCE program
- Minimal teaching loads and no service for first 1-2 years to get head start on research
- Assurances that Fellow position
  - Will transition to tenure-track when faculty line opens
  - Counts towards tenure clock, at Fellow’s discretion
- Opportunity to talk confidentially with women scientists during interview about climate, maternity leave policy, dual career issues, etc. (bias avoidance) & negotiating start-up packages.
- ADVANCE Faculty Development Workshops and support network
ADVANCE Faculty Development – Retention Activities

- **Workshops**
  - Mentoring, Grant Development, How to Negotiate, Writing, Interdisciplinary Collaborations …

- **Monthly Topical Luncheons**
  - Thinking about tenure from the start
  - Gender-sensitive teaching
  - Dual Career Issues
  - Work-work and home-work
  - Visiting Speakers (Valian – “Why so Slow”, Drago “Bias Avoidance”)
  - Didn’t I just say that? How to be heard
  - etc.

- $20-40k/yr Incentive Grants
  - to promote women in STEM fields
  - 32+ grants (given to men & women)

- ADVANCE Resource Center
  - resource for information and confidential advice

- Mentoring Program
  - Training for both mentors/mentees
  - Assignment of 2+ mentors
  - Fellows breakfasts

- Social Activities after work to reduce sense of isolation
  - book club, pot luck dinners, subsidized tickets to plays, concerts, …

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Work-Life

**Parental Leave Policy** for birth or adoption developed & passed providing 6 weeks paid leave and optional 1 year delay of tenure clock

- Campus Involvement & Support
- many participants (including several men)
- Focus on inclusiveness, can benefit men & women

**Dual Career Policy** – policy adopted; guidelines under development; regional network planned
  - Administrative Encouragement
  - Complicated, but critical issue - Union concerns and proper procedures

**Work-Life Virtual Office (www.uri.edu/wlfc)**
  - To become actual office
  - Lactation site to be opened this summer

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Work Climate

Departmental Climate Workshops offered by ADVANCE

- Help STEM departments identify strengths, set strategic goals, and improve departmental dynamics
  - Set positive, pro-active goals
  - Improve Inclusiveness and Openness
    - benefit all
    - “Rising Tide lifts all boats”
Work Climate

Workshops and Best Practices integrated with theoretical models of organizational change

- **Appreciative Inquiry:**
  - emphasis on how all faculty can benefit from analysis of what contributes to an excellent work environment

- **Transtheoretical Model:**
  - system of matching change strategies to defined levels of readiness for change

- **3-level Model:** (~ 3 legged table; B. Risman)
  - Administrative policy, Top-Down (Institutional)
  - department practices and culture (Interactional)
  - Grass roots, Bottom-Up (Individual)

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Assessment and Evaluation

- 2003 Campus wide climate survey conducted (39% response rate); to be repeated in 2007.
- Most Important factors for Career Satisfaction:
  - Work Respect, Influence at Work, Positive Work Climate, Resources, Work-Family Balance
- Men Report More Positive Work Environment:
  - More Career Satisfaction, More Influence Over Careers, Less Discrimination
- Women Report More Interpersonal-Work Challenges:
  - Less Interpersonal Support & Respect, Less Likely to Decide to Have Children, More Consideration of Partner’s Job Opportunities, More Belief in Combining Career & Parenting

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Conclusions ([www.uri.edu/advance](http://www.uri.edu/advance))

- NSF ADVANCE has improved recruitment, retention and climate for female faculty in STEM fields at URI
- Many Benefits of having a Multi-disciplinary team:
  - Engineering, Physical Sciences, Social Sciences, Administrators
  - Social Theory on change very helpful
- Work being done to sustain change beyond grant:
  - Institutionalized within existing campus committees/groups
- Many activities can be done at low cost:
  - Ask Senior Faculty to lead workshops or Topical lunches
  - Seek ways to publicize existing Work-Life Balance initiatives
    - Knowledge is power for new faculty in negotiations with chair
    - Organize low cost social events to reduce sense of isolation