

NDSU ADVANCE FORWARD: Transforming a Gendered Institution Project Summary

North Dakota State University is a land-grant institution that, since 1999 and under the leadership of President Joseph Chapman, has undergone tremendous growth in student enrollment (over 12,500 total students, a 2-fold increase in graduate students, and a 3-fold increase in international students), doctoral programs (41), and research expenditures (over \$100 million/year). Despite these significant successes, our progress in diversity has been modest and has not yet reached the level needed to meet President Chapman's goal of becoming "globally recognized as a contemporary metropolitan land-grant university." In fact, NDSU has been found seriously lacking in the numbers of tenured women faculty, including women of color, and women with disabilities.

This ADVANCE FORWARD proposal marshals energies and resources to meet this important challenge. The proposal builds on the earlier work of NDSU's self-initiated FORWARD (**F**ocus **o**n **R**esources for **W**omen's **A**dvancement, **R**ecruitment/Retention, and **D**evelopment). Through a series of studies and initiatives during the last five years, this informal group has laid the groundwork to better appreciate the barriers faced by women at NDSU and to more clearly understand how to address them. This proposal sets in place a formally recognized structure, the Commission on the Status of Women Faculty, headed by the Provost and linked to key administrative authority, with strategies that reach across the university to achieve institutional climate change and advance women, particularly in the STEM disciplines. The project's principal investigator, Provost R. Craig Schnell, the lead Co-PIs Canan Bilen-Green and Ann Burnett, and the FORWARD team will implement these transformational efforts with a three-prong focus:

1. Campus Climate: Our goal is to create a respectful and supportive environment that fosters women's success. We will create new policies and practices through our Commission on the Status of Women and will add an assistant in the Office for Equity and Diversity to strengthen recruitment. We will provide incentives in the form of grants to encourage research on gender and will hire consultants to help departments address gender issues. Additionally, the program will set up workshops and training for groups of administrators and faculty – including deans, chairs/heads, faculty, and male allies.

2. Advancement and Leadership: Our aim is to ensure that women faculty, through mentoring and professional development, receive the knowledge, skills, support, and resources needed for successful teaching, research, and leadership. The program establishes and supports mid-career and cohort mentoring groups, and offers grants for course release, grant-writing support, leadership training, and individual travel.

3. Research: Our goal is to discover if, how, and why our programs work to transform the University. Throughout the project, we will examine our processes and evaluate the reasons for their relative effectiveness. We will disseminate our results broadly through workshops at other universities, professional conferences, and refereed publications.

Intellectual Merit: Our proposed ADVANCE FORWARD will help transform NDSU from a gendered to a non-gendered institution. This project will contribute knowledge and understanding of how to stimulate, implement, and sustain institutional change that leads to a more diverse institution, evidenced by 1) increased women faculty; 2) increased women competitive researchers; 3) increased women in leadership positions; and 4) an overall environment that permits women to flourish. Our research to uncover the processes that link women's performance to organizational factors will contribute to an understanding of how gendered institutional cultures and structures may be changed to facilitate the achievement of women faculty's full potential.

Broader Impact: ADVANCE FORWARD programs for institutional transformation will be merged with broader NDSU diversity efforts to create a more inclusive campus community, including people of color and people with disabilities. We will develop programs, conduct research, and widely disseminate information so that similar campuses can emulate our successes. Our results will provide templates for peer institutions with similar issues on recruitment, retention, and advancement of women faculty. We fully expect that the methods proposed and the outcomes described in the evaluation program will aid other institutions to tap into the full faculty potential by developing positive environments in which women researchers can excel. Most importantly, as a result of this grant, women faculty at NDSU will contribute to the scientific and technical knowledge base of the nation.