
AC 2012-5370: DEVELOPING DIVERSE DEPARTMENTS (D3) AT NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Marcia Gumpertz, North Carolina State University

Marcia Gumpertz is Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and professor of statistics at North Carolina State University. She serves as PI of N.C. state's ADVANCE PAID project Developing Diverse Departments.

Developing Diverse Departments (D3) at North Carolina State University

Introduction

The Developing Diverse Departments Project (D3) is a three-year NSF-funded ADVANCE PAID project aiming to increase faculty diversity and improve the climate for women and minority faculty at a large decentralized research extensive land grant institution with ten academic colleges and particular focus on engineering, agriculture and life sciences, and veterinary medicine. This paper describes how the D3 project was developed, the Developing Diverse Departments project components, and gives our impressions about what has worked well and what the payoffs have been. It also describes parts of the project that will be retained as permanent programs at the university after the grant funding is exhausted.

Guiding Principles

An experienced administrator wisely suggested that the first step in forming the Developing Diverse Departments project should be to create a Task Force on Women Faculty that would bring together women faculty from across campus and administrators in offices that might be involved in the project. Thus a broad-based group of 18 faculty and administrators including faculty at all ranks from 7 of the 10 academic colleges (Agriculture and Life Sciences, Physical and Mathematical Sciences (PAMS), Engineering, Natural Resources, Management, Education, and Humanities and Social Sciences), one department head, the past Chair of the Faculty, one associate dean, one assistant dean, and three deans (PAMS, Engineering, Education), the Special Assistant to the Provost, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, the Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity, the Director of University Planning and Analysis (the university's office of institutional research), and the Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Diversity was formed and met for ten months in 2007. A retreat with an outside facilitator forced us to clarify our goals and our understanding of which goals might be drivers of change in increasing female faculty presence. Through this process it emerged that having women in leadership positions and in senior faculty roles within the department changed the tone of department conversations and was key to hiring and retaining more women. That became the first principle of the D3 project.

The grant proposal was developed by a subcommittee of the Task Force on Women Faculty, which included social scientists, women's and gender studies faculty, mathematical, physical, and biological scientists, all bringing different approaches to the problem of culture change in a university. We were fortunate to have a good foundation of data on which to base our evaluation of the climate and demographic makeup of the faculty. A university Faculty Well-Being Survey had been conducted in 2006 and the University Planning and Analysis office and the Provost's office were able to provide data about hiring, promotion and tenure rates by race and gender. The emphasis on data helped us gain the interest and commitment of faculty in the sciences and engineering.

The insights of a psychologist on the team provided the second guiding principle for the project: that culture change happens person by person through formal discussions among faculty surrounding hiring, promotion and tenure decisions and informal interactions with peers in the department and university. People are most likely to adopt new ideas when they discuss them with a peer, a trusted friend, or a respected colleague. She also convinced us that unconscious bias has a profound effect on hiring and evaluation of women and minority faculty and the department climate for faculty from underrepresented groups by providing a wealth of research driving home this point ^{1,2,3,4}.

None of us likes to talk about bias, and we don't really know what to call it - unconscious bias, hidden bias, unrecognized bias, implicit bias, schemas or non-conscious expectations. If we're honest with ourselves we'll recognize that we all have various "records" in our heads of involuntary associations, thoughts, and stereotypes. What the research points out is the enormous cumulative and concrete impact of these involuntary associations. The approach of the Developing Diverse Departments project is to educate a wider and wider circle of faculty and university leaders about the potent effects of unconscious bias on the composition and climate of the university.

To summarize, the two guiding principles undergirding the D3 project are:

1. Having women in leadership positions and in senior faculty roles within the department changes the tone of department conversations and is key to hiring and retaining more women; and
2. Culture change happens person by person through formal discussions among faculty surrounding hiring, promotion and tenure decisions and informal interactions with peers in the department and university.

Goals of the Developing Diverse Departments Project

From the NSF ADVANCE at a Glance website⁵:

The goal of the National Science Foundation's ADVANCE program is to increase the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers, thereby developing a more diverse science and engineering workforce.

The D3 project serves all academic colleges in the university and is not restricted to science and engineering faculty. The specific goals of the Developing Diverse Departments project are to

1. Increase the female share of senior faculty and the visibility of women faculty;
2. Increase the number of faculty of color at all ranks;
3. Increase the number of women and faculty of color in line leadership positions (department head, dean, provost);
4. Cultivate men and women leaders as change agents; and
5. Change attitudes about hiring diverse faculty.

Description of the D3 Project

This is a three year PAID (Partnerships for Adaptation, Implementation and Dissemination) ADVANCE Project funded with \$500,000 from NSF and an equal amount provided by the Provost's Office and the 10 academic colleges of the university. The D3 project components are adapted to our university's specific environment from ADVANCE programs developed at four other institutions: the University of Michigan STRIDE Committee⁶, the WISELI climate workshops for department chairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison⁷, leadership development workshops offered through the Center for Institutional Change at the University of Washington⁸, and the ADVANCE Professors Network initiative at Georgia Tech⁹.

The ADVANCE Scholars form the core of NC State's D3 project. These are two groups of faculty who have made a three-year commitment to study unconscious bias and social issues in higher education, and to become change agents in the university. The ADVANCE Scholars are divided into Senior Leaders, who are full professors and department heads; and Emerging Leaders, who are associate professors. Each of the ten academic colleges supports at least one ADVANCE Scholar with an annual course release. The Provost's office provides course releases for an additional seven ADVANCE Scholars. In exchange for the course release, the Scholars attend a monthly seminar. The first year reading topics moved from the politics of the personal; e.g., "Walking a tightrope: The feminist life of a Drosophila biologist"¹⁰, through study of the institutional context and defining the problems, to articles on becoming a change agent, such as sections of *On Becoming a Woman Leader*¹¹. The second year seminar focused on intersectionality of race and gender, sexuality and gender, and the faculty search, promotion, and tenure processes.

Each ADVANCE Scholar is also responsible for developing an initiative related to increasing faculty diversity or promoting the success of faculty from underrepresented groups within their college. The third year seminar focuses on group and individual initiatives. As a group, the ADVANCE Scholars have created two presentations, one is a general overview of the Developing Diverse Departments project which has been presented to the Faculty Senate and the Deans Council and the other is a tool to facilitate discussions with faculty about the search committee process. The ADVANCE Scholars tailor this presentation to departments and facilitate faculty discussions on request. The individual projects include collecting and disseminating best practices for hiring diverse faculty within their discipline; organizing a Hispanic/Latino Faculty Group at NC State; working to develop a campus policy on parental leave for graduate students; creating a lunch and learn series on leadership for women in Engineering, and organizing a two-day community building retreat for junior faculty in the sciences and engineering.

In addition to the ADVANCE Scholars, the D3 project developed and runs two workshop series: a climate workshop series for department heads and a leadership development workshop series for associate and full professors.

The D3 Climate Workshop Series for Department Heads is modeled on the series developed by the WISELI (Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute) of the University of Wisconsin – Madison. We focus on department climate for two reasons:

1. Our Faculty Well-Being Survey results show that satisfaction and desire to stay at the university are strongly related to department satisfaction, and
2. Negative aspects of department climate affect faculty who are not in the mainstream more strongly than others.

The aims of the Climate Workshop Series are to provide a structure for department heads to learn about the climate in their department, discuss challenges and effective means of addressing climate issues with a small group of peers, and to develop a departmental action plan for strengthening the department climate. A climate survey is administered to all faculty and staff in the participating departments during the series to provide department-specific information.

Our implementation consists of four 2-hour workshops centered around the survey of the faculty and staff in the participating departments. We are currently running our third and fourth cohorts, where each cohort consists of 4 to 9 department heads. The outline of topics covered in the four workshops and the timeline of the series follows.

- Workshop I (September/October) is devoted to discussing climate and readings about building a welcoming environment and to providing resources to the department heads. A panel of past participants shares their experiences and gives examples of action plans.
- Workshop II (November): This first half of this session focuses on diversity and unconscious bias, populations at higher risk of leaving NC State and setting a tone and expectations for general department climate. In the second half we describe the climate survey and explain the survey process, IRB consent forms and confidentiality agreements and give suggestions on how to interpret the survey results.
- The climate survey is administered to faculty and staff in the departments of the participating heads between Workshop II and Workshop III. Results for their own department are given to the participating heads a few days before Workshop III.
- Workshop III (January) is a facilitated discussion of the survey results (the results for a department are seen by only the head of that department), how to share the results with the department, and how to involve the department faculty and staff in developing an action plan based on the survey results.
- Workshop IV (March/April) is devoted to discussion of the action plans going forward.

The Leadership Development Workshop Series is targeted to tenured women and faculty from underrepresented groups. The aim of the series is to motivate faculty from these groups to consider a career in academic leadership, specifically in line leadership positions such as department head, dean, and provost. The series consists of seven workshops focused on self discovery, career planning, the roles and responsibilities of various university leadership positions, the kinds of skills needed in these leadership positions, and special challenges for women and minority faculty in leadership roles. The series includes three panels of senior administrators from our university and neighboring institutions. The workshop participants shadow an administrator and keep a journal in addition to reading material and attending the workshops. In Spring 2012, the plan of the seven workshops is as follows.

- Workshop 1 (mid-January): Introductory Session. Theme: Leadership styles
- Workshop 2 (early February): Panel of associate deans, department heads, center directors. Theme: Getting Started in Administration.

- Workshop 3 (late February): Theme: Communication and Conflict Resolution
- Workshop 4 (mid-March): Panel of deans, vice chancellors, university presidents. Theme: Issues Faced by Women in Administration
- Workshop 5 (late March): Theme: Managing Time, Stress and Work-Life Integration
- Workshop 6 (mid-April): Panel of provosts and vice provosts. Theme: Issues Faced by Underrepresented Minorities in Administration.
- Workshop 7 (late April): Concluding Session. Theme: Taking the Next Step

Evaluation: Our Experience

The Developing Diverse Departments has an internal evaluator who participates in all of the meetings of the project senior personnel. Her role is much larger than providing regular structured feedback on the various project activities, which is, of course important. Her most important function is providing process evaluation, which to our team has meant studying all of our processes and providing suggestions for adjusting the processes whenever they are needed¹². The internal project evaluator keeps an eye on our project logic model and whether the project is, in fact, moving in the direction to accomplish its stated objectives. She also is a skilled facilitator and has provided guidance on maintaining a smoothly functioning team when the differences in perspectives and interests between scientists and non-scientists, those who wanted to focus solely on gender and those who wanted to focus on both race and gender, staff and faculty caused discontent. About halfway through the project term, she surveyed the senior personnel about concerns and facilitated a group meeting where we were able to share those concerns in a safe way. This cleared the air, led to developing techniques to ensure that everyone's voice is heard in meetings, and led to developing the subcommittees described below. Three examples of adjustments we have made based on her suggestions follow.

1. We changed the format of the leadership workshop series from 6 workshops to 7 after the first year and added a shadowing component in which the participants shadow a university administrator for some period of time to learn about the daily activities of the job. At the same time we changed the organization of topics and introduced some new topics, particularly around leadership development for women faculty of color.
2. At the project evaluator's suggestion, we created subcommittees for several areas of work, rather than discussing all aspects of the project with all of the senior personnel. The current subcommittees are (1) institutionalizing components of the D3 project, (2) broadening the impact on campus of the D3 project, (3) next steps – future grant proposals, and (4) a planning committee for an upcoming state-wide conference. This subcommittee structure allows us to involve members of the advisory committees and the past participants of the workshop series in discussions and decisions about the direction and activities of the project, while decreasing the number of issues that the senior personnel need to discuss as a whole. We operate more efficiently and meetings of the senior personnel run much more smoothly using subcommittees.
3. Midway through the project we interviewed the deans about their involvement with the D3 project. This increased the deans' awareness of the project personnel, activities, and goals, and allowed the deans to ask questions and provide input. It also gave us valuable information about their perspectives and any glitches or misunderstandings that we were then able to clear up.

Including an internal evaluator was one of the best investments that this team has made.

The number of female department heads has grown substantially during the years of the project, from 18% of department heads to 24% today (15 out of 62 heads), and the number of department heads of color has increased from 2 in 2006 to 4 (2 African American and 2 Hispanic) in 2012. The number of female deans and the number of deans of color, however, have each decreased from 2 in 2006 to 1 today. The number of tenured female and faculty of color has not increased at the rate that we hoped to achieve. In 2006 women made up 19% of tenured faculty and in fall 2011 22%. We had hoped to increase the female presence to 26% of tenured faculty by 2011. African American, Native American, and Hispanic faculty made up 6% of tenured faculty in 2006 and 7% of tenured faculty in fall 2011, far short of our (admittedly very optimistic) hope of 12%.

On the other hand, the D3 project is having a positive impact on the climate and the understanding of the faculty involved and the department heads. The ADVANCE Scholars didn't coalesce immediately, but over the three years have developed into a network of faculty committed to change across the university. The group is prepared and gaining experience leading discussions about unconscious bias, faculty search and evaluation processes, and diversity in higher education with faculty across the campus. At one of our university's monthly networking hours put on by the Association of Women Faculty, I saw a demonstration of the principle of ideas spreading from one valued colleague to another in action when one of the ADVANCE Scholars spontaneously started talking over beer about unconscious bias and its effects on hiring. The ADVANCE Scholars are particularly effective when their department head has also participated in the Climate Workshop for Department Heads, because then the head is knowledgeable about the aims of the project and enthusiastic about the work of the Scholar. Some of the Senior Leaders attend the monthly leadership team meetings of department heads and associate deans in their college, thus learning the workings of the college and the roles of the heads, associate deans, and dean and contributing to the discussions of the college leadership. In one case this has led to an ADVANCE Scholar becoming a department head herself. Three were already department heads when they became ADVANCE Scholars.

The ADVANCE Scholar projects will have a lasting impact on the university. One pair of Scholars is examining the strategies and struggles of successful women faculty and faculty of color, and the dean of one of the academic colleges has asked to use their survey instrument. Another Scholar has been instrumental in developing, promoting and facilitating the Climate Workshop Series for Department Heads. A couple of projects mentioned in the previous section are having a particularly large and lasting impact: one ADVANCE Scholar has created a Hispanic/Latino Faculty Group, which is something that the university has needed for some time, and another Scholar has successfully introduced a resolution adopted by the Faculty Senate recommending institution of parental leave for graduate students. A regulation mandating parental leave for graduate students is now scheduled to go into effect in July 2012. The same ADVANCE Scholar has also developed a Workload Reduction Plan that has been adopted by her department. The plan provides flexibility to faculty during times of intense family obligations; it serves as a model for other departments and is being studied for adoption at the university level. One ADVANCE Scholar has become Assistant Dean for Diversity in her college and one serves

as the chair of the university's Council on the Status of Women, which reports to the Provost of matters of concern to women students, staff, and faculty.

The 16 participants in the first two cohorts of the Climate Workshop Series have undertaken several initiatives developed through the workshop action planning process. Communication, more venues for interaction, and involving staff along with faculty in department functions were common themes of the department action plans. One department appointed a committee for ongoing discussion and developing recommendations for department vision and future directions and one department initiated regular discussions about diversity and climate issues. One department appointed a committee to plan family-friendly social events. Another department began to appoint staff to some departmental committees. One department identified space for a break room to facilitate informal interactions. Creating a department newsletter and Facebook page were easy ways to improve intra-departmental communications and to highlight the contributions of staff. One department head of the 9 participating in this year's Climate Workshop series (cohorts 3 and 4) has recently donated space to create a lactation room and another had his department's faculty search committee meet with me to discuss strategies for increasing diversity in the short list of candidates brought in for interviews. So far, 25 department heads, about 40% of NC State's departments, have participated in the D3 Climate Workshop series.

Surveys of the Leadership Workshop Series participants before and after completing the workshop series show a significant increase in their self-reported ability to persuade others and to perform as change agents in their departments, colleges, and in the university. Many of the 19 Leadership Development Workshop Series participants from the first two cohorts were already in leadership roles when they participated in the workshop series. Several have taken on new leadership roles since their participation. One has become Director of the African American Cultural Center, one, who is also an ADVANCE Scholar, has become Department Head, two have become Associate Department Head, one has become Director of Graduate Studies, and one co-chaired the University Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The series is popular; 13 participants, including one from neighboring St Augustine's College, are participating in the 2012 cohort.

The Developing Diverse Departments project was targeted to a relatively narrow group and originally did not include any programs for non-tenure track faculty or assistant professors, so the project did not reach some large groups of faculty. The subcommittee on broadening the impact of the D3 project within NC State recommended focusing on faculty mentoring, so during the last year of the project we have implemented a small External Mentoring Mini-Grant program targeted to pre-tenure faculty. In this program, tenure track assistant professors may apply for funds to bring in an expert in their field or to travel to visit a more senior colleague at another institution. The program promotes and facilitates collaboration between junior faculty at NC State who may be isolated in their area of research with more senior faculty at other institutions. This program is open to pre-tenure faculty across the university and has received an enthusiastic response from both pre-tenure faculty and department heads. We hope to be able to provide this type of program in the future and expand it.

Permanent Implementation

Much of what the Developing Diverse Departments project does can be continued after the grant period ends. The subcommittee on institutionalizing components of the D3 project has recommended that the Leadership Development Workshop Series and the Climate Workshops for Department Heads be continued. The fourth cohort of the Climate Workshop Series mentioned above is being funded by the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences this year and we expect that the NC State Office for Faculty Development will be able to sponsor these two workshop series annually in the future. These are both low cost and high impact components of the D3 project. The current facilitators are willing to continue facilitating these workshops in future years.

The ADVANCE Scholars program cannot be continued in its current form because of the expense of providing course releases to the Scholars and the facilitators. We are considering developing a reading group on unconscious bias and change agency that would be organized by the university's Office for Faculty Development and/or the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity. One outgrowth of the ADVANCE Scholar program is a new program of Faculty Liaisons to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity initiated in Fall 2011. One ADVANCE Scholar conceived the idea and is serving as the first Faculty Liaison. This gives the faculty liaison time and recognition for service on enhancing diversity and inclusiveness at the university. Now the program includes three liaisons: one for Hispanic/Latino affairs, one to the African American Cultural Center developing a study abroad trip focusing on diversity, and one working on developing an undergraduate certificate in U.S. Diversity and Cultural Competence. Two more Faculty Liaisons are envisioned: one to the GLBT Center and one focusing on women faculty.

Perhaps the most exciting outgrowth of the ADVANCE Developing Diverse Departments project has to do with university-wide faculty recruiting and search processes. NC State hired far fewer faculty over the past three years than we projected in 2006 when the D3 project was conceived. At that time, we projected a large number of faculty retirements, providing a unique opportunity to hire a large number of new faculty. Due to the economic downturn, we actually hired fewer than half as many faculty over the past three years as projected. Now in 2012, though, we are expecting to begin hiring again, providing a good opportunity to increase faculty diversity. The first wave of hiring will be through the NC State Chancellor's Faculty Excellence Program, which is a new program to create interdisciplinary clusters of faculty in strategically important areas. The D3 senior personnel have been instrumental in developing guidelines for the recruiting and search processes for these new interdisciplinary positions. The guidelines provide a template for faculty position descriptions that weaves the importance of faculty diversity throughout the document. The guidelines also instruct the search committees to obtain orientation from the Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity on best practices to increase diversity in the pool of applicants and also to meet with the ADVANCE Scholars for discussion of how to recognize and prevent the effects of unconscious bias in evaluating candidates for faculty positions. These new templates and procedures have never before been mandated across the university and represent a shift in the usual way of doing business. Faculty in all ten academic colleges will gain experience using the templates, exposure to current understanding of the effects of unconscious bias in the search process, instruction on how to implement best

practices in recruiting diverse faculty, and will participate in discussion about the reasons for university commitment to faculty diversity.

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