

Supporting lecturers by building community, promoting agency, and increasing leadership opportunities

Dr. Pauline Khan, University of Michigan

Pauline Bary Khan has been serving as the Director of Lecturer Development since 2020 where she has led efforts to support teaching faculty at the College of Engineering. This work includes advising, mentoring, professional career coaching, and facilitating workshops to serve the teaching faculty population. Her research interests include the topics of teaching faculty development, organizational culture, educational leadership, and workplace communication.

Prior to this role, she served as Director of the Program in Technical Communication since 2012. She has taught classes in technical communications to undergraduate and graduate students at the College of Engineering since 1997. She has also co-authored the book *A Practical Guide to Technical Reports and Presentations for Scientists, Engineers and Students*.

Prior to her teaching career, Dr. Khan worked as an engineering and project manager to design manufacturing systems in the information technology field, to manufacture and test engine blocks for the automotive industry, and to research coatings for high-speed and high-temperature machining applications. Dr. Khan has a Bachelors of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering and a Masters of Science in Technical Communication, both from the University of Michigan. Her Doctorate in Education was earned from Southern New Hampshire University.

Dr. Elizabeth J Bailey, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching in Engineering, University of Michigan

Dr. Elizabeth Bailey is an Instructional Consultant at the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching in Engineering at the University of Michigan. She leads programs to prepare graduate students for success in faculty roles and to support new faculty at the College of Engineering. Dr. Bailey earned a Ph.D. in Chemistry at Columbia University. Her work on preparing future faculty and supporting teaching faculty has been published in *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development* and in ASEE conference proceedings.

Dr. Heidi M Sherick, University of Michigan

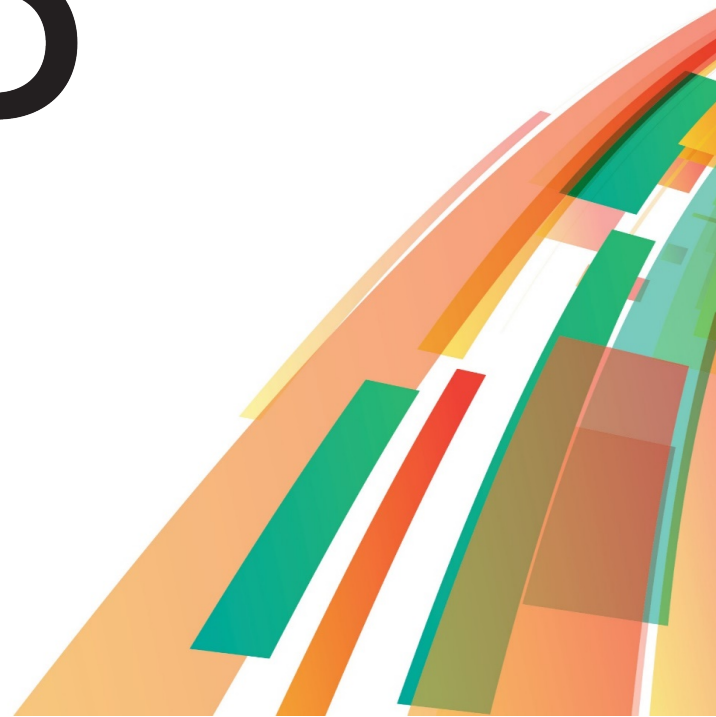
Dr. Heidi Sherick has worked in higher education for 30 years. Currently, Heidi is the Director of Leadership Development in the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan. She provides one-on-one coaching for faculty in new executive leadership roles and for Associate level faculty in Engineering, facilitating career advancement, fostering connections, and providing leadership development opportunities. Heidi served as the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Diversity in the College of Engineering at Montana State University from 2001-2012. She also served as the Director of EMPower, the engineering minority program. Heidi earned her PhD in Educational Leadership from University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2014. She studied developmental relationships in higher education and investigated the processes through which higher education leadership is fostered including mentoring, coaching, role-modeling, sponsoring, and networking.



4th Annual Conference of CoNECD

Collaborative Network for Engineering and Computing Diversity

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**Supporting lecturers by
building community, promoting agency,
and increasing leadership opportunities**

Dr. Pauline Khan, Dr. Elizabeth Bailey, and Dr. Heidi Sherick

University of Michigan, College of Engineering

1

Welcome

What we hope that you will
listen for

2

Welcome

1. There is a need to be purposeful/intentional/concerted regarding developing programming for the benefit of lecturers

2. We would like this to be a creative opportunity – please make the information that we share work for you – maybe choose one opportunity as a starting place to enhance the internal partnership with lecturers in your institution.

Why is the development of **lecturer-specific** support systems significant?

3

Significance of research

1. Engineering colleges and universities have been experiencing a significant shift in faculty population with the growth of teaching faculty, or lecturers. Lecturers are serving in critical roles, as instructors, mentors, advisors, and leaders in the changing higher education landscape (Kezar, 2012). The value of their work has increased as more colleges and universities rely on their contributions to pedagogy and leadership.

2. What are the specific needs, what makes them different from tenure track faculty?

In times of uncertainty, lecturers may feel insecure since they may have limited contracts, limited opportunities, and/or last-minute changes to their teaching schedules and loads. If enrollment is low, they may be the first to be let go. If online needs increase, the first to be leaned on.

Some lecturers may feel isolated. Departments may have very few lecturers, so sometimes the lecturers are not considered to be a part of the general department community and they are not included in department meetings, committees, or in departmental decision making.

The lecturer-specific support that they need can be a discussion about how success is measured as a non-tenure track faculty, how their career may progress and develop, or how their review process works.

Need for **diversity, equity** and **inclusion**

4

Research and need

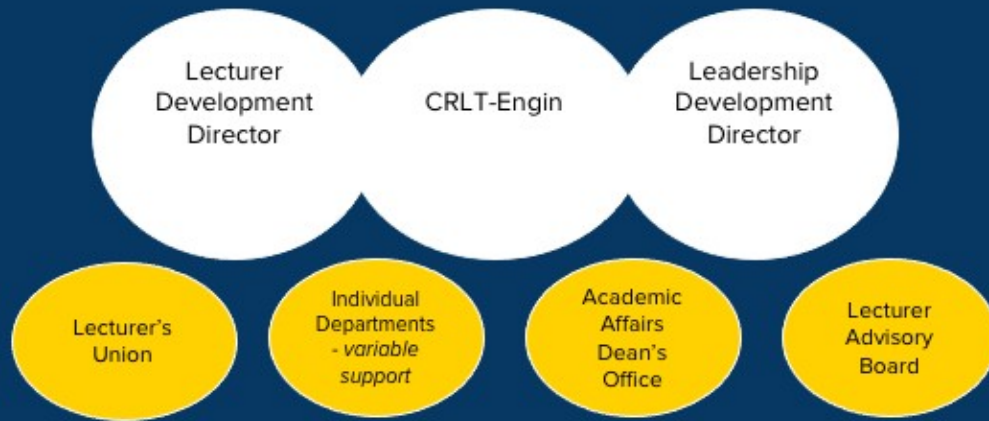
1. The paper “Taking the Measure of Faculty Diversity” (Finkelstein Conley & Shuster, 2016) (data from the National Center for Higher Education Statistics’ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System from the years 1993, 2003 and 2013) argues that faculty members “comprise the essential core of a college or university, its epicenter,” and “epitomize the values of their institutions.” It says they also serve in “important ways as role models for their students,” and “for that to occur for all students, diversity in the faculty ranks is crucial. The paper also notes that full-time, non-tenure-track or contract appointments grew by 84 percent, and that the magnitude of growth for women in part-time appointments was significant, at about 144 percent, and full-time, non-tenure-track appointments, at about 122 percent. Scholars have argued this increase includes an upsurge in inequities and has created a stratified class system between tenure-track faculty (TTF) and contingent faculty (Gonzales, Kanhai, & Hall, 2018; Kezar & Maxey, 2014; Rhoades, 2015; Tirelli, 2014). Adrianna Kezar, a professor of higher education at the University of Southern California and director of its Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success, stated concern that the hiring practices for non-tenure-track faculty often circumvent formal diversity initiatives, which tend to focus on tenure-track jobs and that this topic deserves more attention.

2. According to Waltman *et al.* (2012), lecturers are concerned about a lack of inclusion by tenure-track and tenured faculty members.

3.The growth of the lecturer population calls for respectful adaptation and the inclusion of lecturers by offering opportunities similar to those of tenure-track and tenured faculty (Kezar, 2012; Hahn & Heeren, 2016; Rideau, 2019; Sherick *et al.*, 2020).

4.Conversations with lecturers at the College of Engineering also indicated a need. They call for the understanding of roles, responsibilities, and unique contributions of existing and new faculty members within the higher education community.

Individuals & Teams Supporting Lecturers



5

1. To address this need, we would like to share **one organizational support structure** that is currently being instituted to support lecturers in a **respectful** manner.
2. We will include our personal experiences in sharing this work since we are the individuals, along with a larger support group, who have been navigating the development of this effort.

The origin of the process

- ❖ **We planned strategy together to** request new partial appointment to designate a champion for the effort
- ❖ **Partial appointments** were key
- ❖ **Jointly developed** a proposal to administrators
- ❖ Clarified need for a collaborative **affinity space** and intended goals connected to **equity and inclusion**

1. Let's begin with the origin of the development process in case it might help to understand how we made incremental steps so that we could develop a program.

Our Dean recognized the value of our teaching faculty from an administrative stance, and how lecturers did not have many interactions or support programs for them. A team of administrators discussed the potential unique needs of the lecturers and how they might be supported.

We developed a proposal to pilot a development program for lecturers by suggesting a **20% appointment** for a current lecturer to formalize the program. This was key.

The origin of the process

- ❖ Coordinated to offer programming with the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching in Engineering (CRLT-Engin)
- ❖ Collected information from our lecturers about their experiences

2. We coordinated with our Center for Research on Learning and Teaching in Engineering regularly to establish and coordinate the support for our lecturers so that the programming was intentionally developed, focused, and targeted (so that there was clear messaging and coordination about programming).

3. We turned to our lecturers through focus groups, interviews, and small group conversations to learn about their experiences and their needs. For many, they expressed that their roles were often misunderstood or misinterpreted by colleagues and departments, that they perceived that their teaching contributions were not as valued within the departments that they served since the existing culture valued the contributions made by research, and that they needed a space to connect with other lecturers since they sometimes felt isolated.

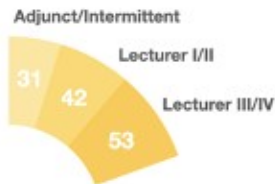
Who are CoE Lecturers?

In Fall 2019 there were:

647 CoE Faculty



19% Lecturers



126 Unique individuals

from
17
Departments,
Programs,
Centers

Responsible for:

Teaching

Individually and team teaching
Undergraduate introductory course
Undergraduate upper level courses
Graduate level courses

Departmental Service

Student advising
Mentoring students
Departmental committees
Writing recommendation letters
Administrative duties
Accreditation

The population that is currently being served may or may not be similar to your organization, but we believe that there may be a benefit to learning about our demographics and organizational structure for lecturers as you may find overlaps between our organizations.

Here is some information about the lecturers in the College of Engineering (CoE)

1. Approximately 20% of our faculty at the CoE (College of Engineering) are lecturers. We have a system that offers 4mo. or 8mo. contracts for Adjunct and Lecturer Level 1s, and 3-5 year contracts for Lecturer 2s, 3s & 4s. The significant contributions to our college by lecturers include teaching a range of courses at both graduate and undergraduate levels as well as providing service in different ways.

2. We placed an effort to educate our departments and colleagues about the role, responsibility, and contribution of our lecturers. Some of the increased awareness came from comments made by members in the departments such as:

"I really wasn't certain about their [the lecturers] roles in our department. I didn't realize that many of our lecturers have been with the university for over 20 years.""

"I didn't know that many lecturers have been teaching senior level design courses or expertise in engineering education."

Outcomes from our efforts

9

We would like to share a few outcomes from our efforts so far.

How are lecturers currently supported?

Teaching

Consultations
Midterm Student
Feedback

CRLT/CRLT-Engin
Seminars

Lecturer Development
Funds

Professional Development

New Faculty Orientation

Career Milestone Support
Mentoring/Advising
Career Coaching

EER Seminars & Research
Groups

Community Building

Small Group Workshops

Director Collaborations

Monthly Lecturer
Gatherings

10

The lecturer-specific programming includes Teaching, Professional Development, and Community building.

Teaching includes Consultations, seminars, grants.

Professional Development and Community building includes orientation, career milestone support, mentoring, career coaching, Engineering Education seminars, small group workshops, Collaborations initiated by the Director, and monthly lecturer gatherings.

You may ask what the differences are between advising, mentoring, and coaching. There are certainly overlaps during these engagements, but in general, an advisor is someone who gives someone a recommendation about what should be done. A mentor is a trusted counselor or guide.

Coaching provides an opportunity for goal setting and reflective discussions about behaviors and approaches that may impact the lecturer's long term practices related to their profession. A coach is a private tutor or one who instructs or trains. We like to focus on the fact that coaches stay in inquiry and help excavate the answers rather than give the answers. Coaching provides a solid sounding board for our faculty.

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Monthly Lecturer
Gatherings

Within two years, we have over **64% of lecturers participating** in one or more of our lecturer-specific programs. We thought that it would be helpful to you to hear some specific experiences and outcomes from some of the programming.

Lecturers expressed challenges and needs during mentoring

- During one-on-one sessions, lecturers revealed their **challenges** and their **needs**
- This information was shared with administrators so that they could increase their understanding and provide solutions
- Some of the solutions that were implemented include the development of a **shared digital space** for documents and resources, **improved understanding of their roles and their needs** (improvements to classrooms, reduced class sizes, more office space, and assistance with remote instruction)

1. Although some mentoring topics, such as best practices in teaching or inclusive teaching, may be provided to both lecturers and tenure-track faculty, we recognize that by working **one-on-one** with lecturers during **mentoring sessions** allowed us to better capture their unique experiences in detail and in confidence. We learned that some lecturers felt supported by their department, were offered extra funds for developing their expertise, but that others were not. Furthermore, we learned that the lines of communication were unclear (especially to report challenges and who they should contact to make requests).

We were able to **serve as a liaison for the lecturers and convey this information to administrators** so that they could **work to improve processes to allow lecturers to better voice needs and concerns** within their departments.

Some of the solutions that were implemented include the development of a **shared digital space** for documents and resources related to lecturer promotion and support and an **improved understanding of their roles and their needs** (improvements to classrooms, reduced class sizes, more office space, and assistance with remote instruction).

Career
milestone
support
conversations
evolved into
discussions
about
transparency in
decision-making

- One-on-one conversations that moved from practical elements of preparing a successful casebook to a **discussion about how the administrators make decisions**
- Many lecturers discussed their **career trajectory** and shared their **aspirations**, as well
- Lecturers felt that **administrators were setting them up for success**

2. Mentoring lecturers to better **prepare for promotion and career milestones**, since the process is different from tenure and tenure-track faculty was very well received.

During these sessions, lecturers had one-on-one conversations to discuss how to most successfully build their promotion casebooks. Initially, they asked questions about the preparation of their casebooks, but then, the questions evolved to how the decisions were made regarding promotions, and then to future career paths and aspirations. Offering insight and being transparent about the process led to an understanding that the administration was trying to set them up for success and to build trust.

In a post session survey, 100% (N=18) of the lecturers reported that this form of support was extremely valuable to them. 100% (N=18) of the lectures reported that this program should continue.

**More lecturers
have
experienced
career growth
in the past
2 years**

- More lecturers at the college have been appointed onto executive committees and in leadership positions in the past 2 years
- The Director of Lecturer Development role has also been expanded from 20% to a 45% appointment

3. Administration is now more ***actively appointing teaching faculty to leadership roles*** so that they can participate in governance and have more agency, more decision-making ability and influence. We have been working with some of these faculty as leadership coaches.

Some of the roles have been:

Director of First Year Programs

Director of the Program in Technical Communication

Director of DEI in Civil and Environmental Engineering

Director of Undergraduate Engineering Curriculum in Climate and Space Sciences

**Collaboration
with Union
representatives
has resulted in
better
prepared
contract
negotiations**

- We have collaborated with Union representatives to try to better understand reasons for requests PRIOR to contract negotiations
- Some recommendations to support lecturers have even been offered by the College administrators to the Union to further lecturer support

4. We have also ***collaborated with union representatives*** PRIOR to union contract negotiations to discuss common overlaps with requests and discuss reasoning, logic, and evidence for requests within smaller units to build consensus. This information was prepared for the Deans to prep for the negotiations. This early conversation made some decision making and compromise easier since the college was already familiar with the reasons for the requests.

Some recommendations to further support lecturers were even presented to the Union by CoE (such as creating processes for Lecturers to reach career milestones rather than simply providing titles).

**Expanding
opportunities
for lecturers
within
existing
new faculty
programming**

- Step-by-step increases in inclusion of lectures in existing faculty orientation program led by teaching center
- **Orientation is now open to lecturers at all levels** (full-time, part-time, and adjunct)
- New track of **new faculty monthly gatherings** created to address topics relevant to lecturers
- During pandemic, new faculty orientation was redesigned as an asynchronous Canvas course featuring pre-recorded faculty panels
- Experienced lecturers were featured in the teaching panel, **centering lecturer voices and expertise**

1. The New Faculty Foundations program is designed to help new faculty succeed in their new roles. The program features an orientation in August and monthly gatherings throughout the academic year to help connect faculty with resources and with each other.
2. The lecturer support team successfully advocated for inclusion of lectures into the existing faculty foundations program led by the teaching center. Now lecturers at all levels (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) are invited to attend orientation and the subsequent monthly gatherings.
3. A new track of monthly gatherings was designed to address topics relevant to lecturers and build community with lecturers across departments. Previously the topics were not tailored and focused more on the needs of tenure-track faculty (e.g. writing granting, recruiting and mentoring graduate students).
4. During the pandemic, the new faculty orientation was redesigned as an asynchronous Canvas course featuring pre-recorded faculty panels. Experienced lecturers were featured in the teaching panel, centering their voices and expertise on teaching. Previously, the orientation panel with experienced lecturers was a concurrent session that only lecturers attended.



Thank you for listening!
Questions?

17

We hope that some of the material provided in the presentation was helpful to you. Thank you for your time and for listening! Are there any questions?