

Project Summary

Data Tools for Institutional Transformation: Collaboration, Synthesis and Dissemination

Funding: National Science Foundation, ADVANCE: Partnerships for Adaptation, Implementation and Dissemination (PAID)

Timeframe: 2008-2011

Co-PIs:

- Lisa Frehill (lfrehill@cpst.org)
- Rachel Ivie (rivie@aip.org)

The Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology (CPST) will partner with the American Institute of Physics (AIP) to enhance the collection, reporting and use of data about women faculty in STEM, with a focus on women of color. We propose to leverage these data not only to document the existing situation for women of color in STEM, but also as a tool to enable transformation. Our four-part effort involves:

- (1) Production of four white papers reporting research findings from existing national data sources about career paths of women, especially women of color with doctoral degrees, to be disseminated widely via conferences, meetings, disciplinary societies, and CPST's website;
- (2) Meetings with various key professional society representatives to inventory existing faculty data collections and then improve the comparability of data collected across societies;
- (3) Convene a national conference revisiting the important report titled "The Double Bind: The Price of Being a Minority Woman in Science" (Malcom, Hall and Brown 1975); and
- (4) Engage the services of a nationally-known program evaluator to ensure that the sponsored work is reaching intended audiences and impacting transformative efforts as intended.

Data Benchmarks

Institutions, such as those in the NSF ADVANCE programs, need data on women of color in STEM in order to assess progress they are making in this area. While any one academic institution may have a small number of women of color on the faculty, national datasets enable us to explore the experiences of women of color in comparison to those of non-minority women and men of color. Such comparisons will be important for developing effective strategies to advance women of color in academia. Our project uses existing datasets: notably the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) and the Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR) to better understand the experiences of women in academia.

Professional societies also collect data on faculty members, and our project will review these data and the methods used to collect them. A meeting with staff members who collect data for professional societies will be convened in late spring 2009 with a follow-up meeting about 6-8 months later. Methods for collecting and reporting data to permit comparability across disciplines will be discussed at the first meeting. Working with the professional societies, we will



make recommendations that will enable the use of the data to achieve gender and ethnic equity goals at individual academic institutions.

Rachel Ivie will be the lead author on a white paper that reports on the workshops' findings. This paper will be peer-reviewed in late 2010 and then disseminated in early 2011.

Revisiting the “Double Bind” Conference

We plan to convene a conference to highlight the persistent issues that women of color face in the academic workplace. There are many conferences that deal with diversity in higher education. There have been some smaller, local conferences that have attempted to bring together researchers with interests in issues for women of color. Our effort differs from these in several important ways. Rather than using the customary approach of issuing a call for papers and hoping to get good papers, we will have completed three of the four proposed white papers prior to the conference, which will provide us with a body of work on women of color in academia. The process of completing these papers will also provide us with an expanding professional network of scholars interested in understanding the experiences of women of color so that we will invite and organize specific panels to address the issues that are emerging in the literature.

Second, we have enlisted the support of one of the original authors of the 1975 “Double Bind” report, Dr. Shirley Malcom. She and other participants in the 1975 conference are interested in reconvening and reconsidering the progress of women of color over the past decades. Dr. Malcom, who is also a member of the CPST Board of Directors, will be instrumental in bringing key actors to the conference.

The conference, then, will be able to provide individuals, professional societies, and academic institutions with reliable information about women of color in academia as well as exemplar programs that support the recruitment, retention and advancement of women of color in the academy. We will model this conference on an extremely successful conference CPST organized in November, 2007 based on another research project, the STEM Workforce Data Project. Our proposed conference will be carefully coordinated with focused panels of nationally-known experts who will be asked to speak on specific issues. Conference materials will be made available on the CPST website for wider dissemination. We plan to hold the conference in early 2011, with a planning committee to be formed in late 2009.

