

Quality Education for Minorities (QEM) Network
Final Report on A Workshop for Women Faculty in STEM at Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs)
Held in Las Vegas, Nevada, on July 30-31, 2010

Topic Summary Tables

Topic 1	Balancing Teaching and Research Demands
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Different institutions have different priorities regarding the balance between teaching and research</i> • <i>Teaching takes the bulk of time and emotional energy</i> • <i>Time-consuming to find students and get research equipment</i> • <i>Research and design are more difficult to insert into the classroom in engineering, because students want to get to the workplace</i> • <i>The research aspect is negative in some circles</i> • <i>Team teaching can cause friction</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pair up new students with upper division and grad students for peer mentoring and teaching</i> • <i>Get Freshman students into the lab to learn the basics so that they are high-functioning researchers when they are Seniors</i> • <i>Structure time, and don't waiver</i> • <i>Faculty should delegate to students to avoid being overwhelmed by tasks that don't require their doing</i> • <i>Be very picky about taking on new tasks and responsibilities</i> • <i>Correlate aspects of research with the curriculum; have students solve problems in labs as a supplement to textbook work</i> • <i>Use online tools and websites when helpful</i> • <i>Incorporate lab techniques into the course to give the students experience, and to find possible researchers</i> • <i>Problem Based Learning – give students problems to solve</i> • <i>Divide the work in a STEM proposal by involving other departments</i> • <i>Make the curriculum more uniform and integrate topics throughout</i>

Topic 2	Obstacles to/Opportunities for Quality Education in STEM for Students from Diverse Backgrounds
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cultural perceptions of gender roles among Hispanic (macho males; domestic females)</i> • <i>Students do not want to leave home to attend school</i> • <i>Family expectation that children will earn a living the way they did gives a negative perception of higher education</i> • <i>Lack of respect for jobs in academia due to lack of exposure</i> • <i>View of education as preparation for a trade or skilled job</i> • <i>Federal funding at institutions is not directed to Hispanic students but to all students; Hispanic students' unique needs are not considered</i> • <i>Evaluation criteria of grants to HSIs do not specify that funds be directed towards Hispanic students</i>

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Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Since there is no requirement that the funds be specifically directed to Hispanic students, it may rely on administrative will to follow the “spirit” or intentions of a grant’s RFP</i> • <i>Focus on Hispanic students, and the efforts will spill over and help all students at an institution</i> • <i>Future grant RFPs should have language within them that allows using funds to “consider the needs of” the specific set of students the grant is intended to benefit</i> • <i>Put language into specific grant proposals that directs specific activities to benefit Hispanic students</i>
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Topic 3	Obtaining Institutional and External Support
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Faculty from teaching-focused institutions have difficulty convincing administrators of the benefits of in-house equipment, instrumentation and facilities</i> • <i>More isolated institutions have less opportunity for collaborative research and have an even greater need to secure funding for on-campus provisions for research</i> • <i>Securing release time to do research is difficult</i> • <i>Because administration is not involved in faculty development and research activities, they don’t value other forms of scholarship, such as education and outreach research</i> • <i>Faculty need help from the administration to encourage students to participate in STEM events, workshops, and hands-on research</i> • <i>Faculty need guidance on effective implementation of funded research projects</i> • <i>Faculty need support to write proposals, create “in-house” journals, develop new courses, and establish collaborations with other institutions</i> • <i>Despite doing research, faculty at teaching-focused institutions get less agency support due to lack of published work</i> • <i>Faculty sometimes have difficulties getting administrative support if their research interests don’t align with that of chief academic officers</i> • <i>Lack of proportion in salary and working hours between faculty who produce research and those who do not</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Find somebody in your institution with some connection to the administration who can help you to get things done</i> • <i>Show administrators the financial benefits of what is being proposed</i> • <i>Find ways to identify better vendors and suppliers</i> • <i>Program officers should be more proactive in supporting principal investigators in getting things done</i> • <i>Funding agencies must evolve to meet the changing needs of researchers</i> • <i>Form partnerships among four-year and two-year institutions</i>

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Topic 4	Promotion, Salary, and Tenure
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Negotiation is not a public discussion, so unwritten policies and the perceptions of peers are unknown factors</i> • <i>Disunity among department chairs, chief academic officers and tenure committees</i> • <i>No infrastructure to handle transitions (hiring freezes; mentors overwhelmed during hiring periods)</i> • <i>Administrators focus on pre-medical and engineering fields at the expense of other science disciplines (even cutting some programs, e.g., environmental science)</i> • <i>Younger faculty are evaluated by older faculty who may not fully understand current research trends, and sometimes face professional jealousy and have to navigate carefully within the social climate</i> • <i>Difficult to understand the difference between explicit expectations for the tenure and promotion process and implicit goals of the department</i> • <i>How to manage student evaluation, especially when teaching typically unpopular courses</i> • <i>Salary differences by gender</i> • <i>Understanding how to procure purely negotiated items (travel support, moving costs, support for student researchers, release time for proposal writing)</i> • <i>Managing undocumented discussions</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify social dynamics of the department, which are unwritten and not reflected in reports</i> • <i>Find a mentor in the senior faculty who can advocate on a faculty member's behalf</i> • <i>Be aware of generational changes, and changes in research priorities</i> • <i>Be clear about expectations—student evaluations, peer-reviewed publications, etc.</i> • <i>Read policies and be able to present a solid case for promotion and tenure</i> • <i>Have well-documented, open discussions on policies</i> • <i>Identify structural problems in the process and figure out a way to discuss them in a constructive way</i> • <i>Learn effective negotiation</i>

Topic 5	Balancing Work and Family
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fear of postponement of family</i> • <i>No perfect time to start a family</i> • <i>Guilt factor; lack of personal time</i> • <i>Values of understanding partner</i> • <i>Flexibility of workplace (research institutions not as flexible)</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Incorporate family with work</i> • <i>Realize that the female is not required to take charge of all family matters</i> • <i>Understand that stress on the relationship is not unique</i> • <i>Co-parenting with an understanding partner</i> • <i>Online courses makes family life easier to manage</i> • <i>Take time to appreciate accomplishments</i>

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Topic 6	Scholarly Productivity
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scholarly productivity is a high priority with respect to promotion and tenure and the requirements may be steep (e.g., four or more journal publications during tenure-track period)</i> • <i>Improvement of writing skills for publications</i> • <i>Managing expectations about authorship (Who is first author, especially when student researchers are involved?)</i> • <i>Research-focused institutions, teaching-focused institutions, and community colleges now have a common mandate for scholarly productivity and research</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To improve writing, read journal articles, including those outside field of interest</i> • <i>Carve out time for creative thinking and writing, and make writing a disciplined, consistent activity</i> • <i>Work with editors to proofread planned submissions</i> • <i>Organize a conference or symposium to be exposed to different writing styles in submitted abstracts</i> • <i>Hispanic-serving organizations like CAHSI (Computing Alliance of Hispanic-serving Institutions) provide support materials on scholarly writing</i> • <i>Assign real ownership of research projects to students so that they are motivated and accountable for the completion of the research</i> • <i>Set achievable goals and deadlines</i>

Topic 7	Service Requirements
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New minority hires are expected to outreach to their cultural groups (women often selected for service of the “nurturing” type)</i> • <i>Often faculty are required to take over the service responsibilities of older faculty so that they can do research or just teach</i> • <i>In 2-year schools the physical sciences are overloaded with service and research and faculty are often discouraged from teaching overload</i> • <i>Other schools require the full-time faculty to teach overload classes and often these classes are at odd hours because adjunct faculty are not permitted to teach more than one or two classes</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Young faculty must assume personal responsibility for time commitments and must be willing to say “no” to overload service requirements (even at risk of public humiliation)</i> • <i>Since outreach is expected, it should be part of the service requirements, rather than an addition to overload teaching assignments</i> • <i>If part of service requirement is to advise students during registration and/or at the end of the semester then faculty should be trained to advise effectively</i> • <i>When tenure is not possible, there needs to be some way to prevent abuse of faculty through overloaded service requirements</i>

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Topic 8	Mentoring of STEM Junior Faculty
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guidance for tenure and promotion from chair and senior faculty may be different</i> • <i>Due to hiring freezes, the last hired faculty may be considered as junior faculty even though they are not recent hires</i> • <i>There are discrepancies between department and university tenure and promotion committees</i> • <i>Availability of funds for faculty development</i> • <i>Unclear rules and processes for tenure and promotion</i> • <i>Administrators sometimes use power unfairly</i> • <i>Changes in administration bring changes in expectations</i> • <i>Chair may not be equitable in publicizing accomplishments of faculty, unfairly making some faculty appear more productive than others</i> • <i>Women are not staying in administration, and producing minority faculty is a revolving door</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evaluation or self-evaluation every semester helps to gauge progress</i> • <i>Mentoring should include a support system for new faculty to build up some immunity to the system</i> • <i>New faculty need to take initiative in publicizing their accomplishments and work to gain recognition within the university</i> • <i>Need to implement a system to provide a large-scale awareness of the issues so that favoritism is not used to weed out faculty</i> • <i>Mentoring should be from a variety of sources, and having mentors from another department may be refreshing</i> • <i>Have a consistent, designated meeting time with mentors, but also have occasional informal meetings</i> • <i>Senior faculty should take interest and initiative with mentoring new faculty</i>

Topic 9	Campus Climate
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Administrators sometimes forget that the first priority is to serve the students</i> • <i>Administrators blame faculty for all student problems, including lack of performance; difficult to attract people into academia when faculty feel they are under attack</i> • <i>Educators and education are becoming a commodity (faculty feel devalued when poorly qualified teachers are hired through processes that are not very thorough)</i> • <i>Maintaining standards in online education when a corporate (profit-generating) business model is applied to education</i> • <i>Increasing pressure for grade inflation, for course redesign to improve passing rates, and on faculty who give failing grades (requirements for extensive written justification, meetings with administrators)</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tenure and promotion process stifles faculty feedback, causing increased tension and job stress</i> • <i>Administrators are mostly males who often do not respect the efforts put forth by female faculty to become effective teachers</i> • <i>The model of a successful faculty member is still defined by the lifestyle of married White men</i> • <i>Female junior faculty are often at security risk because junior faculty are often given the least desirable class schedules</i> • <i>The practice of having one common office key for all faculty offices in a department can leave a woman with no safe place to go to leave a confrontation with a fellow faculty member</i> • <i>Discrimination, including inappropriate speech toward women, is still a problem in nearly-all-male departments</i>
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Make campuses inviting for both students and faculty by understanding the actual student population served</i> • <i>Administration should support new ideas and programs, and new administrators should support the continuity of programs and projects</i> • <i>Educators must change the perception of the importance of education, the expertise and time required to be a good teacher</i> • <i>Online courses need resources (e.g., proctors for exams), and the cost of these resources needs to be included in the business model</i> • <i>Learn to do proper assessment before using the results to reward or penalize teacher performance</i> • <i>More responsive campus security, a broader understanding of the risks of giving women faculty night classes, and a serious approach to the physical safety of women faculty</i>

Topic 10	Interactions with Male Faculty and Administration
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inappropriate nicknames (“honey,” “sweetheart,” etc.) and flirtatious comments</i> • <i>Different standards of dress for women and men in the same department</i> • <i>Disregard for female contributions when collaborating (e.g., grant writing)</i> • <i>Getting proper consideration for requests and complaints</i> • <i>Supervisors may renege on a verbal deal more often with women faculty since they perceive that women are less likely to be aggressive in maintaining the components of the verbal agreement</i> • <i>Conflict between being as aggressive as necessary to get results and being true to oneself</i> • <i>Possibility of ascribing more meaning to comments and situations than was intended by the other party</i> • <i>Sometimes the barriers in communication are female-to-female</i> • <i>Men possibly feel just as stymied by the difficulties engendered by differences in communication between males and females</i>

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Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider whether you may be reading more into the comment/situation than was intended</i> • <i>Pick your battles: Choose when to declare offense, and when problems are not worth the energy needed for resolution</i> • <i>Pay close attention to the tone of your voice and the words you choose.</i> • <i>Get agreements in writing—either when the deal is made, or by a confirmation email immediately after the meeting—to be sure that both parties understand the terms of agreement</i> • <i>In communication of requests or complaints:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Come with data (objective statements or facts)</i> ▪ <i>Answer the questions “Why do you need it?” and “Why should they give it to you?”</i> ▪ <i>Toot your own horn – don’t be afraid to promote your accomplishments that are relevant to your request</i> ▪ <i>Talk about why it’s in their best interests, or the students’ best interests, to grant your request</i> • <i>Don’t be adversarial</i> • <i>Know your limits: Address a situation BEFORE it makes you react in an emotional way</i> • <i>Encourage male groups to consider whether they have problems with the dynamics of communication between male and female faculty, and then bring both groups together to discuss the obstacles identified to try to bring about a solution</i>
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