

Fostering Supportive Academic Workplaces for Diverse Faculty

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Questions This Session Will Address

- What are the essential elements of academic workplaces for diverse faculty in diverse appointments?
- How can we ensure these elements are present in academic workplaces of all faculty?

The Changing Context for Academic Workplaces

- Diverse faculty members
- Changes in patterns of faculty appointments
- Expanded role of technology; more diverse students
- Changing societal expectations about work/life roles

Concerns of NTT Faculty

- Few employment policies and procedures in place
- Salary and benefits differentials
- Limited participation in governance
- Limited support for professional development
- Lack of a collegial environment

Faculty Priorities Regarding Their Work and Workplace

- Respect
- Equity
- Flexibility
- Professional Development
- Collegiality
- Autonomy

The Essential Elements of Faculty Work



Respect

The basic human valuing of people for who they are and what they uniquely contribute to their organization.

Addressing the Changes: Respect

- Include all new faculty in orientation programs
- Include all faculty members in positive publicity about the institution; in awards ceremonies
- Welcome the participation of all faculty members in governance

Equity

- *The right of every faculty member to be treated fairly, to have access to the tools necessary to do his or her job, and to have status as a fully-fledged, albeit necessarily different member of the faculty.*

Addressing the Changes: Equity

- Salary equity
 - within appointment types
 - within ranks
- Contract-renewable appointments with defined probationary periods, multiyear contracts, etc.

Academic Freedom and Autonomy

- *The right of every faculty member to freedom of intellectual expression and inquiry.*
- *Protected by First Amendment to Constitution, contractual rights such as appointment letters and faculty manuals, and academic custom or common law.*

Addressing the Changes: Academic Freedom

- Include all faculty members in policy statements
- Develop grievance procedures for alleged violations of academic freedom rights for various types of appointments.
- Educate the campus community about academic freedom.

Flexibility

- *The ability of faculty members to construct work arrangements to maximize their contributions to their institution and the meaningfulness of their work and personal lives.*

Addressing the Changes: Flexibility

- **Leaves on the tenure-track**
- **Career breaks**
- **Flexible time bases**
- **Time banking program**
- **Department-wide course planning**
- **Support for handling personal responsibilities (e.g., child care, dual career arrangements)**
- **Clear, widely known, and consistently applied policies**

Professional Development

- *Opportunities for faculty to...*
 - *broaden their knowledge, abilities, and skills;*
 - *experience interesting challenges and opportunities for creativity;*
 - *and find greater satisfaction and accomplishment in their work.*

Addressing the Changes: Professional Development

- Widely advertised and easily accessible professional growth resources (web-based, in-person)
- Individualized Growth Plans related to career stage
- Mentoring relationships
- Departmental leaders prepared to be proactive about faculty professional development

Collegiality

- *Opportunity to be part of a mutually respectful community of colleagues who value each others' contributions to the institution and feel concern for their well-being*
- *Tension between the idealism of what the academy could be like vs. experiences of isolation, competition, and lack of community*

Addressing the Changes: Collegiality

- Regular communication about valuing faculty contributions
- Intentional attention to creating occasions and spaces for faculty interactions— formal and informal
- Opportunities for faculty to learn together

Supporting Faculty as a Strategic Institutional Decision

- Significant changes are occurring within higher education and the environments within which colleges and universities operate...And these changes have important implications for the faculty.
- We must rethink academic work and workplaces
 - Invest in all faculty members as a strategic decision
 - Ensure a culture of respect for all faculty
 - Create institutional policies that reflect the characteristics of today's workplace

The Challenge

- "Problems cannot be solved by thinking within the framework in which the problems were created."
-- Albert Einstein
- The opposite of creativity is cynicism.
-- Esa Saarinen

Discussion Groups

- Discuss:
 - How relevant are the “essential elements” to the faculty at your institution?
 - Are there additional “essential elements” to address in the academic workplace?
 - Which strategies discussed are most important?
 - What additional ideas do you have for practical policies and practices that foster supportive academic workplaces for diverse faculty?

The Challenge

- We must think strategically about ways to create environments that attract, support, and retain a diverse and creative faculty, committed to institutional missions.
- “If institutions are to continue attracting and retaining excellent faculty from diverse backgrounds, and if they are to more strategically utilize the intellectual capital that all faculty members represent, they must squarely and creatively address the challenges of today’s higher education environment.”
- (Gappa, J.M., Austin, A. E., & Trice, A. G. 2007. *Rethinking Faculty Work: Higher Education’s Strategic Imperative*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.)