

# **Fostering an Inclusive, Collaborative, and Learning-Centered Approach to Faculty Development: Michigan State University's Academic Advancement Network**

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January 26, 2018  
AAC&U Conference



# Overview of the Session

## Faculty Development as a Strategic Institutional Commitment

The success of higher education institutions in meeting their missions to prepare students from diverse backgrounds for meaningful and productive lives, and to contribute to the creation and advancement of knowledge that transforms lives and benefits society, depends on the capability, quality, and commitment of the faculty.



# Faculty Development for a New Era

## The Changing Context:

- A diverse faculty from an array of backgrounds and serving in various appointment types
- Diversity of students with an array of interests, backgrounds, and needs
- New opportunities afforded by technology
- Societal expectations, needs, and concerns requiring colleges and universities to engage in innovative, integrated, and responsive work in teaching, research, and outreach



# Faculty Development for a New Era

## The Changing Context:

With a plethora of demands on higher education, effective and strategic faculty development is needed to optimize institutional talent:

- Higher education institutions are striving to create or re-envision approaches that use faculty development as a strategic lever for advancing key institutional missions



# Questions Guiding this Session

- How can faculty development organized around commitment to faculty growth and learning meet both individual and organizational needs?
- In what ways can a university take a highly collaborative and inclusive approach to faculty development?
- In what ways can faculty development be organized to address the learning needs of all faculty and academic staff (across ranks, appointment types, and career stages?)



# Organization of the Session

- Case Description:
  - Michigan State University's Academic Advancement Network (AAN)
- Discussion:
  - Other faculty development innovations that encourage faculty learning and address faculty diversity



# Formation of the Academic Advancement Network

- Housed within the Office of the Provost
- Evolved from the Office of Faculty & Organizational Development, August 2016
- Mission: to provide inclusive professional development across the full range of responsibilities and arcs of diverse academic career paths
  - Tenure system and fixed-term faculty
  - Academic staff



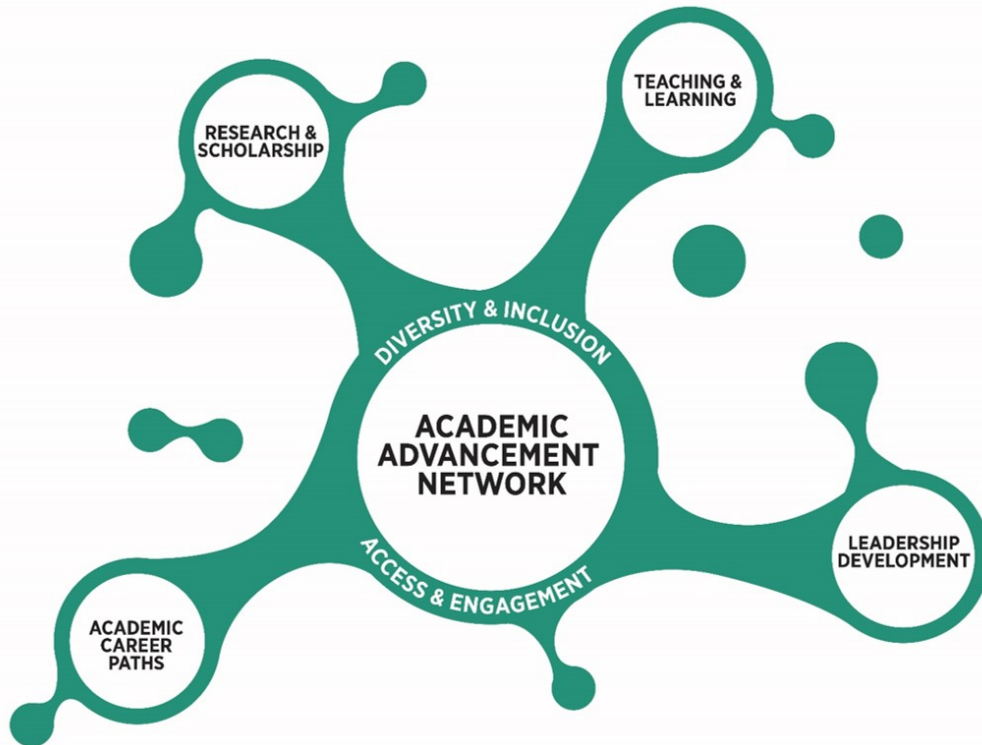
# Guiding Values and Assumptions

- Guided by a commitment to inclusive and diverse working environments
- Privilege innovation and learning as a way to promote growth and development
- Listen to and learn from the lived experiences of academics at Michigan State University
- Offer tailored and adaptive approaches to meet the needs of academic cohorts from varied disciplines, backgrounds, and career stages
- Utilize campus-based expertise when possible as a way to value colleagues' knowledge and experience and to recognize local cultural nuances





# Node Structure of the AAN



- Organized around four nodes to foster development of individual careers in the context of institutional responsibilities
- Work is integrated across the nodes and involves wide-ranging collaborations with partners throughout campus



# Teaching and Learning

## *Educator Professional Development*



Goal: To provide dynamic and responsive educator development, aligned with shared teaching competency areas, that improves the quality of teaching and the campus culture with regard to teaching and learning.

- Learning experiences tied to competency areas
- Open to all educators (faculty, teaching assistants, undergraduate learning assistants)
- Cohort-based



# Teaching and Learning

## *Educator Professional Development*



- Central offerings focused on key evidence-based practices (e.g., designing feedback rich learning environments)
- Central support for our distributed educator professional development network in colleges and departments
- Long-term emphasis on changing the culture and values around teaching and learning
  - Social and sharing community (#ITeachMSU)
  - Support for chairs and departments to understand and value the intellectual work of teaching



# Research and Scholarship

Addresses an array of issues related to building and sustaining impactful research and scholarship programs



- Research Development
- Research Cultivation
- Integrating Research with other Career Domains



# Research Development



- Establishing a research agenda
  - Consultations with junior faculty, with leaders and newly funded individual faculty
- Establishing a team/group
  - Contributions to efforts by Graduate School et al.
- Nuts & bolts of funding acquisition
  - Collaborative with the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies
- Establishing interdisciplinary collaborations



# Research Cultivation



- Mentoring a team/group
- Mentoring for faculty/academic staff researchers
- Funding needs, strategy, and management
- Research implementation/accountability framework
- Research/scholarship communication or dissemination strategies



# Integrating Research with other Career Domains



- Mentoring a team/group
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# Leadership Development

Enhancing the success of current administrators and cultivating future leaders



## Current Leaders

- New Administrator Orientation
- Leadership Institute
- Women Chair Lunches

## Emerging Leaders

- Leadership Blog
- Exploring Academic Leadership Lunches
- Leadership Fellows Program





# Leadership Institute



- Budget Basics
- Retention, Hiring & Spousal Hires
- Transitioning into Academic Leadership: From Putting out Fires to Effecting Change
- Faculty Performance Reviews; Reappointment, Promotion & Tenure
- Discipline, Sexual Harassment & Misconduct
- Difficult Conversations
- Prioritizing & Time/Email Management
- Working with Support Staff
- Effective Decision Making; Running Productive Meetings



# Leadership Fellows

2 semester experience – shadowing and a project, with the goals of:



## *For the fellow*

- exploring an administrative role to learn about its operations, expectations, opportunities, and challenges; general aspects of leadership
- personal reflection on characteristics and career aspirations

## *For the mentor*

- identifying future leaders and helping to hone their skills

## *For the institution*

- effecting change/innovation in an area of institutional priority; developing a leadership talent pool and pipeline



# Academic Career Paths



- Recognizes the diversity in the experiences, interests, expectations, needs, and career stages of academics
- Provides support for academic colleagues striving to create meaningful and productive professional and personal lives in alignment with and contributing to the institution's missions



# Academic Career Paths

## For Early Career Academics

- Orientations
- Thriving Workshops
- International Faculty Networking
- Postdoctoral Resource Session



# Academic Career Paths



- Mid-Career Academics
  - Thriving sessions
  - Institution-wide symposium on mid-career issues
- Late Career Academics and Retirees
  - Institution-wide symposium on late career and retirement
  - Follow-up sessions for academics regarding the late career, and sessions for unit leaders to address issues of relevance
  - Resources and links to other units



## Transferable and Adaptable Lessons



UC San Diego

- MSU began AAN via existing office for faculty development
- UC San Diego does not have such an office. Rather, content experts in various units around campus offer aspects of faculty development

## Applying Lessons from AAN to UC San Diego

- Serve faculty in all “appointment series” and across the career pathway
- Ensure that resources connect faculty to content/method experts
- Foster peer cohorts across divisions and disciplines
- Build network to avoid duplication & gaps, help faculty find resources easily
- Network will be highly decentralized. Likely initial nodes: teaching & learning, research, leadership, international, career progression, outreach.

# Small Group Discussion

- What innovations can you share that:
  - address faculty and academic staff diversity (in career stage, appointment type, discipline, etc.)
  - encourage faculty and academic staff learning from a growth perspective
  - encourage collaboration
- Brief discussions with nearby colleagues
- Group discussion to highlight good ideas





# Thinking to the Future

Our faculty and academic staff are essential to the fulfillment of our institutional missions. Support for professional learning and growth should be central to our strategic efforts to keep our institutions looking forward, innovating, and serving society's needs.



# Thinking to the Future

In supporting our faculty and academic staff, let's...

- encourage learning, collaboration, and inclusivity
- recognize the diversity of academics' experiences and interests
- address the arc of the career



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