

BEST PRACTICES FOR FACULTY RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT^{† 1,2}

1. Introduction

This manual is a companion guide to the UD ADVANCE Recruitment Manual – *Faculty Hiring: Best Practices for Search Committees* and is intended to assist deans and department chairs in retention efforts by fostering an inclusive environment for all faculty. Recruiting an excellent and diverse faculty is important for the institution. Retaining an excellent and diverse faculty is an imperative not only for maintaining a level of stability and structure within a department, college and the university, but also for economic reasons. Recruitment of new faculty takes faculty and administrative time and money – loss of faculty means a major hiccup in faculty productivity overall. Retention is closely tied to a supportive environment for professional development.

Research shows that faculty who have developed a positive sense of community at their institution through meaningful ties with individuals and positive research interactions and teaching/service experiences are less likely to seek out, and to accept, outside offers.^{3,4} An inclusive environment for all faculty will enhance productivity, climate and collegiality as well as increase faculty retention at our institution.

Below are some successful retention and development strategies which have been adopted by various research institutions. UD colleges/departments are already practicing some of these and all are worth consideration. Please note that faculty retention can pose particular challenges for various groups under-represented in their discipline, in which case these recommendations are particularly germane.

NOTE: *At time of preparing this manual COVID-19 raged, resulting in drastic changes in the way faculty work, and causing many concerns. The impacts of this pandemic will have repercussions on the careers of faculty for many years. See Section 3, page 6, for **Faculty Support as a Result of COVID-19.***

2. Best Practices for Faculty Retention

- A. Monitor the Health and Welfare of your College/Department
- B. Establish a Supportive and Welcoming Environment
- C. Support Professional Development at all Levels
- D. Support Leadership Development at all Levels

[†] Adapted from: *A Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Retention, Columbia University*¹ and *Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches, Part 6 – Retention, University of Washington, Seattle.*²

A. Monitor the Health and Welfare of School/Department

Chairs should monitor the health and welfare of their departments regularly to check for faculty satisfaction and for systemic biases and inequities. Chairs need to work to correct disparities promptly so as to ensure that all faculty are afforded the same benefits and resources.

Various areas need to be assessed and addressed:

- Salary levels. Don't wait for faculty to take outside offers. Be proactive. This includes clear and transparent merit raises and, if indicated, proactive salary adjustments.
- Re-visit start-up packages and recruitment offers. Assure equitable base packages. Any additions to those should be clearly justified (large equipment needs. . .). Ensure that promises made at recruitment regarding lab space and other such resources are honored.
- Be vigilant regarding allocation and reallocation of lab and office space.
- Be aware of personality differences among your faculty. A quiet, humble employee may be doing as well, or better than a more aggressive colleague who is able to quickly convince you of his/her worth. Verify claims even when presented as facts.
- Monitor Faculty Workload. Keep a spreadsheet/database with teaching and service loads and research contributions etc., which will provide you with ready and relevant information in this area. *See suggested example in Appendix 1.*

Faculty members who feel supported in this way, who understand the department goals, and who believe that decision making is clear and transparent, are more highly engaged as members of your department and of the institution.

The annual faculty appraisal meetings provide an opportunity for assessment of many of the above areas. Regular focus groups, and/or short (anonymous) surveys administered by the department will provide data for some of the areas mentioned above. To ensure anonymity, these short surveys could be administered by an entity external to your department (e.g. ADVANCE), who will collate/refine responses and communicate them to the chair. The COACHE Faculty Climate Survey may prove useful here, but this is expected to be done only every three years and may not have department level granularity.

Chairs should also: a) practice self-reflection to ensure that they are aware of their own preferences and biases, b) check for behaviors and norms which may create an unwelcoming environment for faculty and c) recognize their role as administrative allies to all, but especially to underrepresented faculty. Female and URM faculty often carry the burden of being the token member of an underrepresented group. Watch for this.

Self-reflection accompanied by an action plan to address issues will help to ensure that your department works in an inclusive and welcoming way. The following are some suggested areas for your self-reflection⁵:

- *Have I asked faculty members if they have what they need to succeed?*
- *Is a structure in place to support newly recruited faculty members?*
- *Am I actually being proactive as an administrative ally in my department?*

B. Establish a Supportive and Welcoming Environment/Culture & Climate

Chairs (and senior leaders) bear most of the responsibility for creating a good sense of community within a department. A unit with good climate is more likely to have faculty members who feel less isolated, are more involved in productive research collaboration and who are more willing to support the departmental decision-making process. Areas to consider are:

- Transparency in Decision-Making:
 - Ensure that P&T guidelines, HR policies, work-life policies, and administrative procedures are readily available and accessible to everyone and, to the extent possible, ensure that decisions in these areas are transparent.
 - Make yourself knowledgeable about policies concerning leave and other accommodations and connect faculty with the offices which handle these matters.⁶
- Accountability – follow through on faculty concerns. This supports the building of a trusting environment within your department/school/college.
- Creation of Informal Social Networks among Faculty. Good informal relationships lead to better understanding when it comes to formal decision-making interactions.
 - Take groups of faculty to lunch, and vary the groups you take to allow for more interactions.
 - Provide opportunities and a focus for regular (bimonthly, monthly) informal department social events hosted by the chair or a senior faculty member, designed to foster interaction among groups of colleagues.
- Active Appreciation of faculty – including but not limited to research accomplishments or funding successes.
 - Recognize departmental and institutional contributions of faculty not only in annual reviews, but also in public forums, one-on-one conversations and/or a personal note.
 - Practice Management by Walking About (MBWA):⁷ Check in with faculty in their workspace on occasion. As you share with them there, ask for ideas on how things could be improved. Be prepared to act on these suggestions.
- Mentoring for all levels – Assign and monitor the effectiveness of formal mentor/s.
 - Mentors can be very useful in helping mentees navigate department and university culture, providing advice regarding professional development, and in guiding with time management and work-life balance as needed.
 - Faculty benefit from having different types of mentors at different stages of their careers. The UD ADVANCE site on Faculty Mentoring⁸ is a rich source of information on this area and includes suggested STEM- and Humanities-focused mentoring topics.
 - Check and recheck the efficacy of your department formal mentoring policy.
- Value the diverse backgrounds, values and ideas of your faculty members. Faculty members have different strengths and contribute in different ways. Some choose non-traditional paths toward excellence and are hired with full awareness of that. These non-traditional paths should be appreciated and valued. Lead open discussions in your department on how alternative models will be evaluated consistent with the P&T criteria for the unit.

C. Support Professional Development at All Levels

Department meetings can be useful for bringing out/highlighting skills and strengths of faculty members. Ensure that you have a good and dynamic agenda providing structure, interest, and focus for every department meeting. Once again, leaders have to be prepared to listen and act, as appropriate, on employees' suggestions.

Provide faculty with opportunities for career development early, often, and at every stage.

For Junior faculty – be careful not to overwhelm new/junior faculty with too much information given all at once. Perhaps information can be prioritized and given over a few months.

- Orientation to UD - done by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, usually mid-August.
- Orientation to department – Junior/New faculty may need guidance in various areas – establishing research, identifying resources, mentoring students, navigating UD. They may also need help with situating family – dual career matters and other family life policies. Ensure that this information is known to the formal mentors and is being shared with the faculty member. Ensure that they know how to access information on relevant resources and University policies.⁶
- Mentorship – see section above (page 3).
- Workload balance is critical to the success of junior faculty – see above section - Monitor Faculty Workload (page 2).
- Help promote faculty (and hence department) external visibility. Some suggestions:
 - As you are able, connect new/junior faculty with PIs in cases where there may be mutual benefit from linkages.
 - As much as possible seek or save some department support for faculty travel to professional meetings. This enhances the work of and visibility of your faculty and promotes your department.
 - Nominate junior faculty for university and national awards as may be appropriate. *See Appendices 2a and 2b.*
[To help in preparing the nomination, you will no doubt need to request from the nominee, information about their work which is relevant to the award. This can sometimes be difficult/uncomfortable for junior faculty. Help them to see the usefulness of the request.]
 - Help junior faculty to establish research relationships external to UD.

For Midcareer Faculty – Studies show that disillusionment with the job usually sets in after promotion to associate professor.¹⁰ The situation is no different at UD, where the 2018 ADVANCE Faculty Climate Survey showed that associate professors are significantly less satisfied than assistant or full professors, with their professional life.¹¹ Midcareer faculty need support through the transition. Some suggestions:

- Address the faculty member's particular area of growth and provide tools for success
- Recognize achievements - nominate for awards and recognition as appropriate
- Encourage creativity
- Mentorship - see section above (page 3).
- Monitor teaching, research and service commitments. *See Appendix 1.*

For Senior Faculty – Like colleagues at other stages of their career, senior faculty can benefit from continued professional development, leadership opportunities, nominations for awards, and opportunities to voice concerns and receive feedback.

Strive to ensure that professors feel valued. Provide appropriate support for, and recognition of these members of your department.

D. Support Leadership Development at all Levels

- Provide faculty with opportunities to participate in department/campus governance, national conferences, and leadership programs. There are various workshops and programs in these areas offered by universities and national professional groups. With some exploration of this, and with input from the faculty member, find a development program that is best for the faculty member and the department. *See Appendices 3 and 4.*
- Provide information about training opportunities on cultural sensitivity, diversity, being an ally, creating and sustaining an inclusive environment. All faculty members have a responsibility for a positive climate therefore it is especially important to help them develop in this way.

Note: The Table in Appendix 5 provides a summary of the strategies discussed above. You may consider printing this table and having it as a quick reference.

3. Faculty Support as a Result of COVID-19

It is important to recognize that support for faculty will be even more critical as a result of COVID-19, and that the impacts of this pandemic will have repercussions on the careers of faculty for many years. (In the case of new assistant professors, the probationary period may extend as long as 9 years[†]). The pandemic presents significant concerns for everyone, but different faculty members will experience unique challenges depending on their personal situation, their discipline, etc. The articles referenced below^{13, 14} provide a guide as to some concerns and useful responses.

The challenges of being engaged with teaching and research while caring for and home-schooling children or caring for elderly family members – perhaps with a disability – are obvious. Traditionally, women bear the brunt of this responsibility. There are other areas which impact research productivity that must also be kept in sharp focus. Faculty members have lost access to research labs, to studios or other places of creative work, to human subjects for their research, and to their research samples and students. This interruption, harmful in itself, will also impact the ability to write grant proposals, and reporting to granting agencies. While all faculty are likely to be impacted by COVID-19, junior /probationary faculty may be particularly vulnerable, isolated and anxious. For some faculty members, their plans and expectations for fulfilling tenure requirements will have been seriously affected.

Structures to support faculty are now more important than ever. Mentorship for all, and especially for junior/probationary faculty is critical and should be strongly supported. Since UD has allowed an extra probationary year for all faculty due to COVID, chairs should ensure that all faculty (probationary and P&T reviewers) are aware of the changes, and that external reviewers are advised of UD's policy as related to COVID when faculty are being considered for promotion.

[†] *The usual 6 years + COVID extra year + potentially 2 family leave years.*

REFERENCES

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6. a) Faculty Handbook, Office of the Provost, University of Delaware. <https://facultyhandbook.udel.edu> (accessed May 19, 2020).
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b) https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_72.htm (accessed May 19, 2020.)
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11. 2018 ADVANCE Faculty Climate Survey Report <https://sites.udel.edu/advance/faculty-climate-survey/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
12. University of Delaware Diversity Statement <https://sites.udel.edu/diversity/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
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APPENDIX 2A.

Some Possibilities for Awards External to UD.

Several of the awards/honors in these appendices are discipline focused. This does not represent a comprehensive list of all awards/honors for all disciplines. These lists are intended to give some ideas. We anticipate that you will look further within your own discipline for relevant workshops.

- Young Investigator and Established Investigator Awards of the faculty member's professional organizations.
- Cottrell Scholar Award – honors and *helps to develop outstanding teacher-scholars who are recognized by their scientific communities for the quality and innovation of their research programs and their academic leadership skills.* <https://rescorp.org/cottrell-scholars/cottrell-scholar-award> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Sloan Research Fellowships. <https://sloan.org/fellowships> (accessed May 19, 2020). *TT but untenured members of faculty in chemistry, computer science, economics, mathematics, molecular biology, neuroscience, ocean sciences, physics or a related field.*
- Fulbright Fellowships/Awards: <https://eca.state.gov/fulbright> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Faculty should be encouraged to join and be proactive in their national professional association. Nominations can be made for:
 - Committee of their professional society
 - Speaker at an annual meeting of their professional society
 - Speaker at a sectional meeting of their professional society
 - Fellow of their professional society
 - Editorial board of a journal
 - Panelist at a national meeting

APPENDIX 2B

University of Delaware Awards

Nominations internally might be, for example:

- University Excellence in Teaching Award
http://www1.udel.edu/teachingawards/awards/exc_teach/index.html (accessed May 19, 2020).
- University Excellence in Advising and Mentoring Award
http://www1.udel.edu/teachingawards/awards/exc_advise/index.html (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Mangone Young Scholars Award
<http://www1.udel.edu/teachingawards/awards/alison/youngscholarsaward.html> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Mid-Career Faculty Excellence in Scholarship Award
http://facsen.udel.edu/Sites/StudentFacultyHonors/UDMid_CareerFacultyExcellenceinScholarshipAward.pdf (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Faculty Excellence in Scholarly Community Engagement Award
<https://cdn.canr.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/06171847/2019-Excellence-in-Scholarly-Community-Engagement-Award.pdf> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Your college Excellence Awards – in teaching, scholarship, service, advocacy, mentoring, as applicable.
- Women’s Studies Faculty Research Award – to support research on women.
- Louis L. Redding Diversity Award - recognizes individuals or units whose efforts have promoted, enhanced and implemented diversity programs or activities resulting in a significant change in the campus climate and composition within the UD community.
<https://sites.udel.edu/diversity/awards/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Arthur Trabant Award – for contribution to equity for women at UD
<https://sites.udel.edu/diversity/awards/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Francis Alison Award <http://www1.udel.edu/teachingawards/awards/alison/index.html> (accessed May 19, 2020).

APPENDIX 3

EXTERNAL WORKSHOPS FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Several of the leadership workshops in these appendices are discipline focused. This does not represent a comprehensive list of all workshops for all disciplines. These lists are intended to give you some ideas. We anticipate that you will look further within your own discipline for relevant workshops.

- Cottrell Scholars Collaborative Academic Leadership Training Workshop: *provides academic leaders with tools, connections and skills to be successful.* (Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy). <https://cen.acs.org/acs-news/Faculty-gather-academic-leadership-workshop/97/i10> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- This Department Leadership Workshop *is for geographers interested in improving their programs – chairs, deans, academic advisors, provosts and other administrators, as well as faculty interested in leadership issues.* <http://www.aag.org/gfda> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- Association for Departments of Foreign Languages offer summer seminars where *"experienced and newly appointed chairs and other key faculty members of ADFL-member departments share information and consult about issues facing departments and the field."* <https://www.adfl.mla.org/Seminars> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- HERS Leadership Institute: Higher Education Leadership Development Program – *a transformational development program for women in higher education.* <https://www.hersnetwork.org/programs/hers-institute/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- ELATES – *a national leadership development program designed to advance senior women faculty in academic engineering, computer science, and other STEM fields into effective institutional leadership roles within their schools and universities.* <https://drexel.edu/provost/initiatives/elates/> (accessed May 19, 2020).

Some Possibilities for Workshops for Chairs

- AAUA Professional Development Fellows Program *"Open to persons with current administrative appointments. Personnel representing a wide range of admin roles (unit director/dept chair through vice president."* <http://www.aaua.org/professional-development/thinktank-description.htm> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- CCAS Seminars for Department Chairs *"in which chairs – new and experienced – can examine the art of departmental administration through close interaction with colleagues from multiple disciplines and from institutions around the country."* <https://www.ccas.net/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4016> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- CCAS Leadership Development Workshops for Chairs. <https://www.ccas.net/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3699> (accessed May 19, 2020).

APPENDIX 4

Other Programs /Workshops for Professional Development

External

- Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching “*provides opportunities for the presentation of the Scholarship of teaching and Learning.*” <https://www.lillyconferences-md.com> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- NCFDD Faculty Success Program “*designed to teach tenure-track and tenured faculty the skills they need to increase both their research and writing productivity while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.*” <https://www.facultydiversity.org/fsp-bootcamp> (accessed May 19, 2020).

At UD

- UD Research Office – provides training on many aspects of research and research administration (e.g. grant writing mentorship programs such as [NIH Proposal Academy](#), [NSF Career Proposal Academy](#), etc.) <https://research.udel.edu/training/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- UD Faculty Accountability Program “*will create supportive communities where faculty members will be challenged and celebrated in their respective journeys to become more productive scholars.*” <https://sites.udel.edu/diversity/accountability-program/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- CTAL Summer Institute on Teaching “*brings together educators from across the UD to build and strengthen a community around teaching and learning.*” <https://ctal.udel.edu/programs/sit2020/> (accessed May 19, 2020).
- UD ADVANCE Institute – *focused on faculty development and success.* The ADVANCE Institute offers workshops and resources in the following areas:
 - Best practices for faculty recruitment
 - Faculty Mentoring
 - Promotion & Tenure panels for T/TT faculty (Asst to Assoc & Assoc to Full)
 - Diversity in Higher Educationand hosts Networking Events for Faculty.
- ADVANCE Women’s Leadership Program (in partnership with the Lerner Women’s Leadership Initiative) *provides a program for mid-career women faculty..... addresses the obstacles to women faculty assuming academic leadership roles, inside the institution and beyond.* https://sites.udel.edu/advance/initiatives/leadership_program/ (accessed May 19, 2020).

APPENDIX 5.

The table below⁹ shows properties of a conventional department vs those of a very professional, on-the-move department. We should be aiming at performance as shown on the righthand column – **HEALTHY / DIVERSE Departments**, seeking to ensure “the recognition and appreciation of the different backgrounds, values, and ideas of those who comprise our campus, as well as a commitment to ensuring that all people on our campus are treated according to principles of fairness, civility, dignity, and equity.”¹²

You may consider printing this table and having it as a quick reference.

TYPICAL / CONVENTIONAL Departments	HEALTHY / DIVERSE Departments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on progress toward P&T is limited to annual evaluations by the department head and is often brief and lacking in meaningful detail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department head provides meaningful feedback annually as well as frequent informal feedback throughout the year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior faculty feedback rarely if ever occurs except at reappointment, depriving newer faculty members of constructive suggestions from the people who will ultimately vote on their tenure and/or promotion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior faculty provide periodic feedback in addition to that given at reappointment. Frequent informal feedback is also provided regularly by mentors or coaches and occasionally by other senior faculty.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New faculty members are mostly left on their own to ask for help as they start their teaching and research. Many departments say that senior faculty regularly provide informal mentoring, but often such mentoring is almost nonexistent and may not come from the best sources. Faculty from underrepresented groups are often left out of informal mentoring arrangements that do occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new faculty are routinely provided with structured mentoring. It may take the form of a single mentor for the first year, a teaching mentor and a research mentor, or a mentor coach who works with the faculty member throughout the tenure period.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty from underrepresented groups are frequently assigned to more committees than their departmental colleagues serve on, and they are also sought out for more student mentoring. The result is an excessive service burden relative to the average departmental service load. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department head and mentor help keep faculty from underrepresented groups from being overburdened with service responsibilities.

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TYPICAL / CONVENTIONAL Departments	HEALTHY / DIVERSE Departments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate professors find themselves on their own as they prepare to progress toward promotion, and frequently stall out at the associate level or take many years to become full professors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate professors are routinely provided guidance by the department head and senior colleagues as they progress toward promotion. Attention is paid to leadership development, goal clarification and facilitation of award nominations and other forms of recognition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work/life events (e.g. welcoming a new baby, elder care and medical problems) are addressed by university policies, which are frequently inadequate to cover faculty members' needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department heads make explicit commitments to flexibility in accommodating work/life events, such as by adjusting teaching schedules, allowing work from home and limiting early morning or late afternoon faculty meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once a faculty member is hired, the department does not get involved with partner hiring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a faculty member is hired and a partner is also looking for a professional position the department head and colleagues continue to assist the partner in finding a satisfactory position.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate (working environment for faculty and staff) is seldom or never discussed in the department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining a positive climate is an explicit part of the department's mission and is addressed by a standing task force or committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department head does not pay particular attention to climate and may do things that work against a positive one (e.g. making decisions without input or with the input of a select small group, not communicating regularly and effectively with faculty and allowing conflicts to fester). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department head pays attention to climate by maintaining transparency in decision making, keeping strong lines of communication open with faculty and staff and helping to resolve conflicts as soon as they develop.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty members interact primarily in formal faculty meetings. Little opportunity is provided for informal social gatherings, and when social events are planned (e.g. holiday parties), few faculty members attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments consciously seek to provide regular opportunities for faculty to interact both formally and informally (e.g. brown-bag lunches, social events that include families, weekly breakfasts with doughnuts, daily or weekly afternoon tea/coffee sessions and monthly birthday celebrations). Most faculty attend these events.

From NC State University Guide for Department Heads – Retaining Diverse Department Faculties– 2014⁹