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A) Contacts and responsibilities:

During the academic year 2010 – 2011 I completed analysis and produced a report on the NDSU Administrative Survey. I provided these results in a separate report.

I also visited campus from November 16 -20, 2010. During that visit I met with the FORWARD co-PIs and Leadership Team, the Provost, college Deans, the Commission on the Status of Women, Department Chairs and Heads, the Promotion to Professor Taskforce, a group of women STEM faculty, and the FORWARD internal evaluation committee. I also attended a FORWARD Leadership Development panel event and a meeting of the College of Human Development and Education, and presented the results of the administrative survey to the Deans and Department Heads and Chairs. Before my visit, the FORWARD team forwarded a wide array of program documentation for my review.

This report primarily concerns my impressions from that site visit and review of program documentation. I had not visited campus before (at least in this capacity), so these are baseline impressions.

B) Program summary

The NDSU ADVANCE FORWARD program was funded in 2008, and has the following five goals:

Improving the campus **climate** around issues of gender equity

Opening and increasing **leadership** opportunities for women faculty

Improve the **advancement** of women faculty, with a particular focus on the transition between associate and full professor.

Enhance the **recruitment** of women faculty.

Increase **retention** of women faculty.

For each of these there are specific initiatives and evaluation plans.

C) Summary assessment

Many things are going well. The grant programs seem to have been well received. The course release grants are particularly popular, as are the mentor relationship travel grants.

There has been considerable progress toward the goals you identified in your initial proposal.

All in all, you have accomplished a lot in a very short time – as of my visit in November 2010, \$630,000 had been allocated, and 68 STEM and non-STEM women had received at least one award.

There are some initiatives that are working more effectively than others, and some concerns the team may wish to address going forward, however.

D) Specific comments on successes and concerns

I will organize these in terms of program goals as stated in the ADVANCE FORWARD proposal.

- 1) Climate – the specific goal of the FORWARD program is to find no difference in perceptions of climate between men and women by the end of the award period, or between majority and minority groups.

There have been two climate surveys conducted on campus, one of faculty and one of administrators. The former data have not been fully analyzed (though the team has frequencies for survey items). The administrative survey results are presented here as appendix A. Here I think the team can build on the broad support for change indicated in the survey. The social norms approach might be of use – if chairs and deans think that others support change they may be encouraged to buy in as well. One barrier is the fundamental difference revealed in the survey between men and women in their perception of the climate. This is not unusual at all, and is what climate-targeted programs are meant to address. I strongly doubt, based on my knowledge of the social science evidence, that such differences in perceptions will disappear by the end of the grant. They may be mitigated somewhat, however.

In terms of my own evaluation during the visit, I heard two things of note from the faculty. One was a sense of rising expectations, particularly among STEM women. This is double-edged; it means that the FORWARD team has had some early and visible successes, and that this has created hope that the climate will continue to change. On the other hand, early success can create expectations that further changes will be more rapid than is actually possible, and some STEM women are frustrated that change has not come more quickly. The other issue is that some on campus are simply not well informed about what FORWARD is and what it does. I strongly encourage the FORWARD team to be more vocal about its successes. We had some discussion of how this might be accomplished. I simply want to reiterate the issue here.

In terms of administration, there are two issues of note. One of the factors that will certainly affect the FORWARD team/project going forward is recent rapid turnover at multiple levels of university leadership. The President is new, and the current Provost is retiring from administrative duties and will transition to a faculty position,

as is the Dean of the college of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Two FORWARD team members are on the search committees for the Provost and the Dean, which is an encouraging sign. Prior to the third year site visit, it is essential that newly hired university leaders be brought up to speed on the FORWARD program, as this will be very important for the site visit team's evaluation. As to chairs and deans, they are often a recalcitrant layer in accomplishing organizational change. Dean and Chair training has now begun, and has included both outside speakers and presentations by FORWARD team members. Obviously accountability at the highest levels is necessary to make sure change happens. With recent and upcoming changes in the administrative structure at the university, the FORWARD team has an opportunity to contribute to the recruitment of administrators committed to the goals of gender equity.

The second area in which administrative support is crucial lies in the area of work/family policies. Work/family balance is not an explicit area of focus for the FORWARD team, though this has definite implications for climate. Though the Commission on the Status of Women Faculty has begun to draft work/family policies, there are few resources to make such policies a reality, and the legal context has also made change difficult. I know that budget cuts have decimated such programs on many campuses. So here I can only say that the administrative survey clearly demonstrates broad support – from men and women administrators – for the efforts of the Commission and the FORWARD team. Administrators clearly support efforts to create work/family balance. Almost all such initiatives must come from the central administration, however.

The team lists several initiatives as connected to their climate change goal – as there is overlap across initiatives I will deal with each as they seem most relevant:

- a) Allies program - The Advocates and Allies Program, which is a unique component of this grant, has begun and is showing promise. This group clearly has the potential to provide positive support to women on campus, as well as to the FORWARD team's efforts. The meeting at which I was present was both lively and well-attended. The men (and particularly the group leaders) seem knowledgeable and committed to gender equity efforts on campus. They have met with speakers, educated themselves, and advocated for FORWARD and for individual women in their departments. From my meeting with women faculty, I can say that at the moment the women who attended were clear that the mandate of the program should not be on fixing or helping women, but on dealing with other men. For their work to have credibility, Advocates must be a self-selected group whose mission is work with other men.
- b) FORWARD lectures/gender equity awareness workshops – there have been a number of these on campus, and the speakers have met with administrators, team members, and others privately during their visits. The lectures are being evaluated on an ongoing basis.

- c) Commission on the Status of Women Faculty – I attended a meeting of this group, which sees its goal (in part) as the drafting of policy and moving these policies through the system. In particular we discussed the efforts of the Commission to draft a policy broadening access to junior administrative positions in departments. I understand that this is an attempt to introduce some transparency into what had been a closed process in which promotion were based very much on informal ties. And I also understand that this policy has recently had some success in opening searches that for whom the candidates would have previously been chosen informally - there is an ongoing open search for an associate dean position in engineering, for example. Based on the data I have collected on promotion to full, however, I would only urge caution – women should not be encouraged to take such positions at the associate professor level, or if they do, they should do so in conjunction with negotiation about how these administrative duties will be counted toward promotion to full.
 - d) Dean/chair training (administrator workshops) – the goal here is to create buy-in for FORWARD initiatives as well as improve the climate in the colleges and units. Chairs and deans are often a recalcitrant layer in accomplishing organizational change, so training at this level is extremely important. As of Spring 2011, there have been eleven separate workshops conducted by both inside and outside speakers. It is too early to know what sort of effect this training will have – results on a final administrative survey should shed light on this issue. The meeting of department chairs I attended was lively but the Provost’s presentation was mainly concerned with budget issues. Hiring has been severely affected across campus, which means that even if Deans or Heads wanted to increase the recruitment of women, it would be difficult in this climate.
 - e) Climate/equity research grants – this program has just begun; there were presentations about it on campus during the fall and spring of 2009-2010. When I was on campus three awards had been given to interdisciplinary groups. The competition for the next round of funding is ongoing.
 - f) Department climate grants – there is no information about this on the ADVANCE FORWARD website, and there was no discussion about this initiative when I was on campus. It may be that work in this area is ongoing, but if so I do not have this information in my own notes.
 - g) Gender equity award – this is an award of \$5,000 to an academic department that makes the greatest effort in support and advancing gender equity in one of the five FORWARD goal areas. One award has been given for 2009-2010 for Biological Sciences. It is not clear to me whether the practices identified in these awarded departments are being shared or implemented across campus.
- 2) Leadership – the specific goal as stated in the original proposal is increase women’s access to leadership positions at NDSU, specifically promote or hire women in at

least two more dean positions (for a total of three women deans) over the next five years; increase women heads and chairs/heads in the STEM disciplines to five of 28. There is currently (at the time of my visit) one women Dean (in Human Development and Education) and there are four women department heads (though only one in a traditional STEM discipline). There are a number of initiatives aimed at increasing women's access to leadership positions, though some are targeted more at advancing women through the ranks, particularly from associate to full (see below). The initiative most directly related to leadership is the Leadership Development program provides funds to send tenured women faculty each year to a national leadership development program of their choice. During the time I was on campus, I was able to observe a luncheon program in which participants in leadership programs discussed their experiences. The luncheon was very well attended and there seemed to be considerable interest in the leadership grants. As of Spring 2011, six of these grants have been awarded.

- 3) Advancement/Retention – these are closely allied goals, so I will take them together. In terms of advancement, the specific goal as written in the proposal is to increase the number of STEM women full professors to 10 in the next five years. There are several initiatives aimed at reaching this goal, and an additional Task Force on Promotion to Professor. The taskforce has held three informational sessions: one with faculty recently promoted to full, one with department heads, and one with promotion and tenure committee members. The task force believes the first session in particular was useful in helping women understand the process better and in encouraging women to seek promotion to full. Indeed while I was on campus I spoke to several women who are seeking or preparing to seek promotion to full – including one who (if successful) will be the first woman full professor in the history of her STEM department. In terms of retention, the specific goal in the project is to retain 90% of women through the tenure decision, and increase numbers of associate women in STEM disciplines from eight to 24 by the end of the grant period.
 - a) Grant-based initiatives – there are a number in this category. Though I did not discuss these specific programs with recipients, discussions with the team suggest they have been well received (not surprisingly). There has been some tension around the definition of eligible faculty – in at least one case (mentor relationship travel grants) the Provost has provided the funds so that women not in the traditional STEM disciplines can receive awards. In other cases applicants have been encouraged to construct their own justifications for why/whether they should be eligible for FORWARD funds.
 - i. Mentor Relationship Travel grants to offset the costs of meeting with mentors outside NDSU – sixty of these have been awarded through Spring 2011. The Provost has provided expanded funding for women not in STEM disciplines. This is an encouraging sign of institutional support for FORWARD goals.

- ii. LEAP Lab renovation grant program funded by VP of Research – targets STEM women Assistant Professors after a third year review and Associate Professors at least two years before promotion to full. Four awards have been made to Assistant Professor women in the Sciences. It may be that the lack of Associate Professor women in STEM disciplines has meant that the greatest demand for this assistance has come from more junior women.
 - iii. LEAP Research grant - targets STEM women Assistant Professors after a third year review and Associate Professors at least two years before promotion to full. Leap Grants are seed or bridging research grants intended to increase the potential for STEM women faculty at NDSU to acquire external funding, thereby increasing their research productivity and potential for promotion and/or tenure. These are intended for faculty with great ideas who need some extra support to become competitive, and are not intended for those who have already demonstrated success at obtaining external funding. Each grant awards up to \$30,000 for a twelve month (typically September through August) project, and requires additional application(s) to external sources as an outcome of the project. Thirteen awards had been given through the summer of 2010, again, mostly to assistant professor women.
 - iv. Course release grants – targets STEM women Assistant Professors after a third year review and Associate Professors at least two years before promotion to full. Provide a one semester release from teaching responsibilities. As of Spring 2011, eleven of these awards have been given.
- b) There are two mentoring programs aimed at achieving the goals of retention and advancement.
 - i. Junior faculty mentoring cohorts program - This program supports the formation of same-gender mentoring groups; all incoming female faculty are invited to participate in a single cohort through their third year review. Two speakers have also conducted mentoring workshops on campus. Overall, this looks like an excellent program. Evaluation is ongoing, and the feedback from participants has been basically positive. There is one problem that has emerged very quickly, however, and it is one of running out of more senior women to mentor junior women. This is a logical structural problem given the sheer demographics of the campus. One also does not want associate level women to do even more service – at least not if the goal is to see them promoted to full. I do understand the commitment to single sex mentoring, and I am well aware of the benefits of such programs. I wonder, however, if the team might consider other models. At the moment the sole source model is simply exhausting the supply of more senior women. Perhaps as more allies/advocates are trained they might serve as mentors? Or a junior faculty member might

have a team of mentors, not all of whom are women? I have no easy solution to this, but encourage the team to think through the unintended effects of the single sex mentoring model. I understand that the FORWARD team is committed to this model as one of the unique components of the grant, but the fact is that the extreme dearth of senior women at NDSU means that the burden of mentoring rests on the shoulders of a few.

- ii. Mid-career mentoring cohorts - tenured women to apply for funds to create their own peer, mid-career mentoring teams. These teams can have a variety of goals. Three groups have received funding for 2010-2011 and all are meeting. One is meeting monthly and has met with the department head, Dean, Department PTE committee, and College PTE community to learn more about how to put their materials together to go up for promotion to Full Professor and what materials they will need.
- 4) Recruitment – The goal as stated in the original ADVANCE-IT proposal is to standardize expectations that minimally mirror pipelines from doctoral programs before a search may move forward in order assure that all pool is include a representative number of women and women from underrepresented groups. Budget concerns have meant that there has been little hiring, however. There are two initiatives aimed at achieving this goal.
- a) Faculty recruitment assistant – this has been implemented in the form of a full time position. There are some difficulties, however. The FORWARD team is receiving little support from the chief officer for Equity and Diversity, whose office now seems largely involved in the hiring of staff. The assistant, a portion of whose salary is paid by FORWARD, has had some difficulties meeting the expectations and goals of the FORWARD team. She is also, by virtue of her position, not well situated to hold departments and colleges responsible for their practices. Given that so much of the original grant focused on hiring, it will be necessary to show that something has been accomplished in this area. The lack of effectiveness in this office also means that key data are not being collected on the utilization and outcomes of institutional policies like tenure clock extensions and faculty reviews.
 - b) Search committee training – this is now ongoing, and (in light of the difficulties above) is now being conducted by the FORWARD team. This means that the goals are being met, but the original mechanism has not worked as planned.
- 5) Research/evaluation/FORWARD team issues/visibility of FORWARD work

This section of the report focuses on issues not specifically related to the goals of ADVANCE FORWARD, but instead on internal evaluation and the team itself. Attention to these components is also crucial if ADVANCE FORWARD is to achieve success.

a) Evaluation and dissemination

- i. Data infrastructure - it seems clear that the FORWARD team is having difficulty getting clear and consistent administrative data. The problem extends all the way from basic data on hiring and recruitment and faculty positions to monitoring of polices like tenure clock extensions. Consistent data on hiring, promotion, and attrition will be key in documenting the FORWARD team's progress. In terms of this kind of raw data, two solutions come to mind – some ADVANCE programs (e.g., Utah State) created their own databases, drawing on available institutional data. The other solution is to improve administrative data gathering and work more closely with their institutional planning office. Perhaps a person from that office might be invited to join the steering or internal evaluation committee. Having spoken to the FORWARD leadership team about this, I understand that they are now working on cleaning the data and feel that they are making some progress.
- ii. Research production - there is some conflict in the team about the research that can or should come from the FORWARD project. My opinion and experience is that these programs are not really designed to produce publications in refereed journals. The problem is that the programs are designed to produce institutional data, rarely have a clear theoretical connection to the literature, and it is difficult to know how the results at one institution would translate to another. Some ways to think about publication might lie in collaborations across institutions (e.g., those who have also done exit interviews). FORWARD might also be able to capitalize on really unique initiatives, like the Advocates and Allies program.
- iii. Internal evaluation – the quality of this is good, and efforts are ongoing. There was some discussion among the team during my visit about how much internal evaluation to do and what programs to evaluate. There is a legitimate concern with over-surveying faculty, particularly given the small numbers of women on the campus. So I agree that there needs to be some coordination of efforts. All of the work of evaluation is also falling on one person, who is now an assistant professor. Two things seem wise – one, draft an internal evaluation plan to be approved by the team, and two, get a realistic sense of what resources are required to accomplish these tasks and make reasonable requests for support. The latter should be part of the evaluation plan.

b) Team Dynamics

- i. Initiatives and programming: The team has done a lot and had a lot of success in a very short period. I got a sense, however, that there was some initiative fatigue among the team. One of the things I noticed that NSF was worried about in their initial evaluation of the proposal is

that the team intended to do too much too fast. Though the team has accomplished much, they have done so at the expense of many hours expended by a few very committed team members. On the other hand, there are several initiatives that are just beginning. As of my visit to campus, there had been two search committee training sessions and three climate research initiative awards. Three groups are now (as of academic year 2010-2011) working on mid-career mentoring. The tribal college collaboration and programs targeting women with disabilities/minority women have only recently been launched. It is too early to judge the impact of any of these programs. It only seems logical to me that some initiatives have taken longer to roll out than others, particularly given the team's initial ambitious plans to launch several initiatives at once. My sense is that the team needs to clearly think through their priorities and perhaps aim to focus on few initiatives at one time.

- ii. Leadership – the leadership structure of the FORWARD grant has shifted from the original proposal, this perhaps offers an opportunity to think about the strengths that people have brought to the program and reallocate responsibilities to take optimum advantage of these. At the very least, as the EAB report had also suggested, the leadership structure and organizational chart need to be clearly specified before the site visit, and everyone needs to know what this structure looks like.
 - iii. Workloads – everyone primarily responsible for the administration of the program is severely overloaded. The FORWARD director has no reduction in teaching load, the internal evaluator is performing tasks that other ADVANCE programs delegate to an entire staff, others are crowding FORWARD work into already overburdened service loads and jeopardizing their own career progress in the process. I have no particular solution to this problem, other than to encourage FORWARD team members to be more realistic about the resources that are actually required to do the work of implementing the program. It may be possible to delegate some of this labor to staff – e.g., the office coordinator. Other ADVANCE programs have employed various models; some have hired full or part time directors. At the moment my sense is that the FORWARD team is spending far less than it would cost to make the burden of administration more reasonable for everyone involved.
- c) Visibility of FORWARD work this is also a team issue, but the solution lies in administration, so I have listed it here. Many of those who do the work of the FORWARD team are finding that their work is either not credited or is a detriment in their own evaluations for promotion and tenure. This is a common problem for team members on ADVANCE-IT grants on other campuses. I have no particular solution in mind, but it bears mentioning and

perhaps needs to be on the agenda for the team's future efforts in building support from administrators.

E)

Closing comments – as I note at the outset of this report, the FORWARD team has accomplished a lot in a short period of time, and in a campus environment in which women faculty have been historically severely underrepresented at every level. None of the comments in this report should be taken as diminishing these achievements. I offer the concerns identified here in the spirit of encouraging further discussion and review. I look forward to following the progress of the team in future visits.