ADVANCE:
Institutional Transformation
A U.S. program for change

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March 19, 2012     Project GENDER A
U.S. National Science Foundation

ADVANCE I.T. Program began in 2001

Goal: Improve the representation and advancement of women in academic science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers

www.nsf.gov/advance
Shift focus from individual

✓ Overarching concerns
  – loss of social investment in women’s education and training
  – increase recruitment of women into the scientific and technical workforce

✓ Prior equity-oriented funding to strengthen individual women’s ability to succeed

✓ Variety of evidence showing that practices and cultures of universities advantage men
Major obstacles: getting hired

✓ Recruitment practices
  – limited announcement of openings
  – narrowness of fields sought
  – implicit bias against women

✓ “Two body problem”
  – more common for STEM women than men
  – wives expected to follow husbands
Major obstacles: career success

✓ Isolation
  – Collaboration and communication

✓ Lack of “transparency”
  – Rules and informal expectations

✓ Inequities
  – Resources and responsibilities
Strategies: a partial list

- Collect organizational demographic data
- Do a “climate survey”
- Create networking opportunities
- Create or strengthen formal mentoring
- Incentivize collaboration
- Train leaders and personnel committees
- Cost share for partner hiring
- “Family friendly” policies
Major drivers of change

✓ Recognize outcomes are for all
✓ Seriously involve top leaders
✓ Broadly share work and commitment
  (men and women, disciplines, ranks, units)
✓ Think long term
Indicators of success

✓ Increased applications from women
✓ Hiring women
✓ Promotions
✓ Tenure decisions
✓ Women in leadership positions
✓ Awards and named chairs
Common Challenges

- Differences among disciplines and departments
- Tension: choosing strategies
- Changes in leadership
- Data: access and quality issues
Unexpected benefits

✓ Changing norms across institutions
✓ Contributions to social science
✓ Greater retention of couples hired together
✓ Growing attention to shared challenges:
  – International scholarship and gender equity
  – Personnel evaluation of interdisciplinary scholarship
✓ Projects create new stream of leaders