

Introduction

General Issue

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Introduction

Earlier this year, the *ADVANCE Journal* published its special issue to mark the 20th anniversary of the National Science Foundation's ADVANCE program. The issue had a range of articles that highlighted and emphasized several milestones through the program's 20-year history. This included honoring the groundbreaking work of the program's earliest leaders and advocates, while also drawing attention to the critical work of racial equity that needs to continue and expand now more than ever. More specifically the issue underscored the urgent intersectional perspectives offered by Black, Latinx, and other faculty of color working within Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) and the ways that institutional transformation work should continue to be informed by the unique, intersectional positionalities of minoritized scholars in the academy.

The two special issues prior to the 20th anniversary special issue focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. Across these two issues, our authors focused on topics like the impacts of the pandemic on STEM women in the academy and the increased burden on women faculty of color who, in addition to working through the pandemic, took on extra responsibilities of addressing race and racism as Black Lives Matter protests simultaneously gained momentum nationwide. Several articles in the COVID-19 special issues focused on ways to look at the impacts of the pandemic with an intersectional lens. In particular, authors paid attention to struggles of marginalized faculty of color to balance their care work for vulnerable people at home with scholarly and academic responsibilities in the context of broader structural inequalities governing their academic lives.

With this general issue of the *ADVANCE Journal*, we continue the conversation on addressing institutional transformation by centering the experiences of minoritized scholars in

the academy and systemic inequalities and institutional barriers that negatively affect STEM women faculty of color. The contributors to this issue also look at the ways that such experiences are situated within larger systems of oppression undergirding the American STEM academy and the inextricable connections between individual experiences, institutional structures, and the larger world in which we live.

We see this issue as a bridge across our previous issues on the COVID-19 pandemic and NSF ADVANCE's 20th anniversary as well as our upcoming special issue focusing on experiences of institutional betrayal and academic trauma in the academy and the ways that racial equity and institutional justice should be at the center of efforts to promote institutional transformation. The articles published in this issue offer new feminist perspectives, and practices on transforming the academy by focusing on the experiences of minoritized faculty, and their experiences with navigating processes like promotion and tenure. The practices provided by our authors challenge dominant structures that undergird the institutional processes like promotion and tenure, paving paths for alternate ways that make visible the invisible labor my minoritized faculty of color. This has become especially necessary given the ways that the COVID-19 pandemic made visible the disproportionate burden of academic and personal care work placed on women faculty of color. With these themes, the contributors to this issue are collaboratively and collectively challenging dominant and normative metrics that are used to assess performance within the academy, which are all central feminist and pedagogical concerns for transforming the higher educational institution in the United States.

Along with their reflections on existing promotion and tenure processes, the articles in this issue also emphasize alternative ways of assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion work, which institutions often do not value while assessing faculty for promotion and tenure. The

academy needs to recognize the work that minoritized faculty of color made to embody institutional “diversity,” are doing and the way that while being engaged in this work their roles as scholars, mentors, and community members are inseparable and not always visible within the metrics and numbers used to evaluate their contributions. The work of care offered by faculty of color in the academy in mentoring minorized students, scholarly critiques of the way diversity work is or isn’t acknowledged by the academy, as well as the way “diversity” itself has become institutionalized, are all part of the necessary and ongoing antiracist work that we need to be concerned with.

We begin this issue with Dawn Culpepper and Sarah Kilmer’s policy review titled “Faculty-Related COVID-19 Policies and Practices at Top-Ranked Higher Education Institutions in the United States,” which analyzes different institutional responses and interventions to the COVID-19 pandemic among 386 top-ranked universities and colleges in the United States. Tenure delays and pandemic impact statements were the most commonly implemented institutional interventions.

The theme of faculty promotion and tenure is continued further in the critical reflection, “Disrupting the Status Quo: Forging a Path to Promotion that Explicitly Recognizes and Values Faculty Work Focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” by Gina S. Gibau, Rachel Applegate, Margaret R. Ferguson, and Kathy E. Johnson. The authors challenge institutions to acknowledge and center diversity, equity, and inclusion work that faculty undertake in their research, teaching, and/or service work while evaluating them for promotion and tenure. Such a shift in evaluating faculty work allows those with marginalized identities who mentor students with similar identities to be rewarded for their work as educators, scholars, and academics “disrupting the status quo.” Further, it reduces the burden on women and minoritized faculty and encourages

other faculty members to engage in DEI work, leading to institutional transformation and challenging the exclusionary nature and dominant narrative of race neutrality and merit-based advancement in higher education.

Holly M. Hutchins, Maura J. Pereira-Leon, and Mimi M. Lee, in their data report, “Can a Workshop Make a Difference? Influencing Promotion-Seeking Behaviors of Women Associate Professors” offers developmental workshops as an intervention and tool for women professors’ career advancement. They write that such workshops led to an increase in the number of women, especially Black and Latinx women associate professors, and equipped them with frameworks to hold and exercise increased agency over promotion decisions and processes. Such frameworks helped women associate professors recognize and disrupt gatekeeping by department chairs and other college administrators, which perpetuates structural inequities in the promotion process, which especially affected Latinx and Asian faculty that were interviewed.

In “The Importance of HOW in Faculty Salary Equity Studies: Development and Impact of an ADVANCE Salary Equity Study and Workshop Series to Promote an Inclusive Academic Environment” Carol E. Marchetti and Margaret Bailey argue for the need for institutions’ compensation systems to become more inclusive to mitigate systemic inequities in academic as well as government, industry, and other settings. Their study shows that a cross-departmental committee to study and address salary inequity was effective in increasing communication, trust, and collaboration across campus.

We then turn to a review of the Connect Grants program, titled “Reimagining Seed Grants for the 21st Century: Individual and Institutional Impacts of a Mini-Grants Program,” by Margaret Bailey, Sharon Mason, Carol E. Marchetti, Betsy Dell, Elizabeth Litzler, and Maureen Valentine, who conclude that scholars, especially women scholars, benefited from the

opportunities for mentoring and networking in the program. The Connect Grants program resulted in better representation and advancement of women faculty in STEM fields by removing barriers and increasing access and support and making changes at institutional and structural levels. These interventions benefitted individuals as well as the institution more broadly, improving overall institutional culture and environment.

Jennifer M. Dechaine, José M. Rios, and Susana Flores continue the conversation on creating equity and inclusion and dismantling barriers minoritized communities face in higher education in “Diversifying the STEM Teaching Workforce: A Process and Tools Described through One Institution’s Journey.” Formulating a guiding framework for university teacher programs to identify the barriers minoritized communities face in STEM education, Dechaine et al. argue for a consultative model that centers the culturally specific backgrounds and contexts of marginalized communities and involves them in the process of recruiting and retaining diverse students. Such a process helps identify and dismantle discrimination within systems and structures in the academy to ensure greater success in STEM.

In “Reducing Stereotyping of Women in STEM: Do Personal Relevance and Efficacy of Messages Boost Persuasion?” Amy Hillard and Tamera Schneider examine the ways gender stereotyping impacts women in STEM. They found unexpectedly that experimental messages involving personal relevance and efficacy led to increased negative attitudes and feelings toward STEM women and more stereotyping across faculty gender, rank, race, and ethnicity.

In the issue’s final piece, Jenn Stroud Rossmann and Mary A. Armstrong write in “Empowering and Liberating: Fostering STEM Identity through Engagement with Women’s and Gender Studies” that STEM students who took courses in women and gender studies felt empowered and expressed an improved sense of agency as they expanded their sense of their

own identity and positionality in STEM. The course gave them frameworks to reflect on identity and power, helping them challenge the white, masculinist, heterosexist, non-neutrality, or objectivity prevalent in STEM. It also gave marginalized STEM students a better sense of belonging to the field.

Our next issue will be a special issue focused on institutional betrayal and academic trauma. For this special issue, we invite contributions from scholars across higher education who have experienced marginalization in the academy. We especially welcome submissions from queer, trans, Black, Indigenous and other scholars of color in STEM who can speak to institutional betrayal and marginalization in higher education at the intersection of gender, sexuality, race, caste, disability, and other axes of oppression. The detailed call for submissions is available [on the *ADVANCE Journal* website](#). We continue to welcome creative submissions for this special issue including but not limited to poetry, narratives, resignation letters, email messages, monologues, visual art, photography, and original short dramatic scripts.

We also invite scholarly research articles (empirical, theoretical, and/or conceptual), program evaluation and/or assessment reports, critical review of literature and resources, historical approaches pertinent to building a diverse and inclusive academy, reflective personal narratives about participation in institutional transformation, letters to the editor/article responses from readers and welcome other suggestions. For this upcoming special issue, we invite banner images for our manuscripts. Images can address themes spanning across resistance movements, art-based activisms, intersectional forms of oppression, and ongoing realities around the world that are materially impacting and shaping lives in different ways. Collages, paintings, stencil work, sketches, photography, and any other media are welcome for the banner images that will appear on the journal website.

Putting together a journal centering feminist institutional transformation in STEM is a process that is impossible without collaborations and synergetic connections, and some notes of gratitude are in order. This general issue of the *ADVANCE Journal* marks the final issue with our co-editor Rebecca Warner, who has been with the journal since 2020. As co-editor, Becky brought a keen sociological eye and methodological expertise to the journal. Becky was one of the original co-PIs on Oregon State University's ADVANCE IT grant, and she took over as PI in the project's third year. We would like to express our gratitude and our congratulations for all of Becky's wonderful contributions to the journal over these two years as a co-editor. We hope that we can continue to collaborate and remain thought partners in the future. We are also honored and excited to welcome Kelly M. Mack as incoming co-editor. Kelly is the Vice President for Undergraduate STEM Education and Executive Director of Project Kaleidoscope at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and has been on the *ADVANCE Journal's* editorial board since its inception. Prior to joining AAC&U, Kelly was the Program Director for the National Science Foundation ADVANCE Program for four years. In fact, she was the first program officer for Oregon State ADVANCE, and the journal was her idea when the leadership team at OSU was putting the grant proposal together. In joining the editorial team, Kelly comes full circle with the journal.