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LEGAL ISSUES

Protecting Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian Students from Discrimination

Eric Lyerly

The US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has been relentless in investigating and addressing cases of discrimination against Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian students. Over the past two years, OCR has released numerous fact sheets and "Dear Colleague" letters urging colleges and universities to protect these students from discrimination and hostile environments.

1. **In May 2023**, OCR issued a "Dear Colleague" letter highlighting the responsibility of higher education institutions to protect Jewish students from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, and shared ethnic traits or ancestry.

2. A follow-up "Dear Colleague" letter **from November 2023** reinforced the directives outlined in a January 2023 fact sheet.

3. Most recently, in **March 2024**, OCR

As of September 2024, OCR is actively investigating 152 educational institutions for cases involving discrimination linked to shared ancestry, with many allegations directed at faculty members.

issued another letter reminding institutions of their duty to prevent discrimination against students identifying as Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian.

As of September 2024, OCR **is actively investigating** 152 educational institutions for cases involving discrimination linked to shared ancestry, with many allegations directed at faculty members.

Universities are increasingly paying attention to OCR's guidance and concerns, recognizing the need to address potential hostile environments on campus. Earlier this year, Columbia University resolved a lawsuit filed by Jewish students who accused the institution of failing to protect their rights. In July, Columbia removed three administrators after they exchanged anti-Semitic messages during a May 2024 panel discussion on Jewish campus life.

IN THIS ISSUE

COMING UP:

Target Mentoring: A Tailored Mentoring Program for Faculty

Susan K. Gardner

In my prior position at the University of Maine, my colleagues and I conducted a lot of research on faculty mentoring. The effort, funded originally by a National Science Foundation ADVANCE grant, included the implementation of several kinds of mentoring programs across our campus, finding that a combination of mentoring programs was best for our faculty.

At the time, the provost required that a mentoring plan be submitted and approved for all new faculty hiring proposals (both tenure-stream and lecturer). This mentoring happened at the departmental or school level and followed the traditional format wherein a new faculty member is assigned a more senior faculty member who provides feedback and serves as a touchstone within their academic unit. Our research found that while this was helpful and needed, it didn't go far enough for some faculty. Namely, new faculty found they had specific questions that perhaps their assigned colleague couldn't address, had issues they didn't want to discuss within their departments, or had specific goals that went beyond the discipline in which they were housed. So entered the target mentoring program (TMP) to address this gap.

The TMP was an optional, supplemental mentoring program housed within the Rising Tide Center. Unlike the department-specific mentoring program, TMP was open to all faculty regardless of rank or career stage.

Faculty applied for a target mentor through an online form that listed many of the areas that we found to be of general interest but also provided an open-ended option. Faculty applying for a mentor could choose up to five areas of interest from this form. Simultaneously, we solicited help from faculty from across campus to serve as mentors; they each selected five areas of strength or expertise. We then matched these mentors and mentees to the best of our abilities by comparing the lists. While we originally had been able to provide monetary compensation to mentors during the years of the grant, we found that just as many faculty were willing to participate without compensation as service to their colleagues. We did provide a dining card to buy them coffee or lunch during mentoring meetings if they so desired, and we also began giving out a campus-wide faculty mentoring award to recognize this important work.

Our list included the following topics, divided by theme:

Research
- Building your reputation as a scholar
- Developing a research agenda
- Establishing a research laboratory
- Establishing a research program
- Managing a research program
- Protecting research time
- Publishing scholarly work
- Reinventing: changing research focus

Teaching
- Assessment
- Creating engaging assignments
- Creating engaging classrooms
- Curriculum development

- Developing and teaching online classes
- E-learning: using digital resources effectively
- Teaching large classes
- Transitioning to active learning classes

Success in academia
- Academic life: finding balance
- Finding appropriate grant opportunities
- Fulfilling the tripartite mission of UMaine
- Interdisciplinary collaborations: keys to success
- Integrating into male-dominated disciplines
- Preparing competitive grant applications
- Review of promotion and tenure (P&T) materials
- Understanding the P&T process

Leadership
- Pursuing academic leadership roles

We found that the open-ended option for the TMP was especially helpful for those with challenges related to their status on our predominately white and very rural campus. For example, we had requests from faculty who identified as gay looking to connect with the LGBTQIA+ community, new parents seeking other new parents on the faculty, and underrepresented women in STEM units who were looking to connect with others.

An additional TMP service we provided was for our associate professors seeking promotion to full professors. We found this program helpful to those who may have needed additional feedback on their dossiers or guidance from others who had traversed the typically less-than-clear process. We accomplished this part of the TMP pairing process by connecting an associate with a full professor, typically in the same college. The guidance we provided for this pairing was through a series of handouts that we provided the pairs, talking about goal setting and preparation of the dossier.

Our continued evaluation of both the required and the optional mentoring programs resulted in several updates. First, we offered two workshops each fall on research about and guidance in faculty mentoring. These two optional training sessions provided context for not only how to mentor, including the outcomes of mentoring and active listening strategies, but also thinking through scenarios and resources to address those scenarios. We particularly emphasized issues that might arise among underrepresented faculty members.

The other piece of feedback we garnered from our evaluation was that the required mentoring matches in their academic homes often floundered when the mentee didn't have a specific topic to discuss or question to ask. To address this concern, we began sending out what we called "monthly mentoring memos." Each of these memos included timely topics and resources that might provide a platform for a deeper conversation between the pairs. Examples included using the university's grading system (early December), reflecting upon first semester successes (January), and planning for summer research time (April).

Finally, new faculty commented that they wanted more social opportunities to connect with other new faculty and mentors on campus. As a result of this feedback, we implemented a few different social events to which mentors and mentees were invited. One new program we initiated with our partner, the **Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning**, was called Blue Drinks. A take on Green Drinks, the program for environmentally minded professionals in various cities, our program occurred twice per semester in different locations on campus. The sponsoring office or division paid for the cash bar fee and a few snacks. They also got the opportunity to talk for a few moments about what they did or offered in that location. This program spawned additional social events that the newer faculty sought out as well as opportunities for entities across campus to show off their locations, offerings, and services to faculty who might not otherwise have known about them.

Now as dean for Oregon State University's College of Education, I have brought TMP to our campus and see its continued benefits for the faculty we hire and promote. I continue to see TMP providing faculty with several outlets for connection and support throughout their careers. I hope this overview gives you ideas for expanding mentoring efforts on your campus. 🏛

Similarly, New York University (NYU) settled a Title VI lawsuit that involved allegations of anti-Semitic discrimination. As part of the settlement, NYU committed to substantial actions to combat antisemitism, including the creation of a dedicated Title VI coordinator role—one of the first at a major university. Numerous other colleges and universities are also making efforts to address and eliminate hostile environments due to national origin discrimination.

Undoubtedly, postsecondary institutions will look to faculty leaders to lead the antidiscrimination charge in their departments. As indicated above, faculty are often caught in the crosshairs of discrimination complaints related to shared ancestry. Often, faculty misconduct in this area comes from a misunderstanding or lack of awareness of the civil rights protections owed to Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian students.

To be sure, many students and faculty have strong views on the Israel-Gaza conflict. The conflict has prompted extensive protests, demonstrations, and classroom disruptions on college and university campuses. But these views and protests should not escalate to the point of discrimination against students who have some relationship—ancestral or religious—to the parties involved in the conflict.

Faculty leaders can help their departments maintain an academic environment free from national origin discrimination and instruct colleagues on how to comply with Title VI. This remainder of this article will explain how Title VI applies to faculty, offer tips for compliance, and explore OCR investigations involving professors, instructors, and graduate assistants.

Title VI and discrimination on the basis of national origin and shared ancestry

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, postsecondary institutions are prohibited from discriminating against students based on race, color, or national origin. OCR's January 2023 fact sheet clarified that Title VI protections extend to students perceived to be part of a religious group, whether Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or other.

Title VI also restricts discrimination and harassment linked to a student's *real or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic traits*. It further prohibits any discrimination based on race, color, or national origin connected to a student's citizenship or residency in a country with a majority religion or distinct religious identity. In the past few years, this type of discrimination has frequently involved students of Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian backgrounds.

Deans and department chairs should work with their units to address and eliminate any of the following prohibited actions against these students:

- Use of racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs and stereotypes
- Appearance-based discrimination, including targeting students due to skin color, physical traits, or culturally or religiously significant attire
- Discrimination based on a student's accent, name, or language
- Prejudice stemming from perceived or alleged inherited characteristics

How faculty leaders should respond to incidents of discrimination

Faculty cannot prevent all instances of racially or ethnically motivated harassment. Title VI doesn't establish a civility code for faculty departments or classrooms.

It does, however, expect postsecondary institutions to respond to known incidents of harassment or discrimination based on national origin or shared ancestry. Upon learning of possible discrimination from faculty, faculty leaders (and faculty in the case of student-to-student harassment) must take "prompt and effective steps" to address the discrimination.

Actions to promptly and effectively address harassment should be individualized to the situation. Faculty leaders should remind colleagues to refer reports of harassment to their deans or department chairs as well as to their institution's equal opportunity office for further guidance.

Other necessary actions may include (1) disciplining faculty or students responsible for the harassment; (2) allowing a harassed student to change classes or schedules to avoid the potentially hostile environment; (3) implementing training for students and faculty on how to avoid race, color, and national origin discrimination; and (4) training faculty on how to appropriately handle reports of discrimination, among other measures. All disciplinary actions should be consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

OCR investigations involving national origin and shared ancestry discrimination

Often, the law seems abstract until one sees it enforced. Below are summaries of recent OCR investigations involving Title VI discrimination against Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian students. These summaries are meant to help faculty leaders understand how their departments might run afoul of Title VI and come under OCR scrutiny.

Brown University, No. 01-24-2116 (OCR 07/08/24)

OCR investigated Brown University's handling of harassment reports in October and November 2023. During this period, Brown received around 75 complaints of national origin discrimination related to Jewish ancestry as well as Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim ancestry. In one instance, a Jewish student alleged that a professor gave him a low grade due to a classroom disagreement related to the Israel-Gaza conflict. In another in-

stance, students claimed that a professor created an anti-Semitic classroom environment.

OCR determined that Brown's response to these reports was insufficient. The university acknowledged receiving the complaints, provided support resources, and offered to meet with the students who filed reports. But OCR noted that Brown may have conditioned its investigation of a student's complaint on the student responding to outreach emails, a policy that violates Title VI.

City University of New York, No. 0-22-2034 (OCR 06/17/24)

OCR examined whether the City University of New York (CUNY) system adequately addressed allegations of discrimination and harassment targeting Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students. In one notable case, the complainant claimed a group of students at Hunter College disrupted two class sessions and made anti-Semitic remarks related to the conflict in the Middle East. The professors allegedly failed to prevent the conduct, and at least one professor participated in the disruptions.

The complainant emailed the professors after class to express concern over the incidents in class. The professors, however, did not impose any sanctions on the harassing students other than to state that the disruptions were unacceptable. OCR found that the institution failed to take steps to address the potential hostile environment.

University of Michigan, No. 15-24-2066 (OCR 06/17/24)

During the 2022–23 academic year, the University of Michigan received 75 complaints related to harassment based on Jewish, Muslim, or Palestinian ancestry. Three complaints implicated faculty departments or university programs, while two additional complaints involved graduate students and employees. In one instance, a student reported harassing comments and conversations related to the Israel-Gaza conflict in an unspecified class.

OCR found that the university consistently declined to investigate reports of discrimination, or else failed to resolve complaints in a timely manner.

University of Vermont, No. 01-22-2002 (OCR 04/03/23)

In this case, the complainant alleged that the University of Vermont failed to address multiple incidents of harassment targeting Jewish students. In one incident, a teaching assistant posted anti-Semitic social media posts and intimated that she purposely gave poor grades to Jewish students.

The university's Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Office (AAEO) did not investigate reports of the teaching assistant's conduct (or other reported harassment), citing the lack of formal complaints. OCR found that the university failed to assess whether these incidents contributed to a hostile environment for Jewish students in violation of Title VII.

Takeaways for faculty leaders

The Department of Education and OCR have repeatedly emphasized the need for colleges and universities to treat discrimination against Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian students with the utmost seriousness. Faculty leaders should remember these takeaways:

- Ensure that your departmental policies and procedures account for protests and classroom disruptions involving students and faculty
- Recognize that Title VI covers harassment off campus (e.g., online) if it contributes to a hostile educational environment in the classroom or other academic environments.
- When receiving reports of harassment or discrimination based on shared ancestry, faculty leaders should consider consulting their institution's equal opportunity office for guidance. 🏛

When Faculty Overreact to Course Ratings

Maryellen Weimer

So far in this series on end-of-course ratings we have discussed how to frame a conversation with a faculty member who receives average ratings semester after semester and how to have a productive conversation with faculty who receives low evaluations. The final end-of-course ratings conversation that merits consideration is the exchange that needs to occur when there's an overreaction to the course ratings.

Sometimes the overreaction is triggered by one of those hurtful student comments. "This instructor should use his lectures for toilet paper." It's pretty hard not to let a comment like that get under your skin. But the problem is that one comment gains such importance that it overshadows everything else students have said, including a multitude of very positive responses. Faculty have been known to carry around hurtful student comments for years. I saw the toilet paper comment on an evaluation form that a faculty member shared with me. I didn't recognize the form. It's wasn't the one used at our institution. Come to find out, he'd kept the evaluation in a file for almost 20 years!

Another common overreaction point is the overreaction to a small increase or decrease in rating scores—and that can be the reaction by the faculty member or the department chair. A small change should not be taken as evidence of a decline or improvement in the quality of teaching. Small changes are more often a result of the form itself. These instruments do not offer precise measures of teaching effectiveness, especially if they've been created by a committee and not tested for validity and reliability. That both faculty and administrators

misinterpret, as in draw erroneous conclusions from small changes in ratings, is illustrated in rigorous research conducted by Boysen et al. (2014). In three separate studies, small changes in mean scores (differences small enough to be within the margin of error) were consistently misinterpreted.

From the earliest research on ratings, the advice of those developing and test-

> *These instruments do not offer precise measures of teaching effectiveness, especially if they've been created by a committee and not tested for validity and reliability.*

ing the instruments has been the same. Ratings can be valid and reliable. When they are, these ratings provide valuable feedback about instructional quality, but they should not be the only source of information when making judgments about teaching. Unfortunately, they often are the only data point or they're supplemented with weak peer review processes.

When dealing with a faculty member who's overreacting to rating results (a couple of negative comments or a miniscule change in the scores), or one who's taking the rating process way too

seriously (obsessively anxious about the results, critical of students and the process), the best advice is a set of strong recommendations for formative feedback. If something about the rating results doesn't make sense or if the results are contradictory, what the faculty member needs is more feedback—and not the kind of feedback provided by most end-of-course rating instruments. Items that are highly inferential ("the instructor cares about students") do not identify the policies, practices, or behaviors that convey those messages. So, while those results may motivate change, they do not inform the change.

Decisions about what to improve and how to change it are best informed with diagnostic, descriptive details. When are students doing the reading for the course? How much time are they spending studying for an exam? What do they do when they can't solve a problem? **Here's an excellent article** (open access) that outlines best practices for soliciting instructional feedback:

At many institutions, end-of-course ratings are the most important source (too often the only source) of feedback on teaching that faculty receive. Because faculty are vested in their teaching, their ability to accurately interpret and respond to rating results is easily compromised. Most teachers consider their rating results private information. They may talk about them generically with a colleague but rarely divulge specific details. The academic leader converses with faculty having read the results. That puts the academic leader in a good position to help teachers gain perspective

Employing Yoga Principles to Support Flourishing at Mid-career: Strategies for Institutional Leaders

Samantha M. Harden and Vicki L. Baker

An eminent threat to the United States' workforce is the culture of burnout, productivity challenges, and mental and physical stress. Bourgeoning empirical investigation and strong anecdotal evidence affirms that academia is not exempt (Barreto et al., 2022; Benge et al., 2015; Deligkaris et al., 2014; Eriksson et al., 2018). While burnout is a topic of critical import in the academy and is felt by students, faculty, and staff alike, it is most notably associated with the mid-career years (Baker & Manning, 2020). Many mid-career faculty find it particularly challenging to manage their own burnout despite seeking to help others (e.g., early career colleagues, students) manage theirs. Yet, faculty have the potential to mentor others in how to avoid burnout, and in fact, mentorship at mid-career is one of the most important resources in all of academia (Lunsford & Baker, 2023).

Recent investigations of workforce attrition predominantly focus on absenteeism, anthropometric measures (e.g., weight and blood pressure), and policy initiatives. Less is known, however, about outcomes people often value more, such as happiness and well-being. Flourishing has emerged as a novel public health target for its comprehensive domains, including meaning and purpose, close social relationships, and financial stability (VanderWeele et al., 2019). The Flourishing Network within the Human Flourishing Program at Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science Studies is one such group that seeks to support the integration of knowledge, via members' (including the lead author's) collective efforts to foster a deeper understanding of and capacity to promote human well-being. One approach to support flourishing is to apply the practices of movement, breath control, and moment-to-moment awareness—all of which speak to the influence yoga provides even "off the mat" for individual and societal health (Buffart et al., 2012; Chu et al., 2016; Cramer et al., 2018; Shaw & Kaytaz, 2021; Sivaramakrishnan et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2018).

We aim to equip innovative academic leaders with a novel lens for how they might use yoga principles to foster a culture of flourishing at their respective institutions. Such knowledge empowers mid-career faculty across appointment types and mid-career leaders (e.g., department chairs, deans) to focus on wellness and healthful professional and personal endeavors for themselves and the institutional stakeholders they are tasked with supporting. Examples of the most prominent issues that lead to burnout in academia include (1) financial and intellectual security in the corporatization of higher education, (2) a lack of time for creative pursuits and reflection (3) losing oneself in the drive to succeed, and (4) a culture of busyness that devalues rest and rejuvenation. Each of these issues corresponds to an energy center, called a chakra in the classical Indo-Aryan language of Sanskrit. While there are seven primary energy centers in many yoga lineages, Table 1 summarizes an example of four of these energy centers for application in academia and outlines critical strategies at the institutional, leadership, and faculty levels.

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on what it all means as well as possible next steps. However, given the evaluative responsibility the chair likely has for that faculty member, the conversation can make soliciting feedback from students and constructively responding to it a less likely outcome. It is a high-stakes conversation and academic leaders need to conduct these conversations carefully and constructively—focusing on providing a set of strong recommendations for formative feedback that will lead to improved performance.

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Chakra	Institutional-Level Strategy (President, Provost, Executive)	Leadership-Level Strategy (Dean, Chair)	Faculty-Level Strategy (Mid-career Faculty)
Root Financial + Intellectual Security	Offer professional development workshops to support skill development navigating external funding opportunities. Assign divisional advancement and/or sponsored research staff representatives to answer questions and provide needed support on funding/grant opportunities.	Ensure that divisional and/or departmental colleagues are aware of and know how to navigate internal and external granting opportunities; codify the knowledge. Provide friendly reviews on internal and external funding applications.	In what ways do you feel unsafe in your job or career? What resources do you need from leadership to change that narrative? *Mantra** I am safe. I am secure. I am grounded on this earthly plane.
Sacral Creative Expression + Birth of Ideas	Create coworking and other support processes to help foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Incentivize interdisciplinary collaborations; connect efforts to strategic priorities.	Provide opportunities for social support and connection (as simple as 15 min. coffee chat after divisional/departmental meetings). Create information sharing mechanisms by which faculty work is disseminated internally; create "faculty highlights."	What are you doing each day, week, semester, or year to generate space for combinatory play and creative thought? What practices can your unit (team, dept, lab) engage in to support creative pursuits? *Mantra** I am creative. I bring forth good ideas. I have healthy connections with people and projects.
Third Eye Intuition + Self-Study	Support or develop an institutional wellness program (e.g., yoga, meditation, lunch-and-learn sessions focused on nutrition). Sponsor wellness "competitions" and related programs that encourage daily activity (e.g., Walking Wednesdays).	Incorporate wellness/nonwork goals as part of yearly evaluation or related conversations. In 1:1 meetings, review workflows and professional commitments to support time and work commitment management.	Who are you beyond expertise, education, and labels? What are your innermost values and desires? How can you use these values and interests to communicate your value-add or service positions (committees, etc.) that most align with your goals? *Mantra** I already know. I let go of outcomes. I am connected to my highest self. I see my true self.
Crown Reverence, Rest, + Surrender	Encourage mid-career faculty to apply for and take supported leave (e.g., sabbatical, faculty leave).Offer workshops to facilitate proposal preparation for faculty pursuing sabbatical or other related leaves.	Institute dashboards to track and identify workload inequities. Encourage calendar blocking that accounts for professional and personal responsibilities.	What activities or practices give you true rest and recharge you? How can you find rest within each week, semester, and year and communicate those boundaries and needs to your team? *Mantra** I am already enough. Be here now. I am complete.

* Mantras are short, repeatable phrases that may regulate breathing and therefore regulate the nervous system (stems from the Sanskrit *manas* + *tra* = mind + tool = "tools for the mind").

Table 1. Example multilevel strategies that align with yoga principles to promote flourishing in academia

Our hope is that the new framework we put forth in this essay informs the study and practice of using the ancient practices set forth by yoga to cultivate a healthful mid-career experience. With the growing and nearly ubiquitous "industry" of yoga, showing accessible and adaptable practices may improve holistic well-being "off the mat" in a novel way. As the number of mid-career faculty across appointment types continues to expand, academic leaders need the language, tools, and resources to support this growing population of faculty. Such an investment in academic leaders and their mid-career faculty, as laid out in the table, provides what we believe to be a fruitful starting point for critical conversations and actions across the academy.

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Addressing Job Balance for Tenure-Track Faculty with Administrative Responsibilities

Karlin Burks, Kimberly Bunch-Crump, and Kellee D. Watkins

As tenure-track faculty members in higher education, we always have the notion of "publish or perish" at the front of our minds. But for those of us serving in competing, multiple roles in which full-time responsibilities to teaching, service, and scholarship combine with full-time administrative duties, job balance is elusive and daunting.

In 2022, Gabriele Griffin coined the term "work-work balance" to describe how higher education professionals negotiate competing job demands. While work-work balance is an emerging concept, and its impact on the retention of junior or tenure-seeking faculty warrants empirical study (Griffin; Pope-Ruark, 2023), minimizing or eliminating cumbersome administrative responsibilities for those pursuing tenure could be a positive way to address it. The question higher education institutions need to answer is what kinds of support they are willing to offer tenure-seeking faculty who are inundated by the daily minutia of administrative tasks.

Not a new phenomenon

Faculty having to contend with administrative tasks while performing their jobs is not a novel development. What has changed is that in the past, tenure-seeking faculty were often shielded from excessive administrative tasks, such as serving as program coordinators or being the lead principal investigator on a grant; today, that is no longer the case. With the rise of faculty vacancies in departments already stretched to their limits, coupled with the loss of more traditional secretaries and administrative assistants, all faculty, including tenure-seeking faculty, find themselves needing to pick up the slack.

Traditionally, the most common time allotment model for assistant professors, who are typically tenure-seeking faculty, is a 40/40/20 split: 40 percent research, 40 percent teaching, and 20 percent service. But for many faculty with increased administrative duties, the split is more like 50/50: they spend 50 percent of their time on administrative duties and the other 50 percent between teaching, service, and scholarship. The problem facing faculty in these situations is one of simple mathematics: no matter how you add it up, there is not enough time in the day left over for scholarly productivity.

In higher education, scholarly productivity is synonymous with publications; thus, "to be a scholar is to be a researcher—and publication is the primary yardstick by which scholarly productivity is measured" (Boyer, 1990, p. 2). Competing workplace demands form the primary challenge to scholarly productivity: juggling increasing administrative duties and the responsibilities of obtaining tenure. If tenure-seeking faculty are to keep their jobs, they must find time to write and publish. Attempts to balance the demands of increased administrative duties and tenure responsibilities present an overwhelming challenge, particularly as not having time to write because of administrative duties will not be an acceptable defense for limited publications during tenure review. Thus, if these faculty are to attain tenure, institutions need to find ways to support them as they seek to manage their increased administrative responsibilities.

Tenure timeline adjustment

Securing tenure in the allotted six-year time frame is one of the biggest challenges for tenure-seeking faculty. Meeting tenure timelines and expectations is challenging for traditionally employed faculty; however, the challenge is almost impossible for faculty with significant administrative responsibilities. Universities can support these faculty by extending the tenure timeline to accommodate the extra administrative workload. Flexibility or adjustments to the tenure timeline can include increasing the number of years faculty are allotted to fulfill their tenure responsibilities as well as rotating administrative roles between multiple faculty within a department.

Mentor support

Mentors are another valuable resource universities can provide to early career faculty seeking to balance tenure expectations with equally critical administrative responsibilities. Tenure-seeking faculty could benefit significantly from mentors who have proven track records of supporting early career professionals and who offer guidance around the tenure process and discuss solutions to challenges associated with navigating multiple administrative demands. As early career faculty are typically stressed by teaching workloads,

scholarship demands, and writing and managing grants (Sun & Simon-Roberts, 2020), mentors can provide encouragement as well as practical advice on how to best balance the two roles.

Reduced advising and course release

A reduction in the student advising workload and the addition of a course release to offset and attend to administrative duties are two other considerations universities could offer to these tenure-seeking faculty. With respect to student advising, it is not uncommon for tenure-seeking faculty to have as many advisees as some already tenured faculty, if not more. Thus, reducing the number of advisees would greatly support these faculty as they work toward tenure.

Additionally, a course release, or reduction in the number of courses a faculty member is required to teach each semester, is already typically offered to faculty serving in more traditional program coordinator roles to accommodate the increased administrative responsibilities. However, no such course reduction is offered to faculty who lack the formal title but still assume much of the administrative responsibility. Providing a course release to these faculty would be a huge step forward in allowing for a successful work-life balance.

Committee assignments

Finally, a review of the service obligations of tenure-seeking faculty with increased administrative responsibilities could be another practical university support. Although service is typically allocated for 20 percent of the workload, new faculty, the majority of whom are tenure seeking, are sometimes inundated with service responsibilities and often have more service hours than are ultimately needed for their tenure requirements. The university could support these faculty by limiting the number of committee assignments and restricting committee assignments that do not directly support their tenure and promotion. Although engaging in service is important for faculty development, committee assignments should be minimized during the tenure-seeking years to allow faculty time and space to engage in scholarship and fulfill tenure obligations.

Final thoughts

Being a tenure-seeking faculty member is a difficult enough task, but the task can seem insurmountable for faculty with multiple administrative duties. Higher education institutions must reexamine how the increased administrative workload impacts tenure requirements as the faculty job description expands beyond the traditional teaching, service, and scholarship model. To date, administrative duties are not counted in any significant way towards a faculty's tenure consideration. The most meaningful way higher education institutions can support faculty in these roles is to review current tenure guidelines and revise them to include consideration for the amount of time these administrative tasks require of faculty members. Supports must be interwoven into tenure processes, especially for faculty with significant administrative obligations, to facilitate a successful tenure outcome and a healthy work-life balance.

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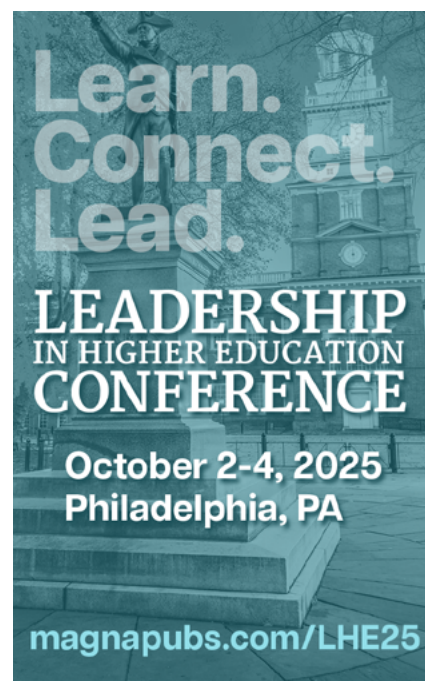
Planning Community-Based Faculty Training and Professional Development at Your Institution

Joseph Fees, Alexa Silver, and Tina Petrovic

External faculty development has many benefits for improving teaching and academic programs, but these courses and training also come with limitations. The direct creation of an academic institution's own faculty training and courses is one practical option to expand faculty professional development opportunities aligned with evidence-based teaching practices, institutional needs, and policy changes. Constructing in-house faculty courses at the university level has a number of advantages and can be cost effective.

During summer 2020, faculty and staff at Delaware State University designed an in-house training course, titled Online Course Conversion, with the support of a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) grant. The goal of the one-month course was to prepare all faculty to implement online and virtual classes in response to the pandemic for the 2020–2021 academic year. The course simulated an online class for faculty with learning modules focused on tools and strategies for effective online teaching, including tech programs, interactive activities, student engagement, and optimal online course design. Based on the experience of the Online Conversion Course at Delaware State University, this article will highlight a number of key takeaways to guide and encourage the development of internal training and courses for successful implementation at other institutions.

External professional development limitations

External professional development courses have much value, and they are an excellent resource for research-based teaching and high-quality programs. External programs also have national recognition and promote evidence-based pedagogy for improved teaching and course delivery. Costs vary based on

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the provider and universities often pay per participant, but these programs are an efficient use of resources for universities with limited budgets for teaching and technology support staff. One of the main challenges of these programs is that they can be too general; they do not address particular university policies, program requirements, or different disciplines. Additionally, they do not focus on the needs of the specific student population, and individual universities cannot modify or condense them, particularly those certifications with large time commitments.

Advantages of internal training

Internal training and courses remove some of these barriers of external professional development and have many additional advantages. In contrast to external professional development, the most substantial edge of internal training is it can address precise university needs with a design based on specific university policies and resources used by faculty and staff, including the learning management systems, technology subscriptions, and other operating systems. University-specific training help faculty not only improve as teachers, but also become more familiar with their institution's resources and policies. Another asset of internal training is an increased sense of comradery among faculty and collaboration with members of other departments, fostering new relationships with members of the university from different segments of the campus. Fellow faculty and staff design and demonstrate the learning content and videos of the courses, which gives the materials a familiar and relatable touch. With so many free tech tools, open educational resources, and the institution's learning management system at their disposal, universities can develop engaging training in-house with the resources to which the university already has access, while minimizing external technology costs. Trainers can provide participants with

completion certificates that can count toward any professional development requirements of faculty.

There is another substantial advantage to internal professional development. Because the university is managing its own training and courses, there are additional opportunities to monitor completion progress with enhanced feedback as well as collect data for the institution. The training team can gather and analyze abundant survey data from these courses to improve the institution and incorporate as a supplement to required accreditation data. For the Delaware State University course, the leaders collected survey data from each module (eight in total) as well as from the self-evaluation tools. These surveys also allowed for course improvements as the later cohorts started the class. Additionally, a post-semester survey in December 2020 gave valuable data about how the course improved teaching that semester and asked for faculty feedback for future training possibilities. The post-semester survey results were encouraging, with faculty overwhelmingly agreeing that the course helped prepare their courses and teaching for an online setting. Based on the feedback, the surveys also provided Delaware State with meaningful suggestions for future training directions.

Steps to implement internal training

There are several crucial steps to initiate the design and implementation of internal training. A recommended systematic blueprint to carry out this process is as follows:

1. Gather data and surveys from faculty, students, and administrators to identify university needs and opportunities for improvement and skill development.
2. Identify talents of particular faculty and staff. Ensure they have the needed training and resources to develop courses and modules. Select the faculty experts to create training materials and work as coordinators.
3. Develop courses as a group with individual tasks and a peer-review process. The more people with diverse perspectives involved in the review, the better the final product will be.
4. Have the reviewers work through training, suggest revisions, and pilot a practice cohort for the training.
5. Implement training and courses in a cohort module and develop relationships with participants through the course moderators and interactive assignments. Modify and improve the course based on cohort feedback. Design the course so that faculty can directly implement what they create into the courses they teach.
6. Offer small incentives and certificates to faculty upon completion.
7. Collect data and surveys from the training. Use the data to guide the future implementations of training topics and skills as well as evaluate institutional effectiveness.

Training moderation and the cohort model

As soon as the courses commence, effective moderation is essential for successful participation and training outcomes. The cohort model, selecting small groups of 10 to 20 participants to complete the course together, can help to develop a rapport with the facilitators and a sense of community with the rest of the group, just like a small, interactive online course. The leaders should train the moderators carefully on the course and the guidelines. Successful moderation not only promotes course completion, but also models effective online and virtual teaching, discussion post responses, and exemplary assignments. Just like in online courses, the moderators can steer the faculty through challenging sections; post announcements; and give them feedback, suggestions, and encouragement while keeping everyone within the set deadlines. They can also provide one-on-one help and guidance. In summary, the dedicated task of the moderator is to develop a community of learners and encourage meaningful and engaging interactions in a supportive environment.

Topics for faculty development

There are many vital topics of faculty development for universities to create. Some areas for internal training may include learning management systems, quality video creation, testing tools, student success strategies, assessment data systems, tech tools, online course design, open educational resources, and accessibility. Be sure to ask for faculty input and tailor all training to the individual university's needs, policies, goals, and operating systems.

Conclusion

Internal training, workshops, and courses are a way to move the university forward, improve teaching, and guide faculty to make the student learning experience more transformative with fewer allocated resources. This is increasingly important as institutions of higher education continue to navigate a more competitive academic market with declining student enrollments. The expansion and accessibility of these types of training will be essential to prepare faculty as our field goes through the rapid and needed changes it must undertake over the next few years to increase its relevance, impact, marketability, and student success.

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Contributors:

Vicki L. Baker, PhD, is the E. Maynard Aris Endowed Professor in Economics and Management and Department Chair at Albion College. She has authored over 110 scholarly works on faculty and leadership development, mentoring, and liberal arts colleges. Her recent book is *Managing Your Academic Career: A Guide to Re-envision Mid-career* (Routledge). She is a cofounder of Lead Mentor Develop.

Kimberly Bunch-Crump, PhD, BC-BA-D, is an assistant professor of special education in the Department of Special Education and Child Development at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Her research interests include using behavioral science to inform the implementation of culturally responsive practices and special education teacher development. Email: kbunchc@charlotte.edu

Karlin Burks, EdD, is an associate professor in the online master's degree program in educational leadership at the University of Southern Maine. In addition to her academic role, she works full-time as a high school administrator. Her research interests include principal preparation, inclusive leadership, and teacher leadership development. Email: Karlin.Burks@maine.edu

Joseph Fees, PhD, is an associate professor of Spanish and online coordinator for the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences at Delaware State University. He was the lead course designer and moderator for the HHMI Online Conversion Course. His research interests include teaching with technology, student engagement, and language pedagogy.

Susan K. Gardner, PhD, is dean of the College of Education at Oregon State University and professor of higher education. Her scholarship focuses on removing barriers to success for underrepresented populations in higher education. She served as co-PI and director for the National Science Foundation ADVANCE (09-054) award at the University of Maine until 2021, where she and colleagues conducted the research that led to her article.

Samantha M. Harden, PhD, is a behavioral psychologist, dissemination and implementation scientist, and 500 Hour Registered Yoga Teacher. She has authored 118 peer-reviewed journal articles and garnered $29 million in research funding. Her work centers on health promotion across the lifespan, specifically through the embodiment of yoga principles for public health.

Eric Lyerly, Esq., is a lawyer and writer who writes frequently on the topics of higher education law. He has served as the Fellow for the Center for Higher Education Law and Policy at Stetson University College of Law, and he is currently the editor of two academic newsletters focused on postsecondary institutions: *Disability Compliance for Higher Education* and *Campus Legal Advisor*.

Tina Petrovic, MA, is a lecturer of English as a foreign language at Delaware State University. She moderated six of the HHMI Online Course Conversion cohorts. Her research interests include increasing student engagement for international students and implementing gamification in instruction.

Alexa Silver, PhD, is a professor of history at Delaware State University. The Online Conversion Course was created as one initiative pursued through the HHMI Inclusive-Excellence grant that Dr. Silver directed. In addition to her historical research into colonial America, her research interests include online teaching, assessment, faculty development, and student success.

Kellee D. Watkins, PhD, is an assistant teaching professor and praxis coordinator in the Department of Educator Preparation at North Carolina A&T State University. Her research interests include English language arts and reading education, teacher professional development, and teacher coaching. Email: kdwatkins1@ncat.edu

Maryellen Weimer, PhD, is professor emerita of teaching and learning at Penn State Berks. She edited *The Teaching Professor* from 1987 until 2022 and is the author of *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (2nd ed.; Jossey-Bass, 2013), which remains one of the most influential books for educators looking to adopt a learner-centered approach in their classrooms. 🏛