

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 15, 2020

TO: University of Arizona Faculty

FROM: Andrea Romero, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

SUBJECT: Reflections and Looking Forward

Welcome to the Spring 2020 Semester. As I reflect on my past year in this role, it is truly an honor to learn about the vast array of your excellent scholarship and masterful teaching. I am looking forward to an exciting new year for our promotion process with 106 tenure-track 13 continuing-status, and 18 career-track dossiers in the queue as well as 75 submissions for university awards. I am particularly excited about the new Gerald G. Swanson Teaching Award and the Early Career Faculty Award. Thank you to Asya Roberts for her work to shepherd these submissions through the process; she has taken on additional duties this past year and we are all grateful for her professionalism and support for faculty and staff.

I would like to share below some of the highlights of our work in Faculty Affairs that demonstrate the continued commitment to a high level of rigor for promotion processes as well as best practices in faculty hiring, leadership, faculty recognition and professional development. Please read more about highlights from the past year and plans for the coming semester.

Equity

1. **Best Practices in Hiring.** A team of six University of Arizona representatives attended the Excelencia in Education Hiring Institute; this opportunity was available because of our HSI designation. Also, the Office of Strategic Implementation has provided support through 2023 for an initiative that supports a faculty cluster hire to fulfill the HSI mission, and to hire an Associate Vice Provost who will focus on improving the search, recruitment and hiring process across campus. In addition, this position will build capacity of faculty to serve Latinx students.
2. The **Strategic Priority Faculty Initiative** for campus visits and hiring continues to be successful. In the past 10 years, we have hired over 62 faculty through this program, with 92% retention. In the past year we had 9 applications and 6 offers were extended. The success of this program has ensured that it will continue; in fact, we have changed to monthly review of applications in order to facilitate a timely offer to competitive faculty.
3. **Workshops.** While we continue our regular workshops on promotion, we have also brought new attention to important issues on the gendered divide in service, gender bias in letters of recommendation, best practices for mentoring, and building peer mentor networks. This spring we will offer new workshops on academic freedom and voice on campus for faculty.
4. The **Salary Equity Study** is nearing completion and my participation on the committee has led to the creation of Annual Review and Pay Equity Taskforces for faculty and department heads. I hope this work will lead to updates in policy, and new practices to support faculty and leadership as they create and sustain best practices for equity in salary and review processes.

5. The **Academic Leadership Institute** continues to be successful in the 11th year, with 222 alumni and 86% retention with 50% in leadership positions. The **Inclusive Leadership Program** is a partnership with Human Resources which continues to serve many faculty and staff across campus for leadership development through HSI Fellows, Future Leaders Workshops, and the Inclusive Leaders Cohort Certificate. Thank you to Interim Associate Vice Provost, Tannis Gibson, for her work with these programs.

Building Community

It has been clear to me in the past year that there is a deep interest in building community among faculty that can contribute to better research and teaching.

1. **Early Career and First Year Faculty Programs.** We continue to offer *Campus Connections* which are informal social events for early career and first year faculty to get to know each other and to learn about exciting activities all over campus. Thank you to our partners including College of Humanities, College of Fine Arts, University Libraries, and Pima County Cooperative Extension. We look forward to an HSI centered Campus Connection event this spring. We, along with over 25 collaborators, refreshed the *First-year Faculty Orientation* with many practical activities, including offering a CatCard, meeting with HR Consultants, lunch with Deans, as well as teaching and research resources.
2. The **Faculty Resources Fair** was a successful new university-wide event with 61 groups across campus represented. This was a fun way to break down silos and connect faculty directly with resources to support and elevate their work. Thank you to the groups who participated; we are especially grateful for the leadership and collaboration of Research, Innovation and Impact and the Office of Instructional Assessment. **Faculty Showcase** is another university-wide event that showcases research, scholarship and creative activity of outstanding faculty and is co-sponsored by the Regent's Professors and Arizona Arts.
3. **Faculty Salons** with the President and Provost have brought together small groups of recently tenured faculty and faculty senators to engage in dialogue on timely issues and help inform, raise awareness, and build relationships across campus and with leadership.
4. The **HeadsUP** program continues with the leadership of Professor Rob Miller, Executive Director of HeadsUP. Regular forums and support are available for department heads and directors. This year we have created a new on-boarding, year-long program for first-year department heads and directors that is a collaboration between Faculty Affairs, HeadsUP, and Human Resources.
5. **Our Best Work Environment (OBWE)**, funded through the Office of Strategic Initiatives, has provided opportunities to examine strengths and challenges in the work environment for faculty and staff. Two-hundred and ninety-seven individuals participated in Praxis workshops that led to taskforces of faculty and staff who will tackle issues of annual review, pay equity, on-going assessment of work environment, workplace inclusivity, and enhancing talent and motivation. We have worked with many partners across campus to finalize the new updated **policy on professional conduct; see UHAP 7.01** for more details on integrity, inclusivity, and more. In fact, some of the most meaningful moments of my work in the past year have been the opportunity to be present with faculty in the moments of their highest highs and lowest lows. We also helped put in place a press release aligned with the Action Collaborative of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine against sexual harassment.

There are many challenges ahead for higher education and faculty, not the least of which include changes in funding, contingent faculty practices, overburden of work expectations, inequity, and unhealthy work climates. I look forward to working with you to address and overcome these challenges while we continue ongoing activities for the promotion process, professional development, faculty hiring, and faculty recognition. Together we can build a faculty community that fosters a healthy workplace climate which allows for faculty to focus on their creative activity, research and teaching.