

**The Alfred P. Sloan Awards for
Faculty Career Flexibility
Accelerator Plan Proposal
San José State University
October 1, 2007**

San José State University, a member of the 23 campus California State University (CSU) system, has welcomed significant policy changes regarding career flexibility for its tenured and tenure-track faculty. The most recent Collective Bargaining Agreement (CFA-CSU Agreement), which took effect in May 2007, includes expanded leave options for birth and adoptive faculty parents, more flexible policies for tenure clock modification, and the continuation of pre-retirement and early retirement options for senior faculty. Our campus is committed to accelerating the career flexibility outlined in the new Agreement by adopting several campus initiatives that build on extant policies and programs focusing on work-life balance. These initiatives are consistent with our campus strategic planning goals and our vision to achieve the identified goals by 2010. We already have in place tracking mechanisms for monitoring the effects of implementing the initiatives outlined in our accelerator application.

The San José State University ACE/Sloan Accelerator Award application theme is to enhance the career flexibility of tenured and tenure-track faculty through the following phases or stages of the academic career: recruitment, early career, mid-career and late career, pre-retirement/early retirement. Although the University has a variety of policies and programs related to various aspects of a faculty member's employment, our goal is to create a more holistic approach by viewing an "academic career life-cycle" of a faculty member from recruitment through retirement.

Rationale for Application for the ACE/Sloan Accelerator Award

The application for an ACE/Sloan Accelerator Award has provided our campus with a well-timed opportunity to review the San José State University strategic planning process, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) reaffirmation of accreditation, and the findings from several recent surveys from the perspective of tenured and tenure-track faculty. The University strategic planning process engaged all members of the University community and created, as one of its major themes, an "Investment in Faculty." The goals associated with this theme include the recruitment and retention of faculty reflective of our diverse student population, an increased percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty, increased support for faculty research and development, and reduction of faculty workload. The WASC reaffirmation of accreditation report of July 2007 reinforced the need for our University community to work towards the goals outlined by our strategic plan.

In addition to the stated goals adopted by the University, recent research findings from national and campus-based surveys of our tenured and tenure-track faculty indicate particular stress among those with children under the age of 18, among those at lower academic ranks, and among racial/ethnic minority faculty. In a recent effort to inform

senior faculty about our system-wide early retirement program, institutional data indicate that 42% of the tenured and tenure-track faculty are age 55 or older, that 53% of our faculty are full professors, 24% are associate professors, and 23% are assistant professors. Compared with national data regarding faculty employment, our faculty members are somewhat older (42% vs. 38%) than faculty on average in public masters degree institutions, and our faculty are more likely to be full professors (53% vs. 31.1%) than faculty on average in public masters degree institutions (Chronicle of Higher Education, August 31, 2007). With an increasingly aging faculty, mirroring national trends in higher education faculty employment, it is clear that this is an opportune time to address the particular “academic career life-cycle” stages of recruitment, early career, mid-career and late career, early retirement and pre-retirement.

Recruitment Goals and Metrics

The first stage in the “academic career life-cycle” is recruitment. We intend to enhance our recruitment outcomes with additional outreach efforts and with expanded efforts to respond to identified partner/spousal career assistance needs.

Although our campus has made progress with the number of racial/ethnic minority and women faculty who are tenured and tenure-track, and our faculty demographics indicate that we are more diverse than the average of U.S. public masters degree institutions, we intend to accelerate our goal of increasing faculty diversity by adding to our current initiatives (from AY 1996-1997 to AY 2006-2007, our racial/ethnic minority faculty members have increased from 22.9% to 30.9%. During the same time, our women faculty members have increased from 33.4% to 42.5%. National data indicate that, on average, comparable public masters degree institutions are made up of 19.1% racial/ethnic minority faculty, and 40.9% women faculty [Chronicle of Higher Education, August 31, 2007]). We plan to provide additional training to recruitment committees with a focus on outreach to universities with larger numbers of diverse doctoral candidates/graduates. In addition, we will send department chairs and deans to institutions identified by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in 2004, with higher rates of diverse doctoral program graduates, to create University-to-University connections to educate doctoral program directors/advisors and doctoral candidates about our campus and our faculty career opportunities. We will measure the outcome of this initiative by tracking all training and outreach efforts. We will continue to monitor the diversity of the new cohort of faculty hired in each recruitment cycle.

San José State was one of the founding members of the Northern California Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) and our University currently has a representative on the NorCalHERC Advisory Board. One of NorCalHERC’s original goals was to provide spousal/partner regional searches in order to recruit and retain the best faculty for all of the member institutions. In addition to our work with NorCalHERC, we will build on the work of the Division of Student Affairs, the current provider of student career counseling, to expand its mission to include partner/spouse career assistance. We will monitor the use of this resource and the outcomes for candidates with identified spouse/partner employment needs. We view this initiative as

an indication to candidates that our University is interested in providing career services to partners/spouses in order to assist in family transitions to our area. We will continue to work with NorCalHERC to create additional tracking mechanisms that will provide documentation of the use of on-line faculty recruitment advertisements with the associated outcome of new faculty hires.

Early Career Goals and Metrics

The second stage in the “academic career life-cycle” is the early career. This career stage extends from appointment to a tenure-track position through the tenure decision. We intend to work to understand our diverse faculty better through more in-depth research on the special needs of our non-U.S. citizen faculty, our racial/ethnic minority faculty and our women faculty. We also intend to build on our campus focus on families, with a special emphasis on faculty members with children, and we intend to provide more training and information about leaves and stopping the tenure clock to administrators, department chairs and tenure-track faculty.

Data from NORC indicate that in 2004, nearly 30 % of all doctoral degree recipients from U.S. doctoral programs were non-U.S. citizens. Hence, we increasingly find that our successful applicants for tenure-track faculty positions need assistance in obtaining H1-B visas. In addition to the need for visas, special problems have arisen for new tenure-track faculty whose families of origin are located outside of the U.S. Out-of-country travel is limited by visa status, adding particular stress to this growing group of faculty members. As the number of non-U.S. citizen tenure-track faculty has grown in recent years, we intend to conduct focus groups with this identified group of faculty. In addition to our non-U.S. citizen tenure-track faculty, we are interested in conducting focus groups with our racial/ethnic minority faculty and women faculty to understand in more depth the findings of recent faculty surveys. We intend to identify general and specific needs of non-U.S. citizen, racial/ethnic minority, and women faculty in order to provide information and referral to appropriate programs and to create new programs, as needed. These efforts will be documented and tracked in our continuing efforts to evaluate our rates of faculty retention.

Located in one of the most expensive communities for real estate purchase in the country, San José State University has made recent strides by providing affordable housing options for faculty. The “Campus Village,” which opened in Fall 2006, with one multi-story building devoted to apartments for faculty and staff. A University/City of San José collaboration has resulted in a tenure-track faculty homebuyer program and an urban renewal housing rental program with formerly City-owned properties. Many of our faculty members have lengthy commutes to areas with more affordable housing; however these options have allowed faculty to live closer to the University and connect better with the community. We plan to work to build a more cohesive community of faculty by adding to a recent initiative of Division of Student Affairs: The First Annual Family Fitness Fair. We also plan to build on our current information packet for new faculty with additional resources regarding the San José community and the Silicon Valley, focusing on health and wellness. Expanding the work of the Division of Student

Affairs and Human Resources, which provides an annual “Benefits Fair,” we will work to create a more family-friendly workplace. We will address the needs of younger faculty with children by providing information about child care options and creating a listserv for faculty to communicate about child care referrals or assistance. Our outcome measure will be rates of faculty retention.

Information to tenure-track faculty about personal and professional leaves and stopping the tenure clock will be enhanced by training deans, associate deans, and chairs about leave options, which have expanded with our newly bargained Agreement. In addition to training, we will update our University website to include the enhanced options for leaves and stopping the tenure clock. We currently track all of these processes and we will continue to do so in order to evaluate the effect of additional information on rates of utilization; the ACE/Sloan benchmark survey of faculty will also provide additional data for later comparison.

Mid-Career – Late Career Goals and Metrics

The third stage in the “academic career life-cycle” is mid-career to late career. We intend to reinstitute a special program for faculty who are evaluated in the “post-tenure review” process. Current University policy outlines a review every fifth year for faculty members who have achieved tenure. The policy has a development option, allowing for reflection on the previous five years with a projection of a career plan for the upcoming five years. We will reinstitute a special retreat for faculty electing the development option in order to reinforce the importance of reflection on past achievements and planning for future academic accomplishments. We monitor this evaluation cycle and track participation and will continue to do so.

We intend to revive “Bridges to Community,” a program that was initiated by our College of Science. This program paired senior faculty members with businesses, agencies and schools to provide faculty service to the community while connecting faculty with the latest technologies, advances and trends in their disciplines. This opportunity to provide service, to be exposed to innovations taking place in our business, science, engineering, humanities, arts, social sciences and health communities has provided senior faculty, in particular, with a renewed perspective on their careers. We also intend to revive the “Last Lecture,” an opportunity for senior faculty to provide a lecture to the University community focused on an overview of their disciplinary areas. We will track the numbers of participants in the two programs, collect data from faculty members about their satisfaction with participation, and collect data from the institutions in which our faculty members have been paired.

Early Retirement/Pre-Retirement Goals and Metrics

The fourth stage in the “academic career life-cycle” is early retirement/pre-retirement. We intend to provide additional information to faculty about early retirement and pre-retirement programs.

Our faculty members currently take advantage of a very successful and much utilized policy on early retirement. The Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) is available to tenured faculty members who are age 55 or older. Qualified faculty are able to retire, to receive full retirement pay, and to teach no more than half time at their pre-retirement salary for up to five years. Currently, 47 faculty members are participants in FERP; this is 15 % of those who are 55 and older. Another program, the Pre-Retirement Reduction in Time Base (PRTB), is available to the same group of faculty; however, the program is currently underutilized with only 2 participants; this is less than 1 % of the eligible faculty. PRTB is available to tenured faculty who are 55 or older; this program reduces teaching assignments by 1/3, 1/2 or 2/3. A faculty member in the PRTB Program continues to receive full service credit towards retirement; at the same time, his/her work assignment and pay are reduced. We intend to create additional information that will be widely disseminated about the PRTB program, and we will create an on-line calculator for faculty to estimate similarities and differences between the FERP and PRTB programs. We will track admission into the two programs to evaluate utilization rates with the intent of increasing participation in the PRTB program.

Initiatives Applying to All Stages of “Academic Career Life-Cycle”

In reviewing the theme of enhancing career flexibility through four stages of the “academic career life-cycle,” two additional initiatives are necessary. One is a centralized pool of money for leaves and the second is a method of communicating information about policies and programs to faculty, chairs and administrators.

We intend to make a request to the University Planning Council (the review committee which advises the President on strategic planning initiatives) to set aside a University pool of money to provide coverage for faculty paid leaves. Currently, departments must fund paid leaves from an allocated budget without supplements for maternity/paternity/adoption leaves, sick leaves or bereavement leaves. We anticipate that this proposed change of funding will help department chairs who are concerned about limited budgets and the need to allocate funds for both a paid leave of absence and for substitute coverage. At the same time, faculty members will be more likely to use paid leaves knowing that their department is supportive of the leave. We will continue to track the number of leaves granted with our current tracking mechanisms.

Although we have carefully considered the creation of a brochure with career flexibility policies to provide to administrators, chairs and tenured and tenure-track faculty, the Advisory Committee for the Accelerator Award has rejected the idea. Our experience with limited state funding and the expense of good quality, but quickly outdated print materials, has resulted in our intent to focus instead on high quality, up-to-date web sites with updates planned on a quarterly basis. In addition, we are committed to providing ongoing training to chairs, associate deans and deans to work to create a culture of increased support for faculty career flexibility.

Summary

With new policies enacted as a result of a recent and updated Collective Bargaining Agreement, with a focused strategic plan and with the successful reaffirmation of accreditation, San José State University is positioned to accelerate its focus on career flexibility for tenured and tenure-track faculty. The opportunity to view our policies and programs in an integrated, “academic career life-cycle” perspective has provided us with a clear view of our current state and of areas for improvement and growth. We intend to build on policies, add to programs and revive programs in the following areas: recruitment, early career, mid and late career, early retirement/pre-retirement. We have mechanisms in place to track outcomes of improved initiatives and new initiatives.

With an ACE/Sloan Accelerator Award for faculty career flexibility, San José State University will be able to share our outcomes with our CSU campus colleagues, NorCalHERC and other colleges and universities that are working to develop, refine and operationalize the concept of “faculty career flexibility.”

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