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ABSTRACT

This paper combines the inquiry phase of the New Pathways project on faculty careers and employment with recommendations for concrete practice on campus, bringing together findings from a series of interviews of new faculty and graduate students called "Heeding New Voices" with the guide "Principles of Good Practice: Supporting Early-Career Faculty" by Mary Deane Sorcinelli. The structured interviews that provide the framework and substance for the first work involved interviewing more than 350 individuals and convening 40 focus groups. These interviews show that new faculty members believe themselves involved in noble work that yields personal reward and social value. There is among them, however, a deep concern about fundamental aspects of the academic career: the lack of a coherent tenure system, the lack of community, and the lack of an integrated professional and personal life. "Principles of Good Practice" presents 10 principles of good practice for early-career faculty. It also contains inventories to examine individual administrator and institutional practices as well as examples of concrete and innovative approaches to good practice being used at a variety of institutions. The third section, "Readings and Resources for and about Early-Career Faculty," provides aa list of 86 resources for further reading. An appendix describes the New Pathways Paper Series. "Heeding New Voices" contains 24 references and "Principles of Good Practice" contains 11 references. (SLD)

Heeding New Voices

Academic Careers for a New Generation

by

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INQUIRY #7

FORUM ON Faculty Roles & Rewards

AAHE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

NEW PATHWAYS: FACULTY CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

A PROJECT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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About the New Pathways Working Paper Series

The Forum on Faculty Roles & Rewards is a program of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE). It works with faculty leaders, senior academic administrators, trustees, legislators, and others interested in refocusing faculty priorities to address pressing institutional and societal needs. To advance this agenda, AAHE initiated a project called "New Pathways: Faculty Careers and Employment for the 21st Century." Its New Pathways Working Paper Series addresses key issues related to changing faculty careers and employment arrangements; the series consists of fourteen papers.

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Foreword

To provide a national arena for rethinking the faculty career and to launch studies that make available fresh ideas and informed data for the discussion, AAHE's Forum on Faculty Roles & Rewards initiated the project "New Pathways: Faculty Careers and Employment for the 21st Century." From the New Pathways project three practical initiatives emerged as central: the changing nature of the faculty appointment (work being advanced by Richard Chait and his colleagues at Harvard); post-tenure review (led by Christine Licata at Rochester Institute of Technology); and the experience of new faculty, with special attention to the tenure process.

Among the many products of that New Pathways project has been the New Pathways Working Paper Series, of which this is the fourteenth and final inquiry into practical ideas and fresh thinking about new career paths and imaginative employment arrangements campuses could try on for size. (See the Appendix for more on the Series.)

Previous installments in this series of Working Papers have been just that — accounts of work in progress, intended to stimulate and enrich further discussion. But this New Pathways Paper #7 combines the inquiry phase of the New Pathways project with recommendations for concrete practice on campus, bringing together findings from a series of interviews of new faculty and graduate students we have called *Heeding New Voices* with Mary Deane Sorcinelli's guide "Principles of Good Practice: Supporting Early-Career Faculty." The intent is both to give voice to those who are just beginning their academic careers and to provide guidance for the senior faculty, chairs, deans, and others in higher education responsible for shaping the professoriate of the future.

The structured interviews that provided the framework and substance for the *Heeding New Voices* inquiry were conducted by a group of faculty who have devoted much of their professional work to understanding the changing role of faculty and the academic workplace. Their probing questions and discerning insights provided the foundation on which we built our interpretation of the experience of early-career faculty. Convening those interview sessions and contributing to the process were Thomas Angelo, Ann Austin, Roger Baldwin, Robert Froh, Zelda Gamson, Judith Gappa, Pat Hutchings, Estela Lopez, Robert Ibarra, the late Robert Menges, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, and myself.

Working with Mary Deane Sorcinelli and Ann Austin in preparing this report has been a

special pleasure. Both are playing leading roles in doing the research on new faculty and in developing the institutional supports needed to sustain the vitality and resilience of early-career faculty. In this endeavor, theory and practice have come together in unusual ways. Indicative of the special convergence is that for the coming year Ann Austin will be president of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) and Mary Deane Sorcinelli will be president of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD). They represent the best of an emerging, new generation of leadership.

In their interpreting of the "new voices," Sorcinelli and Austin emphasized themes that I myself would not have made central — reflecting, I suspect, the differences in our individual experiences as faculty members and the powerful influence of both gender and age. Our work together has underscored the importance of collaboration, particularly when working with the large, generational shifts taking place in the composition of the American professoriate.

The principles grew out of the *Heeding New Voices* study, and they and the study report appear here jointly. The principles section also is available as a separate booklet for use by deans, department chairs, and other academic leaders working directly with new faculty.

The late Robert Menges was an active participant in the early phases of the *Heeding New Voices* inquiry. His influence on our understanding of the new generation of faculty persists, and will for sometime to come. We want to honor and celebrate that contribution, while also acknowledging how deeply he is missed.

R. Eugene Rice
July 2000

Heeding New Voices: Academic Careers for a New Generation

by R. Eugene Rice, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, and Ann E. Austin

A major transformation is coming in the American professoriate, if for no other reason than we are on the verge of a generational changing of the guard. Our senior faculty, appointed in large numbers during higher education's expansionist period circa 1957-1974, have begun to make choices about their retirement and later-life careers. And the next generation of faculty is already beginning to succeed them (see Finkelstein, Seal, and Schuster, 1998). Leaders among the faculty and administration now in our colleges and universities have a time-limited window of opportunity to influence this transformation, and in so doing to contribute to setting the future course of higher learning.

The sheer magnitude of the technological and other changes higher education faces in the twenty-first century would make this transition in the professoriate challenging enough. What will make it particularly difficult is the enormous disparity between the way the departing, senior faculty have experienced their careers — their life's choices, chances, and opportunity structures — and the employment conditions now confronting their successors.

The senior faculty, mostly men between ages 53 and 65, entered the academic profession under the most favorable of conditions:

- Their age cohort was the century's smallest, born during the Depression and World War Two.
- They entered graduate school when fellowships were readily available and competition, both within their small cohort and from women and minorities, was at a minimum.
- They were seeking their first jobs in a seller's market; and became eligible for tenure at a time when employment opportunities outside higher education were numerous and tenure was often used to entice them to stay put.
- And not least, they now are facing an unusually secure and well-funded retirement.

Reflecting and reinforcing these favorable conditions is a mythology about the quality of life that goes with an academic career — autonomy, freedom, being part of a community of scholars, security, reasonable workload, the good life. It is a myth that persists and one widely subscribed to, both by those who aspire to a faculty career and by the larger public.

The disparity between the myth of the professorial life and the new realities being faced now by faculty in the early stages of their academic careers is dramatically illustrated in the following account of two interviews conducted in the *Heeding New Voices* study reported here. The first was a structured conversation with graduate students at a university in the Northwest who aspire to academic careers. When asked about their perceptions of those careers, the students built on belief in a comfortably idyllic professorial life — even though the undergirding reality has markedly changed. An interviewee described one of the persistent but misleading images: "I have a fantasy about academic life, which I still cling to, . . . of the independent thinker who goes in when he wants, does what's really exciting to him, is surrounded by good colleagues and students, in a place where the person with the best idea wins and that's okay."

SO SERIOUS IS THIS ISSUE THAT WE MUST ASK WHETHER THE BEST OF THE NEW GENERATION WILL STILL FIND THE FACULTY PROFESSION ATTRACTIVE?

In contrast, a conversation with early-career faculty at an urban university in the Northeast took a different turn. One interviewee there readily admitted that he was drawn to the flexibility of an academic lifestyle — including the summers off — but has discovered how naïve that view was; he offered instead a view of an academic life that is getting "worse and worse." Others in the interview chimed in, elaborating why: "The requirements of tenure are harder to meet." "Junior faculty are held to a higher standard than the senior faculty." "Non-tenured faculty are vulnerable when students have problems." "There is more public pressure on universities." "Funding for research has decreased." "Faculty have to teach more required courses." "There are more imposed external requirements on curricula." One young woman concluded, "It drains the joy out of it."

These stories capture both the hopeful idealism and the lived experience of the graduate students and early-career faculty who will make up the professoriate in this new century. The overwhelming majority of them hang onto that idyllic vision — the myth lives. But the difficult reality — the unpredictability — of the professorial life all too soon becomes evident. As the late Robert Menges found in his interviews with new faculty that resulted in his book *Faculty in New Jobs,* the

anxieties of a new generation of faculty "have shifted from anxiety about getting a job to anxiety about surviving on the job" (1999: 20). So serious is this issue that we must ask whether the best of the new generation will still find the faculty profession attractive?

As we approach this generational change, we have to sort out the discrepancy between the mythology surrounding faculty work and the workaday realities with which faculty — early-career faculty, particularly — must contend. We also need to decide on the most constructive responses to enormous pressures emerging from all sides to "do something" about the academic career. State legislators and governing boards across the country are regularly proposing changes to one or another of its elements, whether for greater accountability, more productivity, or limits on tenure.

The collegial culture of the campus, which influences greatly how faculty members think of themselves and their work, is being challenged by a managerial culture that pulls in a very different direction and is gathering strength. The faculty-oriented culture — the collegial — looks to peer review for validation and to peers for leadership, assumes a community of scholars (much idealized), and identifies tenure and academic freedom as key elements. The managerial is driven by concerns for the bottom line, accountability, and efficiency.

Each of these cultures has its own economy, shaping academic priorities and having an enormous impact on faculty and their work. The collegial is a prestige economy, whose ranking systems and hierarchically arrayed classifications control what is regarded as meritorious in the profession. The managerial culture is a market economy, that must attend to external expectation and competition. Early-career faculty feel themselves caught between the two systems, having been attracted to the profession in the first place primarily by a commitment to their discipline or field and a desire to share that intrinsic interest with others.

At the same time, academic administrators worry increasingly about institutional flexibility, the capacity to respond in a timely fashion to rapidly changing environments. The impact of technological innovations on both teaching and research is raising profound questions about the traditional ways in which faculty work is organized, as is what we are learning about how students learn and new pedagogical approaches. The ensuing debate about changes in the work of faculty ranges widely, from blatant faculty-bashing to close-minded defense of the status quo in which the phrase "the envy of the world" is tossed in at every opportunity.

The *Heeding New Voices* Study

The *Heeding New Voices* study is rooted in the conviction that in rethinking faculty careers, any changes to be made in the coming years need to be grounded in the contemporary experience of those

most directly affected by the changes. Our purpose, then, was to listen carefully to newcomers to the profession, whose experience of the academic career is radically different from what most senior faculty and academic administrators — those who will shape future academic personnel policy — experienced in their own early work years.

To permit as accurate a hearing as possible of the perspectives, ideas, insights, and preferences of these newcomers, the *Heeding New Voices* study solicited the assistance of a select group of distinguished scholar-practitioners (see Foreword) who work closely with and have studied and written about the graduate school and new faculty experiences. They conducted structured interviews around the country with early-career faculty and with "aspiring" faculty (i.e., graduate students planning careers in higher education).

IN THE INTERVIEWS WITH FACULTY IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THEIR CAREERS AND WITH GRADUATE STUDENTS PREPARING FOR FACULTY WORK, WE ASKED WHAT HAD THEY HOPED FOR? WHAT DID THEY CURRENTLY EXPERIENCE? WHAT DID THEY NEED?

The interviews were specially organized to highlight experiences across the sectors of higher education and across disciplines, races and ethnicities, genders, and geographical regions. Interviewees were located in public and private research universities, comprehensive universities, private liberal arts colleges, and some in community colleges. Some interview groups represented single fields or disciplines, such as engineering, mathematics, or natural sciences; others included faculty or graduate students from a family of disciplines, such as social sciences or humanities; some groups covered a wide range of disciplines. Still other interview groups were organized to focus on interdisciplinary fields, such as women's studies, environmental science, American studies, or public policy. Some of the structured interviews included only women, and typically new faculty were interviewed separately from graduate students. Part-time adjunct faculty were also included.

In addition to these interviews, the study convened several focus groups with members of the academy who work with early-career faculty, such as faculty-development leaders and heads of engineering departments. All in all, forty different groups were convened and more than 350 individuals interviewed.

In the interviews with faculty in the early stages of their careers and with graduate students preparing for faculty work, we asked what had they hoped for? What did they currently experience? What did they need? What did they want in an academic career? What in a faculty career did they think would attract the best of their generation into the profession? What would make the faculty

career more resilient and self-renewing for individual faculty members, and at the same time allow colleges and universities to adapt creatively to changes on the horizon?

It is important to note that the *Heeding New Voices* work stands on the shoulders of a number of notable studies conducted over the last decade — several by the interviewers involved here (Boice, 1992; Menges, 1999; Sorcinelli and Austin, 1992; Tierney and Bensimon, 1996). Having reviewed those studies, we are struck by the extensive congruence of their findings despite their widely varying research approaches. In this paper, we've given dominance to the *Heeding New Voices* interviewees, but we've also woven in information from elsewhere to give their voices an added timbre and context. That widespread agreement exists among studies strengthens the confidence we have in our findings and in the resulting "Principles of Good Practice" that accompany this study report.

A Vision of the Academic Career

Previous studies all suggest that new faculty enter the profession with a high level of idealism about it. The newcomers are optimistic, enthusiastic, and committed to their campuses and careers. They see the faculty position as exciting, fulfilling, challenging, and playing a critical role in society. They envision the academy as providing a high level of freedom and autonomy, opportunities for intellectual discovery and growth, wise use of their skills and abilities, opportunities to have an impact on others, and a chance to work with credible, collegial peers (Boice, 1992; Sorcinelli and Austin, 1992).

These ideals and enthusiasm are well-embedded long before new faculty are hired into their first faculty positions. Data from aspiring faculty in the *Heeding New Voices* interviews are entirely consistent with extensive data collected in a recent longitudinal study of graduate students (see Austin and Fraser, 1999; Nyquist et al., 1999) as well as in large-scale quantitative research conducted a decade ago (Anderson and Swazey, 1998). Graduate students we interviewed report being drawn to the faculty career because they love to learn and pursue intellectual interests; because they perceive that faculty work involves variety, creativity, and the challenge of inquiry; because they anticipate, in the words of one respondent, "freedom to pursue things that fascinate you all the time."

These prospective faculty members also express strong commitment to contributing to the development of their field's next generation, to wanting to work with students, and more broadly to "wanting to help others" by using their intellectual expertise to improve society. The allures of being part of a community and of interacting with diverse people also are important parts of the attraction of a faculty career. Put simply, graduate students aspiring to the faculty role are enthusiastic about doing meaningful work.

These themes and the dreams they reflect about faculty work persist as the graduate students become new faculty members. Now in their first appointments, the new faculty in the *Heeding New Voices* interviews, like faculty in earlier studies, are eloquent in their passion for the academic work itself — teaching and research. In describing both their classrooms and their research projects or labs, a number of these new faculty opened with "I love what I do so much," and went on to describe why: "cognitive stimulation," "the personal contact with students," "discovery-oriented environment," "the opportunity to stretch my mind."

Continuing a theme mentioned by the graduate students, the new faculty also value the autonomous aspects of the career — their ability to organize and determine their own work. "I like the boundlessness in how I construct the work. I am my own boss and set my own agenda and hours — both intellectually and practically," said one. Closely linked is the draw of academic freedom, the opportunity "to pursue the kind of research you want to pursue, to change directions, and to set your own agenda. But I understand that this freedom also makes us accountable."

The sense of engagement already well-established in graduate school follows many new faculty into their new careers, expressed as strong social commitments and a desire that their academic work be part of a larger life mission to give back to their local communities and to improve society. The intent to be involved in social activism and reform was particularly striking among *Heeding New Voices* interviewees, and most evident among the female faculty and faculty of color. Some see themselves "as role models," for example for "young women students who aspire to be professionals and for male students who will need to be able to work with female colleagues." Others desire to influence the direction of their profession, to make an impact "on policy making, on state and national agencies, on how people do their jobs." As they begin to shape their academic life, nonmajority faculty in particular clearly articulated a vision of a career more fully connected to a changing, diverse society.

The Reality of the Academic Career

The *Heeding New Voices* interviews confirm what has been found in almost two decades of research on new and early-career faculty; in other words, the strongest effects on work satisfaction have remained essentially the same, and they spring from a rich internal source. Unfortunately, what early-career faculty *hope for* and *need* from their work life do not fully match what they actually experience over time. A troubling gap exists between the vision and the reality of the academic career.

Even as graduate students aspiring to the faculty role and new faculty speak passionately about their vision for academic work, they also reveal deep concerns about the reality of that work. Such worries begin in graduate school. The graduate students in our *Heeding New Voices* interviews describe

the same concerns as were articulated by aspiring faculty in another recent and extensive study of graduate students (see Austin and Fraser, 1999; Nyquist et al., 1999). The most dominant theme seems to be the graduate students' perception that early-career faculty live "crazed" lives. While the intrinsic aspects of faculty work lure them, graduate students observe that the faculty day is very hectic and stressful, that teaching often takes a back seat to research, and that new faculty are under intense pressure to meet tenure expectations. One interviewee in the *Heeding New Voices* project observed that new faculty just "work, work, work."

These graduate students also worry that while they envision a faculty career made meaningful through stimulating interactions and a sense of community, the reality they observe is "cut-throat" and marred by the isolation that comes from faculty "being in their offices, doing their publications." Interwoven is their sense that even if they obtain a faculty position, getting tenure is a process of great stress and uncertainty. Even juxtaposed against their cherished ideals and enthusiasm for faculty work, such observations cause many graduate students to question whether the reality of an academic career is sufficiently appealing: "The junior faculty I know are driven, highly competitive, and often alienated from their work. This is not the life I want to live."

WHAT EARLY-CAREER FACULTY *HOPE FOR* AND *NEED* FROM THEIR WORK LIFE DO NOT FULLY MATCH WHAT THEY ACTUALLY EXPERIENCE OVER TIME.

In the face of these concerns, however, many of them insist that they can find the kind of faculty situation that will enable them to live the life of commitment and connection they envision. Again and again, we found graduate students holding onto their vision, despite the reality they see around them: "I am willing to sacrifice autonomy for involvement. I do not want the loneliness and disconnection I see in the present faculty." They dream of work that will allow them to cultivate meaningful connections with others in the service of pressing public needs.

Once they do become new faculty, however, this tension between vision and reality intensifies. Part of the problem may be that graduate education typically does not prepare prospective faculty for the full range of experiences they will face — for the demands placed upon them for teaching, student advising, public service and outreach, and institutional citizenship along with research. Furthermore, graduate students usually have not been prepared for how much organizational culture and work responsibilities vary across higher education's different institutional types. The community colleges,

liberal arts colleges, and comprehensive institutions that offer many employment possibilities have very different cultures from the research universities in which the students were trained.

As did previous researchers, we found a disturbing paradox among the *Heeding New Voices* interviewees. Early-career faculty indeed reported real satisfaction with their careers. At the same time, however, virtually all of these same respondents rated their work as stressful. Descriptors such as "pressure," "anxiety," and "worry" cropped up in nearly every interview or focus group. And, unfortunately, the tensions of a faculty member's first years do not appear to be offset by increasing experience. Longitudinal studies find that the proportion of newcomers reporting their work life as very stressful rises dramatically during the first five years of appointment (Olsen and Sorcinelli, 1992); even among faculty members who describe themselves as highly satisfied, work stress steadily erodes their satisfaction (Menges, 1999).

WHAT THEY SAID

The intent of the *Heeding New Voices* study was to give voice to the felt experiences of those who are just beginning their academic careers as a source of guidance for the senior faculty, chairs, deans, and other leaders in higher education who will help shape the academic profession of the future. What did we learn? That the *vision* of the faculty career continues to draw talented scholars, committed to pursuing research, working with students, and using their expertise to address challenging problems in society. But that the *reality* of the career is undermining the quality of life for early-career academics and impairing their ability to do their best work. Even worse, the gap between that vision and that reality may lead talented teachers and researchers to decide that the academy is not where they wish to work.

To ensure that the academic career remains a strong option for the capable, committed scholars we will need in the years ahead, we must understand and address its key problems. From conversations with participants in the *Heeding New Voices* interviews and focus groups, and informed by previous studies, we have identified a set of three core, consistent, and interwoven concerns on the minds of early-career faculty, and that graduate students worry about as they observe the faculty with whom they work. The three are:

- lack of a comprehensible tenure system
- lack of community
- lack of an integrated life.

In the following sections, we analyze these three key problems, then offer a set of recommendations for addressing them in the form of ten "Principles of Good Practice" for supporting early-career faculty.

The Tenure Process

Almost a decade ago, new faculty from a distinguished Presidential Young Investigator Colloquium identified the tenure and promotion system as "our greatest barrier to a better future" (Rice 1996). Now, similar concerns about feedback, evaluation, and the tenure process were expressed consistently and passionately throughout the interviews for the *Heeding New Voices* study, echoing also findings from other studies on new faculty by Olsen (1993), Sorcinelli (1992), and Tierney and Bensimon (1996). Furthermore, in revealing that early-career faculty give the tenure system mixed reviews, *Heeding New Voices* parallels data from a 1989 Carnegie survey of faculty *(The Condition of the Professoriate,* 1989) and a 1995 faculty survey conducted by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (Sax et al., 1996).

TO ENSURE THAT THE ACADEMIC CAREER REMAINS A STRONG OPTION FOR THE CAPABLE, COMMITTED SCHOLARS WE WILL NEED IN THE YEARS AHEAD, WE MUST UNDERSTAND ITS KEY PROBLEMS.

In the *Heeding New Voices* interviews, most aspiring and early-career faculty do *not* want to eliminate tenure altogether. Instead, in their conversations they express serious reservations about the current tenure system and make suggestions for reform. In general, they find the tenure process mystifying, and thus potentially unfair. We highlight below the four problems they most commonly identified.

Expectations for Performance. First and foremost, they are troubled by vague, unclear, shifting, and conflicting expectations for performance. They want to do good work, but they find that expectations are not stated openly or explicitly. Even worse is when new faculty attracted to a college or university by its assertions of rebalanced institutional priorities find that research and publication remain dominant in the institution's review process. Said one interviewee: "I was recruited on the basis of my serious commitments to teaching and involvement in larger social issues through my professional work, but I now know that I'm going to be evaluated on the strength of my research. This is a matter of institutional and personal integrity. I was seriously misled."

When more-senior colleagues do speak about what faculty members must do to be successful, the messages that new faculty hear often conflict. Furthermore, as institutions themselves shift

emphasis (perhaps, for example, a university clarifying its commitment to high-quality teaching and outreach as well as to research, or a liberal arts campus reconceptualizing itself as "research-oriented"), early-career faculty are especially uncertain about where to put the emphasis in their own work. As one new faculty member at an urban public university explained: "Everything is so vague, ambiguous, and elusive; expectations are changing all the time." Another interviewee at a research university concluded: "The guidelines are so vague that nobody knows what they want. I'm not going to try to outguess them. I'm going to follow my own nose, and let the chips fall where they may."

Some interviewees called for chairs, departments, and institutions to spell out the standards by which new faculty will be judged and to arrive at some "hard and fast" criteria for tenure; they noted that expectations and rules can vary widely from department to department. At the same time, other interviewees argued that criteria and standards should be flexible, acknowledging disciplinary and individual differences. This early-career faculty member spoke for many when she proposed that "departments should allow people to occupy niches. It's not realistic to assume that one person can be equally stellar at all roles. To fit everyone into one mold is a pity."

Finally, a number of interviewees perceive that the tenure bar for new faculty has been raised far above where it was for their senior colleagues, who now will decide the newcomers' fates. Some in the *Heeding New Voices* interviews spoke of being expected to deliver "a book at mini-tenure [three- or four-year review] rather than [at] tenure," and for "demands that we bring in external funding and publish the results of our research much earlier than in the past." Ironically, in calling for renewed attention to multiple aspects of faculty work, national forums and associations such as AAHE may be contributing to this problem of escalating expectations. On many campuses, academic reform has taken the approach of what might be called the "additive strategy of change," in which more and more is added to the list of faculty responsibilities. For example, the pursuit by public institutions of "multidimensional excellence," the emphasis on undergraduate teaching, and the heightened attention to community service all may generate even greater tensions and pose even thornier issues around performance expectations for new faculty.

Feedback on Progress. Insufficient, unfocused, and unclear feedback on performance only serve to exacerbate the lack of clarity around expectations. Early-career faculty are looking both for guidance about what expectations they should meet and for specific feedback on the extent to which they are meeting those expectations. But such explicit and focused conversations, we learned, are not occurring regularly or systematically. It was disheartening but not entirely surprising to hear some early-career faculty report a steadily eroding level of satisfaction with the feedback they were receiving as they moved along the tenure track: "I never hear directly from my department about my work, just

indirect comments about what they dislike, such as coauthored pieces. Discussions of good scholarship are so loaded with personal bias that I still really don't know what the norms are," said one. Some interviewees reported that feedback became more and more "antiseptic" as they progressed: "Senior faculty don't see how they can give feedback without saying too much and having it come back at them at some point."

Furthermore, early-career faculty worry that the senior colleagues responsible for providing feedback and evaluation may not be sufficiently knowledgeable in new research areas to fairly and appropriately judge the work of their newer colleagues. Some interviewees also complained that what counts as serious scholarship is too narrowly circumscribed: "Evaluation has not kept pace with the increasing level of interdisciplinary activity. The university needs people who bridge disciplines; however, interdisciplinary activities go against the way some senior faculty see their departments." A woman scientist added, "The institution should value curious, interdisciplinary people. [But] to get promoted you have to have tunnel vision in a very narrow field of focus." Such worries add to the gap between early-career and senior colleagues, as well as undermine the confidence that new faculty have in the evaluation process.

Collegial Review Structure. Early-career faculty also believe the problem with feedback and evaluation is exacerbated by at least three flawed aspects of the tenure and review process itself. These flaws include frequently rotating chairs; turnover in the membership of personnel committees; and closed committee meetings, which surround tenure deliberations and the values that inform them with uncertainty and often secrecy. That probationary faculty are excluded from membership on tenure and promotion committees on so many campuses reinforces for new faculty their perception of the senior faculty and its committee structure as self-protective and self-perpetuating.

From earlier studies we know that new faculty identify their department chair as their advocate, and in many cases as the person most important to them during their first year (Boice, 1992; Sorcinelli, 1988). But while a dean or chair may have given the new faculty member positive and encouraging feedback during those first few years, turnover may well put someone new — perhaps with different priorities and values — in that dean or chair role or as head of the personnel committee by the time of the faculty member's formal evaluation for reappointment or tenure: "The chair has a tremendous impact on the tenure decision. We changed chairs after my hire, and I am bitter, upset, and frightened by the way the current chair controls and dominates the tenure process."

Timeline. Finally, for some early-career faculty the tenure timeline is a major concern. Even as some departments and disciplines are expecting more from early-career faculty in their pre-tenure years, funding opportunities are decreasing and publication backlogs are resulting in long delays before

manuscripts appear in print. Some early-career faculty report that they try to cope by undertaking shorter (and sometimes less important) research projects they are certain can be completed in time to be published before their tenure review. Early-career faculty in science-related fields face particular problems and stresses when their institutions do not ensure that they have the laboratories, equipment, and technology they need to do their research in a timely way.

The tenure timeline is especially harsh on women (and sometimes men) whose heavy family responsibilities, especially childbirth and rearing of young children, conflict with the timeline's demands. One woman in a professional area, married and the parent of young children, summed up such concerns: "Within the tenure system I don't find much balance; there is no time to do anything else. If I'm not working, I feel guilty. There is always something to be done. I am *very, very* tired and still don't feel as though I am doing what fits — even though I'm doing good things."

THE EVALUATION AND TENURE SYSTEM, IN ITS CURRENT FORM AT MANY INSTITUTIONS, IS UNDERMINING THE VERY CREATIVITY, ENERGY, AND COMMITMENT THAT MAKE NEW FACULTY OF SUCH VALUE.

Conclusions About the Tenure Process. As aspiring and new faculty talked about their work and hopes for their future, the most powerful and poignant comments revolved around concerns with feedback, evaluation, and the tenure process. A single theme wove through the reflections and perspectives we heard. This next generation of academics are committed to working hard and wish to make significant contributions to their fields, to their students, and to their institutions. Many of them value the tenure system for its promise to protect academic freedom, to provide some degree of employment security, and to systematize peer, collegial evaluation. Yet many of them are at the same time deeply troubled that the evaluation and tenure system does not live up to its potential and promise. Often evaluation is not based on systematic, explicit, and focused feedback; and the timeline for tenure can cause pre-tenure faculty to set aside their passions and pursuit of challenging and important questions in favor of less-significant work with short turnarounds. As one *Heeding New Voices* interviewee lamented, "I just want to get through this game, so I can get to the things I want to do."

In short, we learned that the evaluation and tenure system, in its current form at many institutions, is undermining the very creativity, energy, and commitment that make new faculty of such value. That system also may be chipping away at what this next generation of academics believe

to be the type of environment most conducive to their doing productive work — one characterized by commitment, community, communication, and shared respect.[1]

Yearning for Community

Many early-career faculty and graduate students who aspire to join the faculty hold dear a vision of a "culture of collegiality" in which they wish to work; evidence supporting this is consistent across studies (Boice, 1992; Fink, 1984; Sorcinelli, 1988; Tierney and Bensimon, 1996; Whitt, 1991). *Heeding New Voices* interviewees told us they want to pursue their work in communities where collaboration is respected and encouraged, where friendships develop between colleagues within and across departments, and where there is time and opportunity for interaction and talk about ideas, one's work, and the institution.

In contrast, however, what early-career faculty report *experiencing* is isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, competition, and sometimes incivility. In reaction, they begin to go outside the campus for support, feeling less and less fulfilled as they seek but do not find the enrichment of a community of scholars in their home departments or institutions. The notable exception tends to occur in small residential colleges, which typically nurture a sense of institutional community — among colleagues and students — as an identifying organizational feature. In general, however, the *Heeding New Voices* interviewees expressed a need to more effectively connect with two groups particularly — senior faculty and students.

Senior Faculty. Early-career faculty in our interviews tended to be very critical of the senior faculty, and concerns frequently emerged related to the lack of a "community of peers." As in previous studies, early-career faculty say that time is a major factor contributing to their sense of isolation and loneliness. Under pressure to meet multiple demands, including publishing, they report they have little time either for informal collegial interaction or for structured discussion groups. Lack of mentoring is another trait of their workplace they perceive as diminishing their sense of community. Early-career faculty say they need more-established colleagues to help them "put a context" around institutional issues, priorities, and even rumors; to provide insights that assist them in understanding their students; and to identify useful institutional resources. Yet, such mentoring or guidance is not easy for new faculty to find — and the problem may actually go deeper.

We learned in the *Heeding New Voices* study that a broad generational gap is perceived to exist between faculty who are still early in their careers and their senior colleagues. Appointment patterns in recent decades have yielded a bimodal faculty distribution, whose large senior group (at one end) entered and established themselves in an academic world very different in significant ways from the

world that new faculty (at the other end) must now negotiate. As a consequence, graduate students aspiring to the professoriate and early-career faculty both report wondering, for instance, whether their senior colleagues understand how competitive funding opportunities have become (especially in the sciences)? Can the senior faculty fairly evaluate their scholarship, especially in fields where new areas of research have recently opened up? Some interviewees were very forthright in saying that they do not want to emulate their senior colleagues' hectic lifestyles, that they do not trust their senior colleagues, and that tenure requirements today are strikingly different from what their senior colleagues faced.

In fact, across several interview groups, early-career faculty saw significant differences between themselves and their senior colleagues. In general, the new academics perceived themselves as "more insistent on a balanced life, more well-rounded, socially skilled, and better at talking and working together." Another interviewee added, with a touch of irony, "We are models of maturity for the senior faculty. We don't have big blowouts, or intense competition, or this complex web of relationships."

While new faculty are idealistic about the nature of the communities they would like to create, their comments are not entirely collegial and suggest that the task of connecting across generational cohorts is a formidable one. Some early-career faculty even expressed doubts about their own ability to support a culture of collegiality. The intrusion of the computer and appeal of working from home, the press of two-career family responsibilities, the span of work responsibilities, the dearth of new faculty appointments over a long period of time, and the concomitant decline of social connections in departments were all mentioned as factors. One interviewee concluded, "It is not exactly anyone's fault, but the fact remains that under these conditions it is much more difficult to create and sustain a sense of community."

Students. One communal tie that does bind the *Heeding New Voices* interviewees is their enjoyment of teaching and students, and many of them are deeply committed to teaching. Many reported that they "love to teach" and that they particularly enjoy "working with young people, who keep you young," the personal contact with students, the "cognitive stimulation" of designing courses and classes, and the potential for influence on others. Said one, "I love having an impact on students. One person might go into your field and do something important."

Yet changes in the student body, the lack of a teaching community, the pressures of the tenure process, and other such tensions are fraying the community of teachers and learners. A number of interviewees mentioned disparity between their goals and their students' goals as a tension undermining the quality of the student-teacher relationship. A new physics faculty member at a

private university asserted that students bring a consumer orientation to campus, treating education as a commodity and demanding that faculty cater to them. "Learning is not seen as an end in itself, and faculty are regarded as hired hands. Education is increasingly career-oriented." Others agreed, pointing to related problems such as grade inflation. For some female faculty and faculty of color, students' questioning of their intellectual authority further complicated their interactions with students.

But many in the *Heeding New Voices* study also were sympathetic to students' needs. Faculty interviewed at a regional state university said they found teaching especially demanding because so many students need financial, emotional, and remedial support: "I am impressed with the commitment of young faculty to investing in this challenge, but we don't feel supported in addressing the serious learning needs of our students." This desire for more institutional support — not just resources but also a supportive teaching and learning community — was expressed across a wide range of institutions. As one faculty newcomer pointed out, "Good teaching requires colleagueship." Another added: "Good teaching needs to be modeled and made visible, and currently it is not. We need mentors with whom the promises and problems of teaching can be openly shared."

The tenure process — particularly the ways in which teaching is measured and valued — appears to have affected how some early-career faculty view their students. They described their students as "having some power," particularly when student ratings were the institution's only judge of teaching effectiveness. "Student evaluations are used as weapons selectively, and there is no check for that at review time. There are no evaluations other than student evaluations. You have no way to respond to them."

Further, as long as teaching does not engender the respect accorded research in the tenure decision, striving for quality teaching and learning is problematic in diverting energy that could be applied to research instead into individual contact with students in and out of class. "One of my priorities is a quality education for students. But if you do too much of this, then the students seek you out. This becomes a problem for tenure." Some new faculty hear this message from their senior colleagues directly. As part of the *Heeding New Voices* project, one of us eavesdropped on a seminar for new faculty, in which a senior faculty mentor offered this advice: "Avoid new and innovative strategies during the probationary period. They might not go over with students, and they take too much time."

Conclusions About Community. Certainly, a number of graduate students and early-career faculty are disappointed to find faculty life characterized by isolation, competition, and lack of community with colleagues and sometimes with students. Yet what stands out just as clearly is their idealism about what the academy *could* be like, and what they believe to be the cultures and

environments that would most enable them to do good work. In the words of one graduate student in the *Heeding New Voices* study: "What I want most in a faculty career is a profession that makes me feel connected to my students, to my colleagues, to the larger community, and to myself."

What these new entrants to the academic career are calling for is not an environment where hard work is avoided; rather, they wish to be part of an institutional culture that values the community, collegiality, and collaboration they believe will enhance their ability to do good work and live satisfying lives. Looking to an imagined future, one early-career woman in a research university concluded: "My vision of the academy in the twenty-first century is one that breaks traditional department barriers, creates interaction among faculty across fields, conducts research around themes, gets rid of the huge gap between research and teaching, and incorporates students more so that the wall between students and professors comes down."

WE FOUND THAT WORRY ABOUT TIME IS THE THREAD CONNECTING MANY OF THE CONCERNS OF FACULTY AS THEY STRUGGLE TO BALANCE AND INTEGRATE THEIR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIVES. THIS IS AN IRONIC FINDING, GIVEN THAT ONE ATTRACTION OF THE FACULTY CAREER FOR OUR INTERVIEWEES IS THEIR NOTION OF HAVING FLEXIBLE TIME THEY COULD SHAPE AND CONTROL.

A Balanced Life

Issues of tenure and scholarly community need to be placed within a larger context; that is, what kind of life those who choose the academic career are able to live. In the *Heeding New Voices* study, we found that worry about time is the thread connecting many of the concerns of faculty as they struggle to balance and integrate their professional and personal lives. This is an ironic finding, given that one attraction of the faculty career for our interviewees is their notion of having flexible time that they could shape and control; of a timeframe that would allow them to focus, think, and create. It is also ironic that faculty are being criticized in today's social and political milieu for not working long or hard enough. Faculty concerns about time are a somewhat predictable finding as well, given that most early-career professionals in today's fast-paced work environments complain about feeling pressured at work.

Nonetheless, faculty reports of lack of time and balance are too consistent and too pervasive to be dismissed as the normal anxieties of professionals laboring under heavy workloads. In our interviews, what early-career faculty say they need most is "time to reflect

on my work." What they get is a culture where "senior colleagues brag about working all the time," other probationary faculty "encourage the driven quality of the profession," and it's a badge of honor that "presidents of institutions like Harvard collapse from overwork." Lack of time and balance are threads woven through every other category of concern we have described in this report. They contribute to the pressures of work, to the imbalance between work and personal life, to fundamental problems with the tenure process, and to difficulties in building collegiality and community. They are also linked to the special career issues with which female and minority faculty particularly struggle.

Balancing Professional Life. "Finding enough time to do my work" stands out as one of the predominant sources of stress reported in our and many other studies of early-career faculty (Boice, 1992; Fink, 1984; Sorcinelli, 1988; Whitt, 1991). Many newcomers describe the semester as fragmented by too many tasks and too little time to complete them. Demanding workloads and difficulties in balancing new responsibilities for teaching, research, and committee work and in simply keeping up with their discipline usually head the list of faculty concerns. *Heeding New Voices* interviewees described difficulties in juggling pressure to publish with heavy teaching loads. Many reported their time and attention are spread thin across too many and sometimes conflicting duties: "The main issue on everyone's mind is maintaining equilibrium. Life before tenure is a juggling act that involves long hours and keeping all the balls in the air long enough to get through it."

Another central time-related concern is the incongruity between work roles/responsibilities and the structure of rewards. In our study, the complicated tensions between teaching and research were most predominant, particularly in universities with complex missions. Although many early-career faculty reported that they enjoy teaching, they spend a great deal of time worrying about what to teach, how best to teach it, and how to motivate students. Expectations for teaching varied from department to department, including updating the curriculum with new course offerings, teaching large lecture courses, infusing technology into teaching, and dealing with a more diverse student body. Although they were eager to expand their pedagogical repertoire, many faculty newcomers have little prior training to prepare them for such teaching, and they already suspect that they devote more time to teaching than their institution will reward. "Good teaching takes a lot of time. The institution requires us to spend our time teaching undergraduates, and then rewards research." In some cases, they complained that their senior colleagues and departments offer them little help in maintaining balance: "The junior faculty carry a disproportionate load of the teaching and feel exploited by senior colleagues and our departments."

Concern about lack of time and inability to successfully balance work roles is a new faculty member's most consistent source of stress over time. One study found that over their first five years

on the job, new faculty became increasingly comfortable with teaching and gained greater clarity and direction in their research agenda; however, over the same period their satisfaction with their ability to find enough time to do work and to balance the conflicting demands of research, teaching, and service declined (Olsen and Sorcinelli, 1992). A *Heeding New Voices* faculty member from a well-regarded liberal arts college mused: "I see the college in a state of transition from an undergraduate teaching institution to a research-oriented institution. Each year the tasks multiply — the demands of teaching, increasing demands of research, and the extraneous demands of committee work, labwork, and secretarial work. There will never be enough time to do everything we are expected to do."

Balancing Professional and Personal Life. The *Heeding New Voices* interviews support other research in suggesting that efforts by new faculty to balance the demands of professional work and personal life — of being a spouse, a parent, a child of aging parents, an involved citizen — compound their stress. Studies across career stages (Sorcinelli and Near, 1989) have found that half of the faculty members interviewed or surveyed reported considerable stress in trying to balance personal/family life and the requirements of professional success. Surveys by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching *(The Condition of the Professoriate,* 1989) also found that the extent to which work intruded into personal life was a primary influence on overall dissatisfaction among faculty members. And the Higher Education Research Institute's 1995-96 national survey of college and university faculty found that time pressures and a lack of personal life were the top two sources of stress, with women showing higher stress levels than men (Sax et al., 1996).

But what about new and early-career faculty specifically? They report significantly more "negative spillover" (i.e., their work life negatively "spilled over" into their personal life) than did associate or full professors (Sorcinelli and Near, 1989). Data also indicated that faculty are less satisfied with the balance between their work and nonwork lives after being a faculty member for a few years (Olsen, 1993). In particular, there was an increase in the percentage of early-career faculty who said their work life exercised a great deal of negative impact on their nonwork life; the conflict stemmed largely from "an erosion of leisure time and social relations under the press of institutional and self-imposed work commitments" (Olsen, 1993).

A previous New Pathways paper, *Work, Family, and the Faculty Career,* considered work-family issues as they affect faculty recruitment, retention, and productivity, and it drew extensively on data from the *Heeding New Voices* study. Its authors offered several conclusions. First, concern about time management is exacerbated as new and early-career faculty try to balance career demands and the "tenure rat race" versus family and personal time. This is true for single and married faculty, although women with children in particular spoke of having to juggle (and sometimes hide) their other roles

and responsibilities. Second, early-career faculty feel that senior faculty who have not experienced the conflicting demands that a dual-career couple faces do not understand its stresses. The typical academic career pattern was originated by and for the male professor who had the support of a wife at home, and that original conception still prevails. Third, that academe's structure, resources, and policies are decentralized further hampers the creation of an environment sensitive to work-family conflicts, because communication and cooperation across such a decentralized structure are so difficult (Gappa and MacDermid, 1997).

We were especially disturbed by the observations of *Heeding New Voices* graduate students regarding the quality of life for the early-career faculty whom they knew — that is, for faculty in a graduate student's own discipline. We asked, "What about their lives do you appreciate, admire, or would like to emulate in your own life?" The typical graduate student response: "I don't want to live a life like theirs." One poignant phrase was invoked repeatedly: "They don't have a life." These aspiring faculty members have noticed that throughout the pre-tenure years, early-career faculty continue to experience difficulties balancing time for family or other nonwork responsibilities with their career aspirations. Striking a balance between the two significant life domains may take considerable time to achieve.

THE NUMBER OF NONMAJORITY FACULTY WITH WHOM WE SPOKE WAS SMALL, BUT THESE WOMEN FACULTY, FACULTY OF COLOR, AND PART-TIME FACULTY ECHOED WITH PARTICULAR POIGNANCY THE THEMES OF TENURE, COMMUNITY, AND BALANCE.

Special Issues Faced by Nonmajority Faculty

Certainly some departments offer their early-career faculty an exception to the stresses reported here. Yet the *Heeding New Voices* study, as well as other research (Cooper and Stevens, in press; Gappa and Leslie, 1993, 1997; Tierney and Bensimon, 1996), indicates that such experiences are both commonplace and especially keen for some subsets of the professoriate. The number of nonmajority faculty with whom we spoke was small, but these women faculty, faculty of color, and part-time faculty echoed with particular poignancy the themes of tenure, community, and balance that figured so prominently across our interview groups. We would like to touch now on their experiences.

Early-career women faculty report unusual difficulty in finding advisors or mentors among their more-senior colleagues, and they describe environments where they must struggle against subtle

discrimination to be taken seriously and as the equals of their male colleagues. In our interviews, the women described feeling lonely and isolated because they were reluctant to openly discuss the multiple professional and personal responsibilities that complicate their daily lives, for fear that colleagues would perceive them as "trying to make excuses" or as not being serious about their work. Our structured interviews were sometimes punctuated with tears, as these women called for more community, more connection, and more support for managing their careers in different ways at different points in their lives.

They especially expressed a desire for more-equal treatment in terms of work (e.g., teaching loads, lab facilities, committee assignments), for inclusion in professional and social networks, and for more sensitivity to their personal lives from their departments. Speaking for her fellow early-career faculty, one woman said, "We are asking for deep internal change . . . cultural change; but the culture is not changing as rapidly as we need it to."

Faculty of color also expressed concerns arising from the interplay of tenure, community, work, and life outside of work. Isolation was a core issue, as these *Heeding New Voices* interviewees described how they attempted to handle the "day-to-day stress" they feel as a member of a minority group in a department or institution. Sometimes they noted that even in our small group interviews they might be the only faculty member of color — mirroring their "solo" status in an all-white department or school. As other reports and studies have found (Moody, 1997; Tierney and Bensimon, 1996), our interviewees noted that collegiality becomes even more of a challenge under the added stresses of differences in age, gender, cultural background, and intellectual and research interests. In such circumstances, minority faculty members find that special effort and time are required to find a sense of community, even as they are called upon to carry unusually heavy loads of campus committee work as "representatives" of their minority group.

Across the *Heeding New Voices* interviews, faculty of color in particular called for a stronger ethos of collegiality and mentorship, as a way of addressing a range of their concerns, such as how to move forward controversial research, deal with problems and prejudices encountered in the classroom, ascribe value to service, approach tenure, figure out how the institution works, move inside traditional professional and campus networks, and attend to the family unit (i.e., children, spouses, parents, friends). Summing up a sentiment broadly expressed, one African-American faculty member spoke of the importance of creating more of a sense of "kinship" in working with students, colleagues, and the community.

Part-time faculty were another faculty subset with special concerns (although, if national hiring trends continue, the perception of part-time faculty as "nonmajority" may soon be outdated). Part-

time faculty we interviewed at a community college said they found satisfaction in "connecting with students"; in the "flexibility of part-time teaching"; and in the "camaraderie" among part-timers, due in part to "offices so crowded that we can't help but get to know one another."

These part-timers also reported difficult challenges, however, especially related to their working conditions. Paralleling findings from other studies (Gappa and Leslie, 1993, 1997), part-time faculty in the *Heeding New Voices* study reported a "lack of respect," conveyed to them through compensation schedules lower than their full-time colleagues', term-by-term appointments, little opportunity for professional development, inadequate office space, and being excluded (even if unintentionally) from various department activities. Such practices effectively block part-timers from developing feelings of connectedness or collegiality. Several members of the interview groups noted that their department chair and full-time colleagues play pivotal roles in integrating (or not) part-time faculty into the unit's teaching mission. "Interaction with the chair is important, because a firm relationship can make you feel a part of the department."

So Now What?

In a materialistic age that likes to measure success in dollars, the *Heeding New Voices* faculty seem to march to a different drummer. Whether in community colleges, liberal arts colleges, or comprehensive and research universities, the several hundred aspiring, new, and early-career faculty whom we met see themselves as engaged in noble work. They find personal reward and social value in their role, as they invest themselves in undergraduate education, train graduate students as the future professoriate, create new knowledge through research, and interact with relevant communities.

At the same time, while we found no thundering loss of commitment, we did find in one locale after another a deep concern about fundamental aspects of the academic career — the lack of a coherent tenure system, the lack of community, and the lack of an integrated professional and personal life. These faculty newcomers in the *Heeding New Voices* study make a strong case for rethinking and reshaping academic careers now.

Fixing Graduate Study

The place to start is in the graduate schools, where we sorely need to equip our students with more than disciplinary expertise. The *Heeding New Voices* study suggests that graduate students want help both in understanding day-to-day faculty work life — especially teaching and campus citizenship —

and in finding a sense of balance among their work roles. They seek faculty role models to illustrate how to engage in meaningful work while living a life of commitment and balance.

Promising practices already under way on some campuses include extensive orientations and ongoing training for teaching assistants, mentoring opportunities that link aspiring faculty with committed faculty, and foundation-supported programs to "prepare the future professoriate" that include internship experiences at nearby institutions.

What Faculty Units Can Do

Once in faculty positions, pre-tenure faculty members could benefit from more institutional guidance and support. How can departments and institutions make a good start at creating some degree of congruence between the vision and the reality of the academic career? Specific ideas are listed in the "Principles of Good Practice: Supporting Early-Career Faculty" that follows this report.

AFTER TWO DECADES OF RESEARCH ON EARLY-CAREER FACULTY, PERHAPS HIGHER EDUCATION'S REAL PROBLEM IS NOT THAT WE DON'T *KNOW* WHAT TO DO, BUT RATHER THAT WE DON'T *DO* WHAT WE KNOW.

In general, department chairs and more-senior colleagues could provide early-career faculty members with clear expectations for their performance; with guidelines for review processes; and with timely, focused, and honest feedback about their work and progress. Departments also can offer orientation and mentoring specific to such areas as teaching, research resources, and time management. Just as important would be to cultivate departments, colleges/divisions, and whole institutions that promote academic careers that more fully develop and accommodate faculty talents and interests in all their diversity, and that recognize and support individual faculty members in achieving that important balance between their professional and personal goals.

Creating an Altogether New Vision

But we need to do even more. After two decades of research on early-career faculty, perhaps higher education's real problem is not that we don't *know* what to do, but rather that we don't *do* what we know. The real challenge before us may be much broader and deeper than addressing tenure systems, collegiality, and balance between work and family, as important as they are.

Perhaps that real challenge is to create a new vision for the academy — a vision that draws from higher education's rich and respected historical values and traditions and that responds both to the goals and expectations of a more diverse faculty and to new societal demands. Such a vision would honor long-held values of intellectual excellence and quality while simultaneously encouraging innovation, balance, and diversity. We recognize that articulating and realizing this new vision will be no small challenge.

It is those early-career and aspiring faculty we heard from in the *Heeding New Voices* study who will set the course of higher education over this next generation. Helping them to create an academy that is both a stimulating and satisfying workplace and an institution that serves society well will require the energies and ideas of all of us, working at our best as colleagues. A thoughtful first step might be to inventory our own departmental cultures and institutional practices to consider how to best support our newest colleagues.[2] As senior colleagues, we might start with a review of and conversation about the findings and recommendations for action that the *Heeding New Voices* study has generated.

In the end, the *Heeding New Voices* study will have served us well only if we can respond to its "new voices," and move from inquiry and discussion of the changing academic career to concrete implementation and effective practices on our campuses. In doing so, we will have increased the possibility of being able to build and sustain a more confident, satisfied, and effective faculty for the coming generation.

Notes

1. For additional discussion of tenure based on data from the *Heeding New Voices* study, see Austin and Rice, 1998.

2. Jon Wergin has initiated this task in his new AAHE study of the evaluation of academic departments (2000). He has identified academic units where faculty are learning to work together. This new inquiry is a companion volume to his previous AAHE publication *The Collaborative Department* (1994).

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Principles of Good Practice: Supporting Early-Career Faculty

Improving Tenure Processes

1 GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATES EXPECTATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE

2 GOOD PRACTICE GIVES FEEDBACK ON PROGRESS

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Principles of Good Practice: Supporting Early-Career Faculty

by Mary Deane Sorcinelli

The *Heeding New Voices* study suggests that intellectual, social, and resource support from senior faculty, chairs, deans, and other campus administrators may be critical to attracting, developing, and retaining faculty on tenure track. In particular, its findings point to the essential role played by the department. But these suggestions for good practice are not directed only toward the department's chair, as no chair *alone* will ever realize them. Given the high turnover among chairs and the lasting influence of a department's senior faculty, supporting early-career faculty members clearly is *everyone's* work.

This "Principles" section includes:

- ten principles of good practice;
- inventories to prompt department chairs, senior colleagues, and other academic leaders to examine their individual and institutional practices; and
- examples of concrete and innovative approaches to good practice being tried out now in a variety of institutional settings.

It evolved from suggestions offered by pre-tenure faculty involved in *Heeding New Voices* and other studies and reports; its good practices are anchored in nearly two decades of research on new and early-career faculty (Boice, 1992; Menges, 1999; Sorcinelli and Austin, 1992; Tierney and Bensimon, 1996). As shown opposite, the principles reflect the three categories of stated need from the *Heeding New Voices* interviews: improving review and tenure processes, encouraging positive relations with colleagues and students, and easing stresses of time and balance.

The core purpose of the principles and their inventories and campus examples is to help academic departments, colleges/divisions, and universities improve the life of faculty on tenure track — *not* to audit or evaluate individual faculty members, departments, or administrators. They will be

of most assistance if the principles are used as a basis for diagnosis, rather than for judgment about performance, for evaluation, or for self-justification.

Of course, too, good practices are campus- and context-specific; that is, what works well on one campus might not fit the culture of another. Hence, a wide range of ideas and examples is offered that faculty members, administrators, and their institutions can use to set goals, guide planning, and create environments to better support not just faculty on the tenure-track, but *all* faculty. From them, select the complement of practices that fits your circumstances best.

1
GOOD PRACTICE COMMUNICATES EXPECTATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE

- Include in letters of appointment a statement of expectations that is clear and detailed enough so that new faculty hires have a real idea of what is expected; update this statement yearly.
- Help pre-tenure faculty set challenging but realistic goals that match the particular mission and resources of your unit and that align with the central missions of your college/division and institution.
- Ask pre-tenure faculty to keep an ongoing log or record of their scholarly activities in teaching and learning, research, and service or outreach.
- Review with candidates for tenure the steps in that process, who evaluates and on what time schedule, the kinds of information needed for tenure files, and what pieces the candidate is responsible for collecting and submitting (e.g., record of professional activities, names of outside reviewers).
- Promote the use of more-encompassing criteria for annual reviews and tenure that more fully document, recognize, and reward the scholarship of teaching and the scholarship of professional service and outreach.

EXAMPLES

The University of Arizona provides a website with detailed instructions for preparation of tenure dossiers, which departments can supplement with checklists and other materials. The dean of one college at the University of Pittsburgh offers a tenure-preparation workshop for faculty in years one and two and another for faculty in years four and five; department chairs are invited. The faculty-development center at the University of Nebraska-Omaha gives faculty members a set of questions about the tenure process and guidelines they can use to interview

senior faculty, their chair, or their dean. Portland State University has developed a model for engaging faculty in both the scholarship of teaching and the scholarship of community-based learning; its vice provost/assistant to the president, among others, works with Portland's faculty to document these new forms of scholarship in their promotion and tenure portfolios.

2
GOOD PRACTICE GIVES FEEDBACK ON PROGRESS

- In an annual review, provide clear, honest, and constructive feedback to early-career faculty on their progress toward tenure.
- Highlight what is going well, clarify what merits attention, and offer concrete suggestions for improvement through discussions and written comments.
- During the faculty member's first year in particular, structure the annual review so that it is oriented to development rather than to evaluation.
- Rely on more than just student ratings in the evaluation of teaching; other vehicles might include peer review, self-assessment, and teaching portfolios.
- Regularly solicit feedback from pre-tenure faculty about their perceptions of and experiences with the tenure process.

EXAMPLES

In one division at Indiana University-South Bend (IUSB), junior faculty submit a "working dossier" each year for reappointment decisions. This gives pre-tenure faculty a chance to work incrementally on their dossier over time. The review committee provides formal feedback on the faculty member's progress toward tenure as well as formative feedback on dossier substance and style. Also, the IUSB faculty senate's promotion and tenure committee offers voluntary third-year reviews to all pre-tenure faculty so they can receive confidential, formative feedback; nothing from that process ever goes on the record. One college dean at the University of Wisconsin-Steven's Point annually brings pre-tenure faculty together in focus groups to get information for improving life on the tenure track. Faculty and departments often can call on their teaching and learning center for information on how to prepare and maintain a teaching portfolio. Centers at the Pennsylvania State University, the Ohio State University, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and the University of Washington offer print and online

resources, and some provide excerpts from faculty portfolios such as sample teaching philosophy statements and activities to improve teaching.

3
GOOD PRACTICE ENHANCES COLLEGIAL REVIEW PROCESSES

- Encourage an ongoing discussion in the department of the tenure process and the values that inform it; use meetings, written guidelines, seminars, and other such venues.
- Work at the department and college/division levels to create a clear set of guidelines for the tenure review committee regarding expectations, criteria, and the like, to ameliorate the effect of any turnover in committee membership.
- Sponsor a yearly meeting for all faculty on tenure track in the department, and encourage pre-tenure faculty to attend college/division or institution seminars on preparing for tenure.
- Allow pre-tenure faculty to meet with department and college/division committees, to open up the tenure process and provide more information about it.

EXAMPLES

The dean of a college at Drake University sponsors a session each year that brings together pre-tenure faculty and the college's tenure review committee; its members share information on the committee's composition, charge, and review process, followed by an open discussion. One school at the University of Washington allows junior faculty to attend tenure reviews, which "lifts the shroud of mystery that often veils the tenure process" (Chait, 1999: 4). The Project on Faculty Appointments, at Harvard University, has developed a review called "Tenure by Objectives," wherein junior faculty negotiate performance contracts; various aspects of proficiency (i.e., research, teaching, service) are established and certified en route to tenure rather than "at the midnight hour" (Chait, 1998: 5).

4
GOOD PRACTICE CREATES FLEXIBLE TIMELINES FOR TENURE

- Encourage pre-tenure faculty to explore with their department options such as "stopping the clock" or counting previous work for credit to "early tenure" in individual circumstances.

- Provide special career guidance to women faculty and faculty of color as needed. In particular, some women faculty in their child-bearing years (and some men who play active roles in child rearing) may want longer and more-flexible tenure timelines. Faculty of color may need additional time to build viable professional networks in research and teaching and to accommodate time they may be called upon to spend on additional committee assignments.

  EXAMPLES

  A department chair at the University of Missouri-Columbia has developed a model program for mentoring tenure-track faculty; for example, he works one-on-one with women who have children to design individualized tenure-track timetables based on their needs. The teaching center at Eastern Michigan University has started an orientation for new faculty of color in which their tenured counterparts give them advice and answer questions; unlike other orientation programs at the center, this one is not open to administrators, it's about "talking turkey." The Committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities at the University of California-Berkeley has published a separate tenure guide for women and minority faculty. Aimed at "friendly guidance vs. the official word," the guide outlines university policies, such as a one-year stoppage for child rearing, and programs to facilitate mentoring relationships for faculty of color. (Visit <http://amber.berkeley.edu:4205/resources/links/tenure_guide.html> to read the guide yourself.)

5
GOOD PRACTICE ENCOURAGES MENTORING BY SENIOR FACULTY

- Ask a representative group of faculty within the department to explore different mentoring programs and recommend workable models (e.g., an assigned mentor, a mentoring committee, emeritus faculty mentors).
- Encourage senior faculty to initiate contact with newcomers; e.g., by inviting them to lunch, offering to read papers, or even visiting classes.
- Build responsibility for nurturing new colleagues into the evaluations of senior faculty.
- Seek ways to recognize and reward senior faculty members for the time they spend working with their junior colleagues.
- Ask senior colleagues to be purposefully welcoming to nonmajority faculty newcomers, who report the greatest need for advice and coaching.

- Create opportunities for early-career and senior faculty to formally collaborate, such as team-teaching, coauthoring a paper or grant, or reshaping department curricula.
- Encourage new faculty to be proactive about asking questions, seeking feedback, and making connections with senior colleagues.

EXAMPLES

The professional-development center at Kean University offers new faculty a one-course reduction in teaching load during their first semester to participate in a mentoring program that features a year of support from senior colleagues; the mentors are named Presidential Teaching Scholars for a three-year term. At Colorado College, as a supplement to practices inside individual departments, its teaching center assigns each new tenure-track faculty member to a senior or retired faculty member who is outside the new hire's own department; pairs get together over lunch or dinner once each month to discuss career-development issues. One college at Temple University offers every tenure-track faculty member a senior mentoring service, which links the newcomer with a recently retired faculty member noted for his or her teaching effectiveness as well as broad knowledge of the campus culture. The faculty center at Brigham Young University structures its new-faculty orientation into a year-long program that includes seven luncheon sessions in the fall, meetings with self-selected mentors who are chosen with the advice of department chairs, and an intensive two-week learning experience (after the newcomers have been two semesters on campus).

6
GOOD PRACTICE EXTENDS MENTORING AND FEEDBACK TO GRADUATE STUDENTS ASPIRING TO BE FACULTY MEMBERS

- Duplicate for graduate students many of the supportive activities provided for new faculty; e.g., provide orientations for first-year graduate students, assign them a faculty advisor, encourage study groups for comprehensive exams, invite them to informal departmental gatherings and to formal colloquia, seminars, or teaching workshops, etc.
- Ask faculty advisors as well as supervisors of teaching/research assistants to build in regular occasions to discuss with TAs and RAs the students' strengths and weaknesses, appropriate options for professional growth, and career goals.

- Work with colleagues to inform graduate students about the academic labor market across the variety of institutional types, as well as about other career options within their fields, to ensure that graduate students have been carefully prepared for seeking their first jobs.
- Link students to career-planning resources at the college/division or institution level that can help them to create resumes, prepare for job interviews, and search for positions.

EXAMPLES

Perhaps the most innovative work being done in research universities is that sponsored by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and the Council of Graduate Schools. Their "Preparing Future Faculty" project has developed a number of model programs to better prepare graduate students interested in academic careers (Gaff et al., 2000). The New England Board of Higher Education's Doctoral Scholars Program coaches departments and faculty on how to build an environment of support for their nonmajority graduate students. The program has developed a range of peer-support, community-building, mentoring, and professional-enrichment practices, which have proved especially helpful for its first-year Minority Scholars (Moody, 1997).

7
GOOD PRACTICE RECOGNIZES THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR AS A CAREER SPONSOR

- Help manage the new faculty member's transition to campus by ensuring that adequate resources such as office space and equipment are in place.
- Encourage a collegial culture in the department. This could include orientation information such as departmental expectations; policies for promotion and tenure; and a list of the department's other faculty members, describing their areas of research, teaching, and service.
- Assign senior faculty members to mentor newcomers as teachers and scholars; then oversee and monitor that mentoring.
- Be especially mindful when assigning committee work and student advising not to overburdened nonmajority faculty.
- Encourage pre-tenure faculty to look outside the department in seeking collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunities for scholarship and teaching development; such resources include teaching and learning centers, offices of research support, networks of faculty of color, and the like.

- Urge new faculty to attend college/division- and institution-wide orientations; accompany them, if invited.
- Encourage expanded orientation programs. In contrast to a one-shot program, they offer opportunities to build relationships between new and established faculty, as well as provide information about teaching, scholarship, and key campus resources.
- Support faculty beyond their first year, particularly by demystifying and providing advice for promotion and tenure.

EXAMPLES

Michigan State University offers a MULTI Leadership Workshop Series for department chairs to meet and discuss issues of mutual interest or concern pertaining to their roles as well as institutional priorities and directions. Particularly well received has been a three-part series on guiding early-career, mid-career, and senior faculty. Colorado State University's faculty-development office has written a *Chairperson's and Department Head's Manual* that is distributed to all new chairs. Topics include such areas as mentoring, encouraging faculty research and teaching, and diversity and retention of students and faculty. The University of Massachusetts-Amherst sponsors an annual chairs and deans conference. Its goal is to provide an interdisciplinary forum for exploring the challenges and opportunities faced in the rapidly changing nature of the University. Over the years, department chairs have facilitated sessions and shared strategies for developing new and early-career faculty and for rethinking faculty roles and rewards in ways that strengthen and renew departments.

8
GOOD PRACTICE SUPPORTS TEACHING, PARTICULARLY AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

- Create opportunities for new faculty to get a good start in teaching; e.g., by sharing course syllabi, inviting them to visit the classes of senior colleagues, or providing guidebooks for new teachers. Two such guidebooks are Davis's *Tools for Teaching* (Jossey-Bass, 1993) and McKeachie's *Teaching Tips* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1999).
- Assign new faculty to courses that fit their interests and priorities; offer them fewer courses, or at the very least fewer preparations, during their first year or two.

- Provide new faculty with information about teaching, such as a profile of students, sample syllabi, names of faculty who previously have taught the courses, and expected number of office hours.
- Provide departmental funds (and seek campus funds) that early-career faculty can access for course materials and equipment, faculty-development workshops, classroom research projects, and the like.
- Encourage new faculty to connect with teaching and learning centers, in particular to access processes that provide early, formative feedback on their teaching; an example of such a process might be confidential midterm feedback from students.
- Provide early, supportive feedback on teaching; e.g., reviews of student and colleague evaluations, grading distributions, or teaching portfolios.
- Create mechanisms for informal support, such as sponsoring discussions between junior and senior colleagues in the department around issues of teaching and learning.
- Advise early-career faculty to seek formal support through structured programs at the campus and national levels (e.g., Lilly Teaching Fellows programs, Carnegie Scholars).

EXAMPLES

A department chair at the University of Notre Dame asks the director of the teaching center to meet with all "new" (one to three years on campus) faculty. The chair schedules a group meeting, which is less intimidating than individual appointments would be. The meeting allows newcomers to become aware of the center's resources and to bond with one another. It also signals that the chair believes that teaching development is important. On campuses such as Miami University, Michigan State University, the University of Georgia, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, department chairs nominate junior faculty for a competitive, year-long teaching fellows program. Chairs support the nomination and fellowship year for the faculty members with the understanding that when they return to their home departments, the fellows bring with them new teaching skills and innovations.

In a national collaboration, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Association for Higher Education are working with individual faculty and academic leaders to elevate regard for teaching through the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). The Academy sponsors a Pew National Fellowship Program for Carnegie Scholars and a Campus Program (see *The Carnegie Academy,* n.d.).

9
GOOD PRACTICE SUPPORTS SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT

- Review the departmental policies for assigning resources to ensure that pre-tenure faculty receive equitable support.
- Help secure basic resources (e.g., adequate office, lab, studio space; a computer) and staff support (e.g., research assistants, clerical personnel, technicians) to ensure that faculty newcomers receive timely assistance.
- Earmark travel funds for pre-tenure faculty, who are least able to afford the financial burden of traveling to professional meetings but most need to attend, present papers, and establish reputations.
- Encourage departmental networks to support early-career researchers; such mechanisms might include informal discussions about writing projects, colloquia for "ideas in progress," mechanisms for sharing papers, and collaborative grant-writing or research projects.
- Help new faculty identify and make use of institutional resources such as sessions on "professors as writers," grant writing, and "getting started in teaching," as well as information on summer grants for research or teaching.
- Work with campus administrators to support flexible leave programs, so pre-tenure faculty can complete their scholarly projects before their tenure reviews.
- Encourage a more-integrated view of "scholarly" work to encompass both a scholarship of teaching and a scholarship that responds to community needs and demands for applied research and public service.

EXAMPLES

Western Michigan University provides early-career faculty with a series of activities designed to advance their research plans, through its Research Development Award. RDA faculty have been recommended by their college dean, are selected by the vice president, and receive a collaboratively funded research account of $3,500 to support expenses of grant seeking and research. They complete three on-campus workshops, develop a mentoring relationship with a faculty member at another institution, conduct an agency visitation, and submit two proposals for external support. At the University of California-Davis, all first-year tenure-track faculty are encouraged to apply for up to $3,000 from its New Faculty Research Grant Program; funds can be used for computers, software, travel, equipment, duplicating, etc. The

University of Florida provides matching grants of up to $10,000 to help its early-career faculty establish their research programs; in this cooperative venture, the applicant's department and/or college provides the matching cash support. Indiana University-Bloomington recognizes the achievements of its pre-tenure faculty who show promise of reaching distinction as scholars and artists through its Outstanding Junior Faculty Award; the award provides a $6,500 summer fellowship, $4,000 release time or grant-in-aid, and a $2,000 grant-in-aid.

10
GOOD PRACTICE FOSTERS A BALANCE BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE

- Counsel pre-tenure faculty on how to manage and prioritize their time among teaching, advising, research, and service.
- Connect women faculty and faculty of color to special resources or networks on campus that might be of relevance and support to them.
- Link faculty newcomers to information and services available for dual-career couples and to flexible employee benefits such as parental leaves, flexible time limits for tenure, part-time status during child rearing, and child care.
- Welcome new faculty with information about the local community, such as housing, schools, child-care options, and cultural, entertainment, and sporting events, both on and off campus.

EXAMPLES

At Purdue University, a relocation specialist works with department chairs and search committees to provide faculty candidates with information about the University and local community; once hired, new faculty members can have a relocation specialist work for up to a year on their spouse's job search. Medical schools are in the forefront of modifying traditional tenure systems to accommodate the personal and professional needs of their faculty; their strategies include lengthening or removing fixed probationary periods, providing perquisites for part-time faculty, and developing multiple career tracks with equivalent salaries and benefits regardless of tenure status (Gappa and MacDermid, 1997). The *College and University Reference Guide to Work-Family Programs* (Friedman, Rimsky, and Johnson, 1996) and AAHE's own *Work, Family, and the Faculty Career* (Gappa and MacDermid, 1997) are both

excellent resources for departments or campus administrators seeking information about innovative work-family policies and practices.

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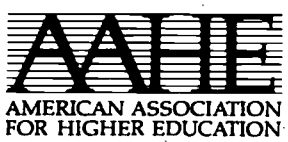

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