

**Committee on the Status of Women and Minorities (COSOWAM)**  
**ELAM Fellow Roundtable Minutes**  
**March 17, 2010**

Present: Drs. Renee Reid, Kamar Goddard, Delores Clement, Andrea Ferreira-Gonzalez, Ms. Janett Forte, Ms. Deborah Stewart and Dr. Saba Masho

ELAM Fellows: Laura Siminoff, Susan Kornstein, Michelle Whitehurst-Cook, Suzanne Barbour and Andrea Pozez. A separate interview was done with Dr. Joann Bodurtha and her input is included in this summary.

**I. Welcome and Introduction**

The meeting began at 4:10 PM with introduction of attendees.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Due to the ELAM round table, approval of minutes was postponed to next meeting.

**III. ELAM Roundtable**

Questions for the ELAM roundtable were sent to participants prior to the meeting. At the meeting participants discussed:

Factors that contribute to successful professional development

1. Protected time for research: having the first few years protected for research was important (no teaching or service)
2. Mentor: clearly assigned mentor(s) who are committed
  - a. Women willing to mentor
  - b. Systematic way of rewarding others who mentor
3. Supportive atmosphere:
  - a. Clear expectation
  - b. Orientation package for new faculty with pilot
  - c. Need P&T discussion
  - d. Find good students to work with and maximize productivity
4. Personal determination: being able to grab good opportunities
  - a. A good mentor can guide a faculty
  - b. Trial and error - do not be afraid to try
5. Individual creativity
  - a. Work around barriers
  - b. Work across departments
  - c. Family support
  - d. Obtaining recognition
  - e. No procrastinations and excuses
6. Leadership programs such as Grace Harris Institute and AAMC

## Barriers that hinder successful professional development

1. Lack of a formal mentor
  - a. New faculty orientation survey to find out the new faculty area of expertise and identify a mentor
2. Lack of negotiation skills -
  - a. protected time
  - b. pilot funding/departmental support
  - c. women tend to spend more time doing service and alternatively, may be offered directorship which may affect their professional development negatively
3. Lack of accountability by chairs
  - a. Lack of clear guidance from chairs
  - b. Not knowing what you want from chairs
  - c. Fear of your boss
  - d. Favoring faculty hired by the chair - abandoning faculty inherited with the department
4. Lack of mid year tenure and promotion review
  - a. Need P&T discussion on Day 1 or it should be done from the first/before hire
5. Poor support for research
6. InfoEd

## Barriers to mentor others

1. Lack of time
2. Lack of incentive and institutional support
3. Departmental problems with chair

## How did ELAM affect your professional development

1. Learned how to negotiate
2. Provided a community of professional network
3. Provided a learning community/assigned to a small group that continues afterwards

## Recommendations to foster success at VCU

1. Chairs need to be more accountable for their faculty's success
  - a. Chairs have to be equally responsible when faculty is not successful
  - b. Having lifelong chairs may not be beneficial for faculty - rotating chairs may be beneficial
2. Allocation of supporting resources for faculty
  - a. office space, lab
3. Assigning formal mentors (could be need based too)
  - a. Consider using faculty and alumni mentors
  - b. Update and use the mentoring guide

- c. Senior faculty should be provided an incentive for mentoring others (chair evaluation or other mechanisms)
  - d. Making mentors and mentees accountable
- 4. Tenure and promotion
  - a. Having a mid review
  - b. Revise timing - with the current funding environment, it may be hard to achieve success in research funding
- 5. Office of Sponsored Program (OSP)
  - a. understaffed and hinders research productivity
  - b. benefits from customer service mentality
- 6. IRB
  - a. Make the application process more user-friendly
  - b. Quick turnaround will benefit faculty
- 7. ELAM participation
  - a. Commended VCU for its scholarships and support
  - b. It will be great for the dean to go to the ELAM meetings when possible
  - c. Recommend for more women to get the opportunity
  - d. Provide incentive/opportunity to mentor
- 8. Facilitate multidisciplinary collaboration
- 9. Continue professional development seminar
  - a. Most faculty learn so much from those seminars
- 10. Individual creativity
  - a. work around barriers
  - b. work across departments
  - c. mentees should know that the mentor has their best interest

Dr. Masho informed that the minutes of this meeting will be summarized and e-mailed to the attendees and also to Dr. PJ Coney.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM