



Outlook

Final Update from the NSF ADVANCE Partnership Project

From provost@slu.edu <provost@slu.edu>

Date Wed 4/23/2025 10:45 AM

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

We write to you today to update you on the [National Science Foundation ADVANCE Partnership](#) activities and efforts to date at SLU.

In 2022, Saint Louis University, Seattle University, and Gonzaga University were awarded a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Partnership Grant for a 3-year program to re-imagine the professoriate and the associated implications for faculty evaluation and advancement. The aims of the project include identifying evidence-based and contextually appropriate approaches to evaluating traditionally undervalued faculty activities, such as community engaged research and institution building.

Over the past 3 years, the ADVANCE partnership has hosted 4 focus groups, 4 workshops, 2 Think Tanks, and many meetings and conversations with faculty and administrative leadership across colleges and schools. These events also included visits and workshops hosted by faculty from Seattle University, where they shared insights from their experience doing similar work. The outcomes of these activities include an internal [White Paper Report in 2024](#) on “pain points” in faculty advancement, revisions submitted for the Faculty Manual in the fall of 2024 for inclusive language in research/scholarship for community engaged scholars, and a working definition of Institution Building as a category of faculty work deserving of recognition in faculty evaluation and promotion guidelines.

In addition, one of the working groups (Team 3, Group C) established by the Provost to address SLU's response to our shifting financial landscape, utilized the insights gathered from the ADVANCE team. In particular, they used [Boyer's model of scholarship](#), a framework suggested in the ADVANCE work, to operationalize Institution Building in guidelines for promotion and tenure documents, and consider how to make visible and promotable those faculty works that impact the academic field, public sphere, education and pedagogy, and our home institution, SLU.

It is important to recognize that the work of the ADVANCE grant builds on earlier work undertaken by other faculty and academic leaders over the last decade. Examples include the work of the Faculty Senate Gender Equity Task Force (2014-2017), now the Provost/Faculty Senate Faculty Gender Equity Committee. The committee supports faculty advancement through initiatives like an internal research study on faculty service, and the Billiken Boost Program (2021-2023), which supported faculty in remaining on track for promotion despite specific negative impacts to scholarship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Other foundational work upon which the ADVANCE project built is the Joint Faculty Senate/Provost Mid-Career Faculty Development Committee (2016-2020), which launched the COACHE survey in 2017 and initiated SLU's membership in the [NCFDD](#) in

2018. NCFDD is a national organization whose programs support all faculty in achieving their advancement goals.

Although the NSF ADVANCE Partnership Project will end later this summer as planned (2022-2025), the work of addressing barriers and facilitators of faculty advancement remain central to our mission and the future of SLU's success. For example, academic units have begun to revise promotion/tenure criteria in ways that better support advancement for all faculty. And the [SLU Teaching Effectiveness Project](#) will help SLU to better define, document, enhance, evaluate, and recognize effective teaching in meaningful ways that align with our institutional identity and better support all faculty.

We are extremely grateful for the engagement of faculty and leadership over the past 3 years. We look forward to continued efforts and initiatives to support the success of our faculty!

Sincerely,

Katie Heiden-Rootes
Assistant Vice President, Division for Diversity & Innovative Community Engagement,
Professor, School of Medicine

Bidisha Chakrabarty
Associate Dean of Research and Faculty Affairs, Edward Jones Professor of Finance,
Chaifetz School of Business

Debra Lohe
Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning, Chief Online Learning Officer