

ADVANCING WOMEN AND  
UNDERREPRESENTED  
MINORITIES ON THE FACULTY  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MICHIGAN

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# Core Aspect of Any Change Effort



- Believing change is necessary here
- At UM, this entailed
  - ▣ Examination of pattern of representation in different disciplines
    - Low representation
    - High turnover
  - ▣ Assessment of the “climate” for women and minorities
    - Less satisfied overall
    - Felt disrespected, overworked, and undervalued
    - Not mentored as well as men
  - ▣ Assessment of key professional markers: recruitment, promotion, salary

# UM Approach to ADVANCE



Once persuaded that situation was not equitable...

- Goal: institutional change
- At all levels of institution
  - Individual
  - Department
  - College
  - University
- Strategy: change institutional policies and practices (not “fix the women”)

# Institutional Change in Four Key Domains



- Increase ties among the women
- Recruitment
- Nature of faculty interactions (“climate”)
- Institutional policy review

# Creation of Network to ADVANCE Women Scientists and Engineers

- Support positive collective identity
  - ▣ Exposure to new experiences of each other as helpful and interesting
- Use Network to surface issues
- Encourage alliances between women and men
- Create support structures that will last (peer mentoring)



Faculty with the UM  
Provost at the Network  
Dinner, Fall 2006



# Recruitment — Influencing a Departmental Practice at UM

- Creation of STRIDE (committee on Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence)
  - ▣ Started with eight science and engineering senior faculty
  - ▣ Now comprised of 8 science and engineering and 3 social science senior faculty
- Studied the social science research literature
- Encourage colleagues to adopt better, equitable recruiting strategies



Lowered career success rate

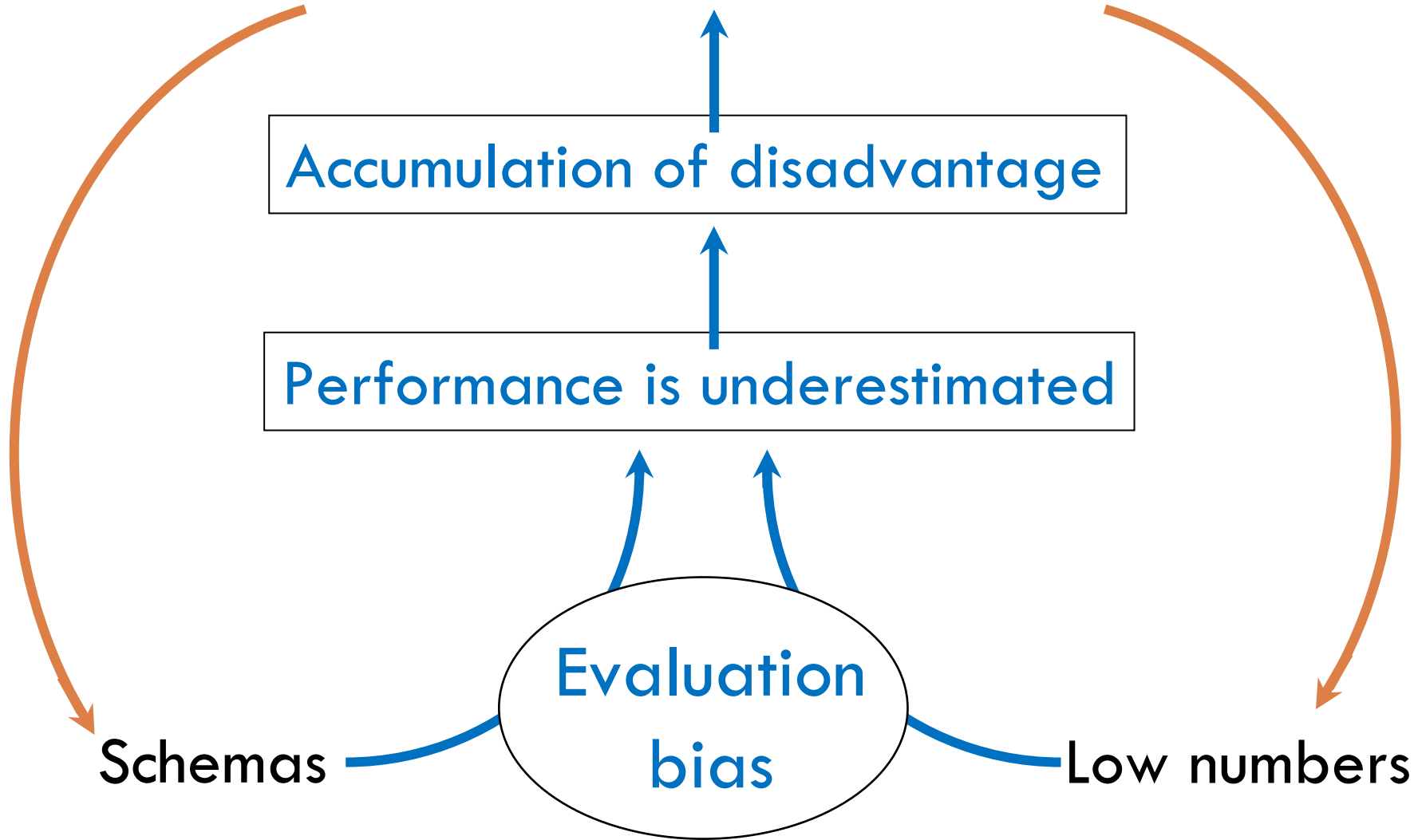
Accumulation of disadvantage

Performance is underestimated

Evaluation  
bias

Schemas

Low numbers



# Why Does STRIDE Work?



- Credible source
  - ▣ Scientists and engineers
  - ▣ Based on research findings
- Explanatory model focusing on mitigating bias
  - ▣ Organizes information (for recall)
  - ▣ Releases from guilt
- Concrete actions

# Changing the Climate for Faculty Interactions: CRLT Players

- Performed sketches on multicultural classroom dynamics
- Created sketches for us on:
  - ▣ Faculty meeting
  - ▣ Faculty advising faculty
  - ▣ Tenure committee meeting



“Faculty Meeting” Sketch

# Social Science Research Findings Represented in Sketches



- Perceptions of “tokens”
- Role of leadership
  - ▣ Power of framing of issues
- Gender dynamics/rank dynamics
  - ▣ Interruptions
  - ▣ Listening
  - ▣ Who has power and influence
- Implications of dynamics for outcomes
- Who can change the dynamics and how

# Reviewing Institutional Policies — “Consciousness-Raising” in an Institution

- Committee on Gender in Science and Engineering convened by President and Provost
- Subcommittees chaired by 3 deans made recommendations on:
  - ▣ Faculty Tracks and Work/Family Integration
  - ▣ Recruitment, Retention, and Leadership
  - ▣ Evaluation and Promotion of Faculty
- View policies from perspective of women scientists



President Mary Sue Coleman (above) and Provost Teresa Sullivan (below), Co-chairs of the GSE Committee



# Significant Policy Changes



- Changes in recruitment practices (e.g., required STRIDE training, shortlist review)
- Changes in annual salary review practices (adopt standardized template)
- Formalization of expectations about career advising
- Family-friendly policies
  - ▣ Generous family leave (for the US) for both men and women
  - ▣ Dual career program with budget
- More flexible tenure clock, with explicit framing of “compensation for time lost” vs. “extra time”

# Emphasized Changes in Structures and Practices



- Network
- Recruitment practices and STRIDE committee
- CRLT Players and “climate”
- Policy changes and GSE committee

# How Assess Progress toward Our Goals?



- Lively network of women engineers and scientists on campus
- Annual recruitment of women faculty from 14% to 34%; (women increased from 13% to 17% of science and engineering faculty)
- Went from having no woman chair of a major science or engineering department to having 12
- Climate described in 2006 survey of women faculty as involving less sexual harassment, scholarly isolation, and felt surveillance

# “Institutional Transformation”



- Some clear successes
  
- Disappointment with limited success
  - ▣ Many climate problems still present
  - ▣ Needs in other disciplines
  - ▣ Needs beyond women in science
  
- Recognition that institutional change is slow

# UM ADVANCE Program's Mission



Expanding to promote diversity and excellence among faculty and students in all fields. Continued focus on...

- Recruitment – focused on development and use of equitable recruiting practices
- Retention – focused on preemptive strategies to prevent the loss of valued faculty
- Climate – focused on improvement of departmental climate
- Leadership – focused on development of leadership skills and opportunities, and on academic leaders' capacity to promote positive climates

# Implications of Our Experience



- Single most important low cost action: create and activate network of women scientists and engineers
  - Lessens isolation
  - Connect social scientists and scientists
  - Creates vehicle for communication and influence
- Mitigate unconscious bias in key practices
  - Recruitment
  - Key evaluation processes
- Examine and change policies and practices
  - Existing ones to change
  - Missing policies to create

# Increase Leadership Capacity in this Area



- Provide new leadership training
  - Current chairs and other line administrators
  - Women scientists and engineers
  - New full professors
  - New program to create departmental change teams (STEP)

# Changing Culture Includes Many Different Constituencies



- Top administrative leadership
- Department chairs
- Faculty conducting various review processes
- Faculty who are too important to serve on committees but who influence decisions
- New faculty from other institutions
- Young faculty

# Align Rewards to these Goals



- Reward individuals for:
  - Thoughtful mentoring
  - Service that advances this agenda
- Reward departments that take active steps to create positive climate
- Reward chairs and other administrators for successful efforts in this domain