Recruitment and Retention of Ethnic Minority Faculty

2003 Progress Report

John Peterson, SFA for Underrepresented Faculty

During the 2002-2003 academic year, efforts to implement the policy on recruitment and retention of ethnic minority tenure-track faculty focused on retention aspects of the policy through activities to develop a pilot mentoring program for minority tenure-track faculty.

In collaboration, the senior faculty associate for underrepresented faculty and chairman of the senate cultural diversity committee completed several activities intended to: identify the broad range of minority mentoring programs available in doctoral-level research universities; conduct a comprehensive review of selected mentoring programs, and determine the essential components and procedures needed to develop a pilot program at Georgia State University.

After completion of these activities, the proposal for a pilot program was prepared, which describes the purpose, structure, and procedures of the program. The program involves a formal approach to mentoring in which mentors and protégés are matched with respect to their professional interests and an informal model of mentoring that heightens awareness of the benefits of mentoring and provides more recognition and/or rewards for those who devote their efforts to the mentoring process. The three-part structure of the program includes: formation of mentor-protégé pairs, social occasions for discussion of common problems, and workshops (group mentoring) to present appropriate information that all program participants need to know.

Most importantly, the literature on previous programs indicates that support of the president and deans is required to achieve successful mentoring efforts. The program needs strong encouragement and commitment from the academic administration and faculty. Hence, the proposal was distributed to the Deans Group for their comments and suggestions at the end of the academic year. Currently, efforts are being made to complete the final, revised proposal and to obtain approval and funding for the mentoring program during the 2003-2004 academic year.