

Phase II: Retention to Tenure

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The entire unit, college, school, or campus, administrators, faculty, and staff alike, **share responsibility in creating a welcoming atmosphere** to for new colleagues' transition to professional life at the University.²

Women and minority faculty accept offers from other institutions due to **climate reasons** at the first institution, with hopes for better climate at the second. When people at other institutions treat them with respect and interest and offer conditions of support for their research, it confirms their suspicions that they may be undervalued by their home institution.⁴

⇒ **What exactly is "the climate"?** The workplace climate is the interpersonal environmental context for individuals' work lives. It includes cues that we are taken seriously (included and consulted), valued, and appreciated, in contrast to cues that we are invisible or unheard, devalued, and not appreciated.⁴

- Elements of a **positive climate** include: **Informal socializing** organized by leadership. Active faculty **appreciation**. **Valuing** diversity-, equity-, access-, and inclusion-related research, teaching, and service. **Transparent** committee rotations, transparent guidelines for promotion and tenure. **Annual reviews as opportunities** for mentoring and coaching. **Regular and open discussion** about important issues, including those related to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion⁵
- **Figuring out what issues** have been leading to a revolving door in the department and working to resolve them in the short term will increase the possibility that long-term recruitment activities will have lasting success, according to Kerry Ann Rockquemore, PhD, founder of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity⁶
- The right **leadership** must be in place. To retain URM faculty, leaders must encourage open and transparent discourse, adopt ideas and best practices, and support experimentation. Leaders must be **willing to challenge conventional wisdom and status quo traditions**, and to entice, motivate and encourage stakeholders while comfortably inviting dissent. Recognizable and realistic achievements and impact rely on comprehensive engagement, leadership, and trust.⁷
 - ⇒ Positive climates were often attributed to the efforts of institutional leadership and authority. **Top-down change generated greater investment and support across the institution**, informing and engaging the whole community in the commitment to diversity⁸
- A 2022 *Nature* article interviewed a dozen scientists who provided reasons for leaving academia, underscoring the importance of department-level tenure & promotion criteria and **fair assessment, mentorship**, and adequate **funding for space and equipment** as factors, among others, that could improve retention²
- Other ways to support junior faculty¹: Assist with professional and personal needs during **orientations**. Assign **mentors**, monitor effectiveness. Monitor research, teaching, and service **workload**. Promote **external visibility** by making connections to PIs, providing financial support for professional travel, nominating for awards, facilitating relationships with external colleagues
- Junior faculty should use both formal and informal mentor relationships to their advantage³
 - ⇒ **Formal relationships** have clear goals, meetings, duration, and definition of responsibilities and target outcomes. They can lead to research productivity and task-dependent sustainability of relationship
 - ⇒ **Informal relationships** may be more conducive to gender, race, and ethnicity discussions. They can provide more perspectives on scholarship and psychosocial support. Power dynamics inherent to roles and rank in formal pairings are reduced, allowing for freer exploration and expression

Phase II References

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2. Gewin, Virginia. "Has the 'great Resignation' Hit Academia?" *Nature*. 606.7912 (2022): 211–213.
3. Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring, Office of the Provost, Columbia University, 2016.
4. Frequently Asked Questions: Retention of Science and Engineering Faculty Who are Women and/or Members of Racial/Ethnic Minorities, University of Michigan, 2018.
5. Best Practices for Faculty Searches, Office for Faculty Advancement, University of Washington, revised 2021.
6. Rockquemore, K. A. (2016, January 5). For a Diverse Faculty, Start With Retention. *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/01/06/how-retain-diverse-faculty-essay>
7. Whittaker, J. A., Montgomery, B. L., & Martinez Acosta, V. G. (2015). Retention of Underrepresented Minority Faculty: Strategic Initiatives for Institutional Value Proposition Based on Perspectives from a Range of Academic Institutions. *Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience Education*, 13(3), A136–A145.
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