

Step-Up Workshop Report

Women in Science and Engineering – Atlantic Region

10/3/2014



NSERC
CRSNG

Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering
Chaires pour les femmes en sciences & génie

Réseau National Network

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Introduction

The NSERC Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering decided to host workshops to support the career advancement of women faculty members in Science and Engineering, in particular the Step-Up to Full Professor Workshop. The design for the workshop included the sharing of insights by women who are already Full Professors and those who have served as Deans and/or Department chairs.

Additionally, networking opportunities were created during the day long workshop and the women were encouraged to develop plans for their career advancement. The October 3, 2014 workshop in Halifax, NS was the first such workshop to be offered in Atlantic Canada.

This report provides highlights of some of the conversations recorded by participants on flip chart notes, notes of collective conversations taken by Dr. Tamara Franz-Odendaal, NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering for Atlantic Canada, and feedback from participant evaluations, as well as lessons learnt by the host and facilitation team. As such, this report is not a content summary of the day. It is intended as a documentation of the process of the day for those who attended and for others who may wish to offer a similar workshop in another region.

The Process

The process was developed based on the experience and learning from the first workshop in Ottawa (2014) and adapted to take advantage of the expertise and experience of women faculty from universities in Atlantic Canada. Dr Tamara Franz-Odendaal led the identification and invitation of the speakers, and the marketing of the workshop, and Sally Marchand, Program Coordinator for WISEatlantic was responsible for the logistics and registration of participants. Dr Franz-Odendaal reached out to all the Science, Technology and Engineering Deans in the region to encourage them to pass the information along to the women faculty in their departments and support the attendance in this workshop. Donna Clark, Leadership Partner with Courage Group International, provided professional facilitation of the workshop. She brought experience working with women in science and engineering and ensured a highly participatory process design that maximized the opportunity for the speakers to interact with participants and for the participants to connect with each other.

Courage Group worked with the following assumptions about what is essential to create authentic engagement and committed action to guide the planning and design of the facilitation process:

- Meaningful purpose compels engagement.
- Invitation and welcome are essential.
- Passion and responsibility aligned with purpose are the source of engagement.
- The whole person is engaged – hands for doing, heads for thinking, hearts for caring, and spirits for achieving inspired results.
- The ‘presence’ of the hosts/facilitators matter – you work intentionally with the processes and hold the space.

- Relational space is created working with both the energetic and physical space in which we meet.
- Knowledge and wisdom exist in the group or community – people in the system know best what will work.
- Holistic approach informs commitment – when we see the whole system, the story up until now, both the visible and the unseen, we see possibilities for the future that wants to unfold, and our role in it.
- A new story is co-created by the participants out of the best of what is – people support what they help to create.
- Choice is a key ingredient to unleash the power of the individual to contribute and take action. Space is created to invite individual commitment and leadership for action to emerge.
- Change is not an event, it is a process. Planning before the event and planning for follow-up are all essential to engage and sustain energy and action.
- Pay attention to what emerges, learn and act again.

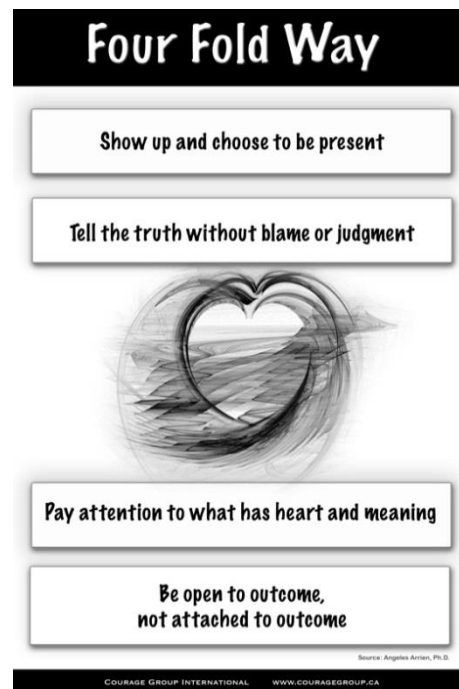
The appendix includes the invitation, agenda, workbook for participant notes, and a planning worksheet. A facilitation outline is available from Dr. Franz-Odendaal upon request. The presentations are not included. Each participant was invited to note what was important for them from these presentations in the workbook provided.

The process design included opportunities for participants to reflect on and connect with their purpose for attending, as well as their purpose for choosing and planning to advance in their careers. Participants were engaged early in the session in conversations with colleagues at small table groups and were invited to change tables throughout the session to meet and network with others in their discipline in other universities. The sharing of first person stories, including the process of learning and emotional experiences by female professors, previous acting deans and department chairs, engaged both the presenter and participants. Discussion after the presentations engaged the participants in making meaning for themselves about the information and experiences shared by the speakers. The women had opportunities to choose who to engage with and how they wanted to engage in these small group conversations. Opportunities to share challenges in achieving criteria in service, research and administration were created, as well as space for the sharing of strategies for dealing with these challenges in the journey to Full Professorship. One session provided strategies for negotiation, a key skill in the overall career management process; another was devoted to work-life effectiveness and sustaining health and energy. A Step-Up Plan was shared with the women as a tool to be used in their career planning. In the workshop there was an opportunity to get a brief introduction to working with this planning framework, and make an assessment of a first step toward that career goal. The workshop ended with an opportunity to provide written feedback on the day and a closing circle for sharing reflections about the experience of the day.

Goals for the Workshop: What attracted the women to attend?

The invitation to the workshop noted that the purpose was to support the career advancement of women faculty members in science and engineering, in particular the step-up to Full Professorship. The women who responded to the invitation were invited to share with each other and the group why they responded to the invitation they received. The following themes emerged for attending the session:

- To understand the process and requirements for promotion;
- To learn from the experiences of others and peers in a supportive environment;
- To network and meet women who are going through the same process, and to learn how to get back into 'the game' after a leave;
- To develop clear goals, timeline and a strategy for reaching our goals (promotion, tenure, or a job) – want a concrete plan;
- To find ways to express accomplishments that will be understood and appreciated by our male colleagues;
- To find inspiration to apply and advice;
- To give feedback to NSERC on policies.



The women were invited to take personal responsibility for their learning for the day, and use each of the various opportunities in the day to get the information and support that they came to find. They were asked to respect the confidentiality of the conversations and personal stories that would be shared and were invited to engage in the conversations with authenticity. The Four Fold Way as created by Dr. Angeles Arrien was offered as a way of looking at participating with authenticity.

Managing your reputation

by Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, Associate Dean of Science, Diversity, University of Alberta

Your reputation within the university is dependent on your teaching evaluations, your annual report to your Dean/Chair and your rapport with colleagues. Therefore, it is important to build trust amongst your colleagues.

- Be strategic when you approach your Dean (be effective, not angry)
- Barriers take work to break down so avoid building them
- If something effects your reputation then meet it head on; if not, then ignore it!
- Be a Team Player by being professional, being an effective communicator (know when to ignore comments and when to respond); be engaged at meetings and have mentors for yourself.

Service Challenges and Strategies

Dr. Ruth Shaw, Dean of Science, Applied Science and Engineering, University of New Brunswick and Dr. Marty Leonard, Professor, Department of Biology, Dalhousie University (past-acting Dean of Science)

These women shared their insights into the challenges and opportunities in meeting service requirements for career advancement. The women were then invited into conversations about this important topic. Here are some brief highlights from this collective conversation and flip chart notes.

Challenges:

- When an institution wants a woman on a committee and there is a small pool of women, then these women end up getting asked a lot!
- Being competent and a good team player, one is asked to do more than appropriate
- Expectations vs reality of service commitments
- After focusing on service it is a challenge to come back
- Set-backs – students not finishing, change to funding availability
- How to know when you've reached too much service and how to present this (team players vs. self-balance)
- We don't perceive ourselves as having a gender schema, we assume we are just going to be treated as a researcher.

Strategies for dealing effectively with service:

- Refocus to emphasize areas of importance for promotion according to collective agreement.
 - Use resources - examples: e.g. How to do research in absence of funding
 - Develop a course with a research project – publish the results!
 - directed studies “special topics” courses
 - undergrad/honours course
 - co-supervisors
- Sell yourself as a team player - examples: Tailor service choices wisely: interests, types, load, etc. Consider your personal schedule. Know when you are doing too much. Women seem to have a stronger sense of duty than most male colleagues.

Negotiating Workload

Dr. Catherine Mavriplis, NSERC – Pratt & Whitney Chair for Women in Science and Engineering and Associate Professor, Department of Engineering, University of Ottawa, led a session on negotiating workload. She invited the women to share how they experience a negotiation. Here are the metaphors that they shared:

- Feels like begging
- Like pulling teeth
- Necessary evil
- Uncomfortable, like a confrontation
- Like challenging authority

- Turkish bazaar
- Like a mind game
- Like a game where you don't know how others are playing
- Win-win

The sorts of things that women faculty members need to negotiate included the following:

- Service, teaching, salaries (e.g. anomalies fund & special salary increase)
- Professional development
- Create new courses
- Types of courses (size, level, time of day, semester)
- Space – office, student, lab
- Teaching support/assistance – T.A's/markers
- Operating funds, equipment repair
- "Release" money for being chair or postdoc
- Support for grad students from university/faculty
- Negotiate with students with respect to their stipend
- Admin leave following senior position (chair)
- Reduced workload
- Timing of sabbatical
- Teaching assignment, timing, /course type
- Money for projects/students
- Equipment repair/replace

Remember: "you don't get what you deserve but you get what you negotiate"

Recognise when you are in a negotiation!

Know the historical precedence in your Department – what has been negotiated for in the past.

Frank Discussions and Take Home Messages

While the detailed presentations are not included here, speakers and panelist invited the women to engage in frank discussions about the process and experience of applying for Full Professor. The following speakers and panelists generously shared their learning and advice and participated in conversations:

- *Dr. Colleen Barber, Professor, Department of Biology, Saint Mary's University*
- *Dr. Lisbeth Truelstrup-Hansen, Professor, Department of Process Engineering and Applied Science, Dalhousie University*
- *Dr. Shelley Adamo, Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, Dalhousie University*

Several discussions took place that focussed on the following topics: sabbaticals (timing, with children? Etc); how to handle disappointment if your promotion is not successful; external reference letters, cover letters to your package and the sharing of personal experiences.

Through the sharing of the stories of the speakers and panelists, several key messages stood out:

- Build trust amongst colleagues and remember barriers are hard to break down and easier to build;
- Be courageous: if something happens that affects your reputation, then act; if not, then ignore it!
- Be strategic about where you provide service and which committees you sit on
- In your application, explain weaknesses head on
- In your application, demonstrate how your service inter-connects with your teaching and with your research to present a complete cohesive package
- In your application, make sure you explain your environment to your external reviewers; they will know your field and work but not necessarily your environment
- In your application, your cover letter sets the tone; make it easy for your reviewers to check the criteria off and show how you meet and exceed these criteria
- Deans do go against Department Review Committees – this does happen
- The President can overturn all decisions in the process
- Ask your colleagues if they think you are ready to apply for promotion
- Tenure is about your POTENTIAL; Full Professorship is about your ACHIEVEMENTS
- “We know we work hard and we work in flexible jobs; it is okay to go to the gym during conventional “work hours” – look after yourself and don’t feel guilty”

Feedback to NSERC

East coast women are asked frequently to be on committees to have representation of women. The good intentions may have unintended consequences for female faculty in science and engineering in Atlantic Canadian universities. Female faculty members may feel compelled to sit on committees and may end up actually sitting on too many committees, particularly in comparison with their male colleagues.

Feedback from Participants about the Workshop

Overall the participants were very appreciative of the workshop and the opportunity to engage in conversations with colleagues about this journey. 96% of the respondents noted that the knowledge and participation that they gained in the workshop met their expectations and was beneficial to them. Highlights of their feedback are presented below.

All sessions were considered useful with average responses on a 5 point scale (1 being not useful to 5 being very useful) of 3.6 to 4.3. The most useful sessions noted by participants were:

- Negotiating Workload

- Managing Your Reputation
- Are You Ready?

It was interesting to note the variability of responses. Some sessions were noted as least useful by some of the women and most useful by others, indicating that the workshop had a good balance of topics that met the diverse needs of the women who chose to participate.

Several themes emerged from a review of the comments as follows:

- Not alone in this journey : Many women noted that they were glad to know that they were not alone, that others shared similar experiences and feelings, and that it was encouraging to have the support of other female colleagues, a new network to reach out to for ongoing support.
- New ideas and solutions to challenges of stepping up: Women noted that they got many new practical tips, suggestions and concrete ideas from the workshop including clarity on process of promotions, how to look at criteria, broader perspectives and new ways to use their experience, how to balance service opportunities, and how to prepare their packages.
- Safe environment in which to share stories: Many women commented on their comfort and appreciation to be able to share challenges, successes and failures, and to discuss issues in a facilitated process that created a safe and non-judgemental environment.

Selected comments:

- “I learned a lot from the sessions, was able to ask questions and get answers in a safe environment”
- “Great to hear stories of success/failure, ideas and tips on how best to prep packages, general networking, suggestions for balancing service”
- “Excellent workshop! Great balance of discussion topics, lots of helpful advice”
- “Very useful workshop - gave me ideas on how to proceed and tips on what to do to accomplish my goals.”
- “I learned the value of negotiation and being persistent.”
- “Excellent workshop. It was very well organized and very engaging.”
- “The facilitation was fantastic – creating a safe, non-judgemental environment is not easy and was vital for our discussion. I look forward to seeking out some of these women for future advice”

Suggestions:

- “This workshop was very useful to me, even as an assistant professor. I think it could have been more general in its call – very little or no change in format would be necessary.”
- “practising how an external evaluator would look at the dossier/case study similar to the videos about negotiations of workload would be useful”

- “I really enjoyed this workshop. A workshop for female postdocs interested in academic positions might be of interest. Also, perhaps a grant information workshop.”
- “Keep up regular workshop and networking opportunities”

Organizational Lessons Learned from Atlantic Step-Up Workshop

In the process of planning and marketing the workshop, several lessons were learnt that will be useful for organizing the next session either in this region or in others.

What worked well:

- Timing of the workshop after the start of academic year, after the initial rush was important to allow participation of the women.
- Using multiple ways to reach out to the women including asking those for whom we did have contact information to share with others, emails to individuals and deans, mail-out and postcard distribution and the WISEatlantic social media platforms.
- Inviting speakers from diverse institutions and diverse disciplines- important to the women to have this cross-section of disciplines and institutions involved in the conversations to encourage and support them in their career development.
- Having a variety of ways to participate and engage in the day really enhanced the enjoyment of the day for the women.
- Using an external facilitator to help support the overall frame for the day, thread and weave the pieces together into a coherent program, and create conversational spaces for meaning making for the women.

Challenges to work with:

- Getting the message out about the workshop was a challenge since university websites were not up-to-date and Deans often didn't have a separate list of female faculty. Our strategies to reach out in multiple ways was effective to address this challenge.
- Some female faculty members who received the invitation to attend assumed that they couldn't attend because they were not funded by NSERC. In the future we want to make a point about noting in invitations and marketing materials that this is open to any women faculty members in science and engineering.

Opportunities for additional impact:

- Conversations during these events have the potential to spark new initiatives that bring women faculty together. For example, out of this Step-Up workshop women in physics connected and a new mentoring network has already emerged and is being supported by NSERC - NSERC Atlantic Peer Mentoring Network – Physics. It seems that this event was the catalyst that was needed for this to get formalized.
- From the conversations at Step-Up, it is clear that there is a desire for learning about negotiation, communication and health and balance. Yet few female academics come to the

WinSETT workshops on communication and negotiation. There is an opportunity to link these workshops to professional development for the purpose of promotion and support women faculty in science and engineering in prioritizing these professional development workshops.

Acknowledgements:

On behalf of all the women who attended, we are grateful to the NSERC Women in Science and Engineering Chairs Network for sponsoring this workshop. We also thank Dalhousie University for sponsoring the luncheon for this event.

Contact WISEatlantic:

If you have any questions about this workshop or report, please feel free to contact Sally Marchand, Program Coordinator of WISEatlantic, at WISEatlantic@msvu.ca or 902-457-6294.

For more information about the WISEatlantic program, please visit our website at www.WISEatlantic.ca. To stay connected with WISEatlantic, like us on Facebook (facebook.com/WISEatlantic) or follow us on twitter (@WISEatlantic).

Appendix

- 1 - Invitation
- 2 - Step-Up Workshop Agenda
- 3 - Participant Workbook
- 4 - Step-Up Plan

Appendix 1: Invitation



Get Ready to Step-Up!

Join other female Associate Professors in Science and Engineering fields in Atlantic Canada to explore how to take the next step to becoming a Full Professor.

Your NSERC Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering invite you to attend this unique workshop and to learn from female Full Professors about what worked for them, gain insights from those who have served as Dean or Department Chair, and leave with a draft plan for

your own career advancement. This is a great opportunity to get the support and encouragement you need to Step-Up!

During this one-day workshop on **Friday, October 3, 2014 in Halifax**, you will have the opportunity to discuss with female speakers and colleagues from the region some of the following questions:

- How do I prepare myself to meet the criteria for my university?
- How do I overcome the challenges women often face in this process? Who do I ask for support/assistance?
- How do I get comfortable promoting myself?
- How do I negotiate my workload so I can meet the criteria for research, service and teaching?
- How do I use the influence I have in the process? What is important in picking my external reviewers?
- Do I have what I need to make the move? Am I ready to do it?

When: Friday, October 3, 2014, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Where: The Westin Nova Scotian, 1181 Hollis St, Halifax, NS, Harbour Suites A/B

Cost: \$30.00, call Sally Burke at (902) 457-6294 to secure payment by VISA or Mastercard. Travel reimbursement is available, but you must register and book accommodation before September 2nd, 2014 to receive re-imbusement.

Registration: To register please visit our website, www.WISEatlantic.ca/StepUp.asp or contact Sally Burke at (902) 457-6294 or WISEatlantic@msvu.ca. Registration deadline is September 15th, 2014.

Your host for this event is Dr. Tamara Franz-Odendaal, Associate Professor of Biology, Mount Saint Vincent University and NSERC Atlantic Chair for Women in Science and Engineering.

Appendix 2: STEP-UP WORKSHOP Agenda

Westin Nova Scotian - Oct 3, 2014, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

- 8:00 Registration and Breakfast
- 8:25 Welcome and Introduction
- *Dr. Tamara Franz-Odendaal, Associate Professor of Biology, Mount Saint Vincent University and NSERC Chair for Science and Engineering*
- 8:30 Who is in the room? Why did you respond to the invitation to the workshop?
- 8:45 Managing Your Reputation
- *Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, Associate Dean of Science, Diversity, University of Alberta*
- 9:15 Service/Administration and a Dean's Perspective (20 Min – 10 min each)
- *Dr. Ruth Shaw, Dean of Science, Applied Science and Engineering, University of New Brunswick*
 - *Dr. Marty Leonard, Professor, Department of Biology, Dalhousie University*
- 10:00 Break
- 10:30 Negotiating Workload
- *Dr. Catherine Mavriplis, NSERC – Pratt & Whitney Chair for Women in Science and Engineering and Associate Professor, Department of Engineering, University of Ottawa*
- 12:00 Lunch – Conversation with Colleagues
- 12:45 Assessing Where You Are on the Journey to Full Professor
- 1:15 The Process from Associate to Full Professor – Sharing Experiences
- *Dr. Colleen Barber, Professor, Department of Biology, Saint Mary's University*
 - *Dr. Lisbeth Truelstrup-Hansen, Professor, Department of Process Engineering and Applied Science, Dalhousie University*
- 2:30 Health Break
- 2:50 Work-Life Effectiveness: Sustaining your Energy as you Advance in your Career
- 3:15 Are you Ready?
- *Dr. Shelley Adamo, Professor, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, Dalhousie University*
- 3:45 A Plan to Step-Up
- 4:15 Closing and Feedback on the Workshop

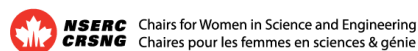
Appendix 3

Participant Workbook

Step-Up: A Promotion Workshop for Female Faculty

October 3rd, 2014

The Westin Nova Scotian



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Participant Reflections and Intentions for this Workshop

Why did you respond to the invitation to this workshop?

What would make this a successful workshop for you?

Managing Your Reputation

What stood out for you?

What do you have to pay attention to re managing your reputation?

Service and Administration

Notes /Questions?

What are your challenges re fulfilling service/administration requirements at your university?

What strategies did you pick up that could help you?

Negotiating Workload

Notes/Questions?

What is important for you to negotiate if you are going to step-up to full professor?

What keeps you from negotiating for specific workload arrangements?

If you knew you could successfully negotiate for yourself, what specifically would you ask for?

Who do you need to ask for support or advice for preparing for your promotion package?

What additional skills would you want to acquire to help you be a better negotiator for yourself?

The Process from Associate to Full Professor

Notes/Questions?

What did you learn from these experiences for application in planning your career advancement?

Are you Ready?

Notes/Questions?

Closing Reflections

What is your first next step?

Teaching				
Service				
NEXT STEPS				
Action/Criterion	How will I accomplish this step?	What resources do I need?	Who do I need to involve or ask for support?	When will I complete this step?

Action/Criterion	How will I accomplish this step?	What resources do I need?	Who do I need to involve or ask for support?	When will I complete this step?

SUSTAINING MY HEALTH AND ENERGY

	Strategies/Practices	What resources/support do I need to do this?	How often will I do this?	How will I know I am succeeding?
Physical				
Emotional/Spiritual				
Mental				