Empowering the Future of Sport Management

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It is critical for women in academia, specifically the academic discipline of sport management, to learn to navigate the intricacies of the academic workplace. According to Austin and Wulff (2004) “new faculty today are entering an academic workplace that is changing rapidly and dramatically” (p. 9). Fiscal restraints, technology, external pressures and emphasis on outcomes based learning are just a few of the expectations faculty are expected to handle. Austin (2003) contended that the expectations placed of faculty members are not adequately discussed in graduate school. One of the consequences of not understanding the expectations is the fact that 42% of faculty at research universities resigns prior to the tenure decision (Dooris & Guidos, 2006). In their research related to how gender role stereotyping impacts women in the tenure process, Gasser and Shaffner (2014), stated that “women, by cultural standard, bear the weight of the more relational processes involved in academia (e.g., teaching, advising, mentoring), so research and administration are areas still disproportionately male dominated” (p. 339).

Felder (2002) contended that “becoming a successful faculty member at a research university is no trivial undertaking. People are not born knowing how to prepare and deliver effective lectures, make good use of the growing power of instructional technology, write rigorous but fair assignments and exams, help students deal with a bewildering array of academic and personal problems, build a world-class research program, manage research and teaching assistants, and balance the endless and often conflicting time demands imposed by teaching, research, service, and personal life” (p. 1). This can be more problematic particularly for female faculty members as they are not receiving the necessary preparation, support and experiences. For example, Danzey-Bussell and Riemer (2012) found that although female faculty members received mentoring about the tenure process, male faculty members received more informal mentoring about grant writing, networking, and other skills that help lead to tenure and promotion.

Job seekers often hear the phrase, “it’s not what you know but who you know.” But over the last decade the norm has become “it’s not who you know, but who knows you.” Thus, networking is a critical skill for those looking to secure an interview and ultimately to land a job. This is true not only in the sport industry, but in academia as well. For many the first experiences with professional networking are the mentoring relationships formed with degree specific professors. This relationship is defined by Russell and Adams (1997) as “an intense interpersonal exchange between a senior experienced colleague (mentor) and a less experienced junior colleague (protégé) in which the mentor provides support, direction, and feedback regarding career plans and personal development” (p. 2). Chandler (1996) concluded “that having a mentor is an important component to successful career advancement and, conversely, that the lack of a mentor may hinder timely progression” (p. 79).

de Vise (2010) defined the process of promotion and tenure for women as a pipeline with a leak. Although the number of women earning advanced degrees continues to rise, the increase is not in direct proportion to the number of women who attain the highest reward, tenure. A 2009-10 AAUP survey revealed that 61 percent of male professors have tenure while only 43 percent of women. Williams (2011) suggested that professional networks were utilized for things like career guidance and advancement, recommendations, collaboration, and keeping current with industry news and trends. Conferences like NASSM and groups like WIN (Women in NASSM) facilitate the opportunities to foster these necessary relationships.
Drawing upon their plethora of knowledge and experiences, this panel is designed to generate discussion addressing the areas of mentoring, networking, promotion and tenure, and publishing. This panel consists of “seasoned veterans” to “rookies” discussing their experiences in and management of academia. Participants interested in attending this session will be encouraged to submit questions to the panel moderator prior to the session.

References


