
January 5, 2025

Dear Search Committee,

Wichit

number of PhD degrees awarded needs to roughly double. Adding new PhD programs is one approach and we are currently looking at departments which are in a position to do so, as well as investigating opportunities for interdisciplinary PhD degrees. As we add new PhD programs and in order to increase the number of PhDs awarded in existing programs, it is imperative that we concentrate on improving the infrastructure to support PhD students and faculty-led research. Among the programs which I initiated as Associate Dean and Interim Dean that will support this goal are: (1) our newly implemented workload policy, which allows faculty identified as high-research intensive to be eligible for reduced course loads, thereby allowing them more time to devote to their research and giving them the ability to mentor more graduate students; and (2) using some of the SRO funds our college receives as a result of our faculty's external grants to provide money for our departments to support GRA positions, which will increase our ability to attract more and better PhD students.

My accomplishments related to inclusive excellence include serving as Co-PI on two successful NSF ADVANCE grants, whose specific goals are to identify and address barriers to hiring and advancement of female faculty and faculty from diverse populations. I led the incorporation of search advocates into Fairmount College's faculty search committees, who assist with acknowledged best practices to get a diverse applicant pool and avoid inherent bias in the search process. As department chair, I hired two female faculty members in a department that had none. While the ADVANCE grants specifically focus on the STEM disciplines, their initiatives will help to change university culture, policies, and infrastructure related to support of diverse faculty in all disciplines. One result of these grants was our establishment of the new Office of Faculty Advancement, Retention, and Excellence (FARE), whose express purpose is to support faculty in research and teaching, encourage and facilitate networking and collaboration, and coordinate faculty-support programs offered by various campus offices. WSU's goal of achieving Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation will benefit from this move to diversify the faculty. The presence of Hispanic faculty as role models improves the retention and success of Hispanic students, especially those who are first-generation. Of the 12 faculty searches I initiated this year, at least three of our new faculty for AY26 have research interests in Latinx issues and culture, including two resulting from searches explicitly aimed at that goal. With these hires, we will begin to approach a true Latinx faculty cluster which will sustain and expand our HSI activity. I will work closely with the Office of Hispanic Serving Initiatives to grow these and other programs to allow WSU to become a welcoming and nurturing destination for Hispanic students.

Enrollment growth is a key challenge for WSU, especially given the looming higher education enrollment cliff. Recruitment and retention of Hispanic students is one tactic to address the challenge, as this demographic is one of the few with the potential to undergo increased matriculation in the coming years. Another important tactic to attract students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, including first-generation, international, and underrepresented minority students, is to better

with Fine Arts and Engineering and I am working to develop multi-college degree programs, such as an MS in Data Analytics, an interdisciplinary science PhD, and a PhD in Materials Science and Engineering. However, the structures of these degree programs reflect a significant barrier to growing interdisciplinary studies at Wichita State, namely the inherent conflict between establishment of these interdisciplinary programs and the need for colleges and departments to meet individual benchmarks for majors and credit hours. I will continue working to address this problem by developing and advocating for processes which will enable us to encourage expansion of interdisciplinary degree offerings and research collaborations by academic units.

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Dr. M. E. Fisher, Ph.D.

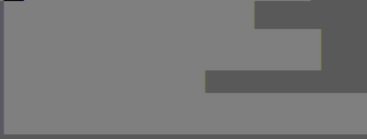
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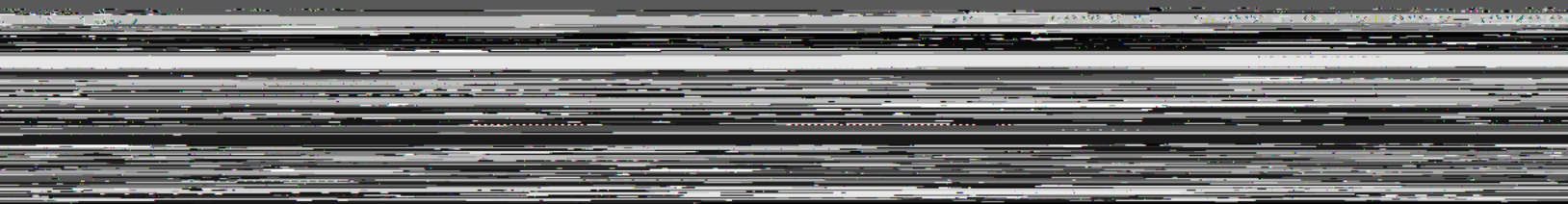
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Gifted and Talented Incl.
Wichita State University



EDUCATION

1980-1981



- Major accomplishments
 - Increased external awards received by College faculty from \$7M in FY20 to over \$13M in FY23
 - Served as co-PI on two successful NSF ADVANCE grant proposals addressing barriers to advancement for female faculty in STEM and helped establish new WSU Faculty Advancement, Retention, and Excellence (FARE) office
 - Developed University policy governing overload salary from externally funded research grants
 - Developed College faculty workload policy to allow course release for high-research-

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

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- Freige, M.J.; Senaratne, N.K.; Eichhorn, D.M.; "(2-{[2-(Dimethylamino)ethyl]iminomethyl}-benzenethiolato-³⁻N,N',S)(4-methoxybenzenethiolato-^{S-})nickel(II)"; *IUCrData* **2018**, *3*, x181167.
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- Andra, K.K.; Bullinger, J.C.; Bann, J.G.; Eichhorn, D.M.; 2-Fluoro-L-Histidine; *Acta Cryst.* **2010**, *E66*, o2713.
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Eichhorn, D.M., Wichita State University,