

# UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS WORCESTER

## FACULTY DIVERSITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

### *Purpose*

The primary goal of the **Faculty Diversity Scholars Program (FDSP)** is to recruit new faculty from underrepresented groups in the health sciences and to support their successful academic career advancement. In order to address departments with minority underutilization, African American and Hispanic/Latino(a) faculty are among the underrepresented groups who specifically would benefit from this program.

### *Background*

One of the most critical elements in the effort to diversify the health professions workforce is the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities as faculty. A widening body of evidence regarding the barriers to success for African American and Hispanic/Latino/a faculty entering careers in academic medicine suggests that programs such as the FDSP may diminish the negative impact of isolation, loneliness and stereotypes due to minority status, lack of positive role models as mentors, and low career satisfaction.

Diversity is inherent in the University of Massachusetts Worcester (UMW) mission and vision statements and is reinforced in the Institutional Diversity Plan. The FDSP serves as a catalyst for achieving the institution's goals for increasing the number of underrepresented groups and establishing an inclusive academic community. To that end, the FDSP is a program of the Office of Faculty Affairs in collaboration with the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office through its Council of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) and the Minority Academic Advancement Committee (MAAC). Oversight for the FDSP is accomplished through a representative committee of UMW stakeholders.

The goal of the FDSP for increasing representation in departments with underutilization is aligned with the UMW institutional affirmative action plan and, accordingly, seeks to increase the number of underrepresented minority faculty in the academic health sciences.

The FDSP helps advance UMW excellence in education, clinical care and research through advancing the goals of diversity and inclusion. Specifically, the FDSP supports the missions of the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and the Graduate School of Nursing to: (1) meet the health care needs of our increasingly diverse community and state, (2) broaden research programs to eliminate health disparities; and (3) enhance learning through diverse experiences and teaching opportunities.

The resources and support provided through the program go beyond attracting and recruiting underrepresented faculty to our institution. The FDSP is designed to help underrepresented minority faculty thrive and successfully contribute to the institution's ultimate goal of ensuring high quality health care for all.

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### **Program Administration**

The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs (VPFA) serves as administrator of the Program. The FDSP Oversight Committee ensures that the program is meeting its goals through participating in the review of applications and the evaluation of the scholars' career advancement and mentoring goals. The committee also reviews and evaluates the overall program and goals.

Requests for information regarding funding availability and the development of applications should be directed to the VPFA. All applications are initially screened by the VPFA in conjunction with the FDSP Oversight Committee to determine eligibility. Completed applications undergo a peer-review process under the auspices of the FDSP Oversight Committee, which makes recommendations. Applications are reviewed by three members of the FDSP Oversight Committee. By agreement of the Committee, an external ad hoc reviewer may be invited to participate in the review of a specific application.

The application is presented and discussed by the entire committee at regular meetings. Rating criteria used by the Committee are appended to this document (Appendix I). The committee makes a final recommendation to the VPFA. A simple majority of the Oversight Committee members present is required for making a final recommendation on an application. Final funding decisions are made in consultation with the Provost, the VPFA, and the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. Notice of program award or denial is issued by the Office of Faculty Affairs.

### **Resources**

The FDSP is supported by the Provost's office in conjunction with the Office of Faculty Affairs. Departments may request resources distributed over a period of 3 years and a budget of up to \$300,000.00 per scholar.

The FDSP funds salary support (typically between 50-75%) to leverage existing departmental and/or programmatic resources. Other allowable expenses include research startup costs, supplies and equipment, lab personnel (i.e., graduate students, post-doctoral fellows), loan support, travel for conferences/professional activities, and professional coaching. FDSP funds may not be used to support clinical effort or research effort funded by other projects. However, funds may be used to "buy out" or offset clinical or research effort to support the scholar's own research or educational scholarship.

Scholars are expected to apply for external funding during the period of the FDSP award. Scholars who are successful in securing external support may use allocated FDSP funds for additional research activities, personnel, or professional development activities consistent with the goals of FDSP. This may include support for gaps in funding; however, FDSP funds may not be saved beyond 5 years of the end of the original funding period.

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### Eligibility

1. Applicants must be individuals recruited for a benefitted UMW or UMass Memorial Medical Group faculty position with a UMW faculty appointment at or above the rank of Instructor in accordance with the academic personnel policies of the appropriate school.
2. Applicants must have between 50-75% of their FTE devoted to scholarly activity (i.e. scholarly research and writing, educational scholarship, curriculum development).
3. Applicants must be sponsored by their department.
4. Applicants must have a primary mentor and a mentoring team. The primary mentor must be a UMW faculty member different from the applicant's direct supervisor.
5. Applicants also will be screened for eligibility based on status of underutilization of an underrepresented group within the department or field.

### Application Process and Requirements

In general and pending availability of funds, a call for applications will be made in the fall and spring of each year. Upon identifying a potential applicant, the Department Chair will contact the VPFA to discuss the applicant and the application process. After the discussions have occurred and opportunity has been determined, the Chair will submit the applicant's package including budget justification to the VPFA. An interview with the applicant, the mentor, and the Department Chair by three members of the FDSP Oversight Committee will be required as part of the application process.

The application package **must** include the following:

1. Updated Curriculum Vitae.
2. A Personal Statement from the applicant that describes his or her proposed career plan toward developing regional/national/international distinction including: direct teaching/educational plans; scholarly research and writing; and activities that enhance diversity (e.g. mentoring of students, service on school-based or campus-wide committees and community involvement). Document can be no longer than 1 page.
3. A Career Development Plan that addresses the specific needs and interests of the applicant. The plan should include: description of areas targeted for skills/knowledge development; name of the proposed mentor responsible for supervising the plan implementation; approximate timeline with benchmarks for achievement of plan goals and objectives; and description of sustainability of scholarly activities at the end of the program and potential funding sources. The Career Development Plan should be written by the applicant in conjunction with the mentor, and signed by both. Document can be no longer than 3 pages.
4. A Mentoring Plan that reflects sensitivity to issues that have historically created barriers to success for faculty from underrepresented minority groups. The plan should include: description of specific mentoring goals, objectives and strategies to be employed; name(s) of the main faculty mentor as well as other faculty that will comprise the mentoring team; frequency and intensity of mentoring to be provided; and approximate timeline for

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achievement of mentoring goals and objectives. The Mentoring Plan should be written by the applicant in conjunction with the mentor, and signed by both. Document can be no longer than 2 pages.

5. A Letter from the Department Chair or the Dean (if in a School without departments). A second letter from the Program or Center Director is required if the applicant is employed through a non-academic department/unit. The letter(s) should include: a description of specific departmental commitment and resources (e.g. support services, personnel, equipment and space) available to support the faculty position and documentation that the appointment is consistent with the appropriate academic personnel policies regarding the track and rank.
6. A Budget Justification with: 1) delineation of full funding requirements for the applicant over three years, including FDSP and department funding and amount of time allotted to develop scholarship activities; 2) a budget proposal submitted by the department which describes and justifies the amount of support requested. Applications should include the following template:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Year 1</b> ___% support up to \$___ per year less salary offsets for grants, contracts and clinical activity.</li><li>• <b>Year 2</b> ___% support up to \$___ per year less salary offsets for grants, contracts and clinical activity.</li><li>• <b>Year 3</b> ___% support up to \$___ per year less salary offsets for grants, contracts and clinical activity.</li></ul>
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7. Three Letters of Recommendation at least one of which should be from an external evaluator.
8. Signatures by the applicant and the sponsoring Department Chair. By signing, the applicant and Chair document their commitment to the faculty member and support of their participation in the FDSP.

### **Follow up/Evaluation Process**

Deans or department chairs who receive FDSP funding are required to submit semi-annual (or more frequent) written progress reports to the VPFA. Reports must document progress toward stated goals and objectives, including description of specific activities of the FDSP-supported faculty during the preceding six months (or quarter). The report must specifically address productivity regarding any training received, presentations, manuscripts, grants development, teaching, service activities, clinical responsibilities, conferences attended, new areas of expertise acquired, awards received, mentoring experiences and diversity activities. The report should also include specific information about challenges encountered and additional resources needed to attain career and mentoring goals.

In addition, the scholar, main mentor and departmental sponsor are required to meet with the VPFA at least semiannually or more frequently as needed. As part of this process, continuation of funding throughout the funding period will be contingent upon satisfactory progress towards the goals of the Scholar's faculty development and professional program. A copy of the report will be distributed to the Department Chair.

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### Citations

Association of American Medical Colleges. Diversity Policy and Programs (2008). *Successfully evaluating diversity efforts in medical education*. Proceedings of the Diversity Policy and Programs at the Association of American Medical Colleges Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Association of American Medical Colleges. (2009). *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)*. Washington, DC.

Association of American Medical Colleges (2005). *Minorities in medical education: Facts and figures*. Washington, DC: Author.

Cohen, J. Gabriel, B. & Terrell, C. (2002). The case for diversity in health care workforce. *Health Affairs*. 21, 90-102.

Cregler, L. L. , Clark, L. T. & Jackson, E. B. Jr. (1994) Careers in academic medicine and clinical practice for minorities: Opportunities and barriers. *Journal of Association of Academic Minority Physicians*, 5, 68-73.

Moody, J. (2004) *Faculty diversity: Problems and solutions*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Smedley, B. D., Smith, A. Y. & Nelson, A. R. (Eds.). (2003). *Unequal Treatment: Confronting racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare*. Washington, DC: Institute of Medicine.

## Appendix I: Criteria for Evaluating FDSP Applicants

### *Applicant*

- Is the applicant from an underrepresented group in the health sciences and being hired by a department with underutilization?
- Does the applicant meet eligibility for the position for which he or she is being hired, including education, research, service (including clinical service) and related scholarly activity? Is the academic appointment consistent with the appropriate academic personnel policies regarding the track and rank?
- Is the applicant's prior training and academic experience appropriate for this award and is there evidence of academic achievement? Is the applicant's research, academic, and (if relevant) clinical record of high quality?
- Is the applicant committed to a career in academic medicine?
- Does the applicant have a high potential for becoming an accomplished member of the faculty and achieving regional, national recognition for his or her work?
- Do the letters of reference address the FDSP review criteria?

### *Career Development Plan*

- Does the Career Development Plan have clear goals and objectives?
- Are the proposed academic/research questions, design, and methodology of significant scientific and technical merit? Is the proposed research feasible, innovative or have the potential to be innovative to support future grant applications?
- Are the goals and scope of the plan appropriate and feasible, when considered in the context of prior training/experience and the future stated training and objectives?
- Are there plans for developing/enhancing the applicant's skills to implement the proposed research objectives?
- Is the active/pending support for the proposed project appropriate and adequate?
- What is the likelihood that the program will contribute substantially to the professional development of the applicant and support their academic career advancement?
- Is the plan for monitoring and evaluating the applicant's progress adequate? Are there specific benchmarks to evaluate progress?
- Is there a plan for pursuing external sources of funding to sustain the applicant's scholarly work after the FDSP support ends?

### *Mentoring Plan*

- Does the mentoring plan support the applicant's career objectives?
- Are the mentor's qualifications in the area of the proposed concentration appropriate?

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- Does the proposed mentor have previous experience in fostering the development of independent faculty? A track record of scholarly activity in an area appropriate for the potential scholar?
- Do the letters from the mentor and additional letters of recommendation adequately address the FDSP program criteria including the applicant's potential and his/her strengths and areas needing improvement?
- Is there adequate description of the quality and extent of the mentor's proposed role in providing guidance and advice to the applicant? Does the plan include a clear description of the frequency of meetings, intensity of mentorship, and strategies that will be implemented, and how other members of the mentorship team will coordinate their effort with the applicant's main mentor?

### ***Departmental Commitment and Resources to the Applicant***

- Is there clear commitment from the sponsoring department to ensure that a minimum of 50% of the applicant's effort will be devoted directly to the project described in the application, with the remaining percent effort being devoted to an appropriate balance of research, teaching, administrative, and clinical responsibilities?
- Is the departmental commitment to the career development of the applicant appropriately strong? (e.g. support services, personnel and space)
- Are the facilities, resources and training opportunities, including faculty capable of productive collaboration with the applicant adequate and appropriate?
- Is the environment for scientific and professional development of the applicant of high quality? Is there a track record of support for scientific and professional development of faculty in the department/division?
- Is there a description of how the department will oversee the implementation of the proposed Career Development and Mentoring plans?

### ***Budget Justification***

- Is the budget appropriate for proposed plan? Are items/resources included in the application clearly described in the budget justification?