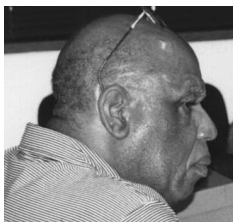
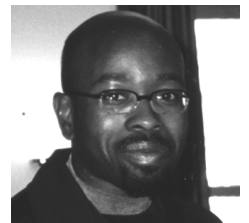


The Preparing Future Faculty Program



Preparing
Future Faculty



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PFF History and Sponsors

A joint undertaking of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), PFF is supported by the National Science Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts and a private donor. It was designed, first, to develop alternative models of faculty preparation (1993-1997) and then to institutionalize them (1997-2001). A third phase (1998-2001) was launched to develop model programs in science and mathematics departments in collaboration with the American Association of Physics Teachers, the American Chemical Society, the American Mathematical Society and the Mathematical Association of America, and the Special Interest Group on Computer Science Education/ACM. In November 1999, another phase of PFF was initiated to develop model programs in social sciences and humanities departments in collaboration with the American Historical Association, the American Political Science Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Sociological Association, the National Communication Association, and the National Council of Teachers of English. Currently an independent assessment of the impact of PFF programs on the success of faculty members in their early careers is being conducted.

What is the Preparing Future Faculty program?

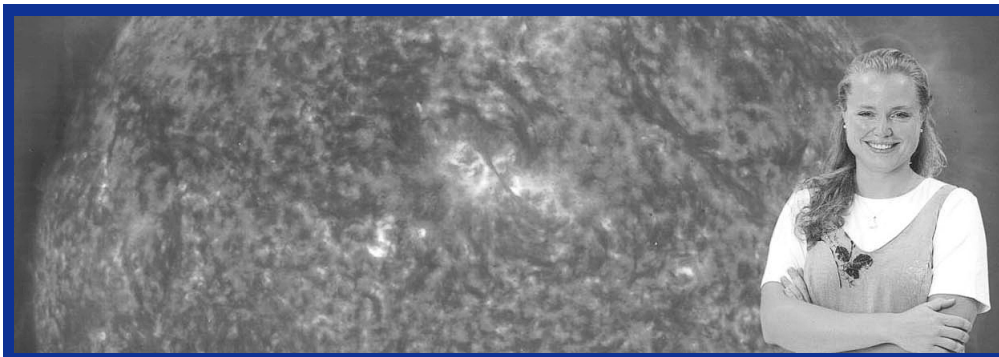
The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program is both a configuration of ideas and a national program involving 43 doctoral degree-granting institutions and more than 250 “partner” institutions. Built in the spirit of partnership and cooperation, PFF programs transform the way doctoral programs prepare aspiring faculty members for their careers, moving toward an education that is informed by the kinds of responsibilities faculty members actually have in a variety of institutional types. PFF’s focus is on the full range of faculty roles and responsibilities subsumed by the terms teaching, research, and service. A PFF program provides doctoral students with opportunities to observe and experience faculty responsibilities at a variety of academic institutions with varying missions, diverse student bodies, and different expectations for faculty.

The national PFF programs have three core features. Most essential is the **cluster**: an anchor, doctoral degree-granting institution or department collaborating with various partner institutions or departments. The cluster is guided by a steering committee that determines what is needed in future faculty and the direction of the PFF program. The committee includes representatives from each partner institution, and these representatives must have equal voice in leadership of the program. Second, the PFF program must **address the full scope of faculty roles and responsibilities** included in teaching, research, and service, emphasizing how the expectations for these responsibilities are often quite different in different campus settings. And third, participating doctoral students should have **multiple mentors** and receive reflective feedback not only for their research activities, but also for their teaching and service activities.

Since 1993, many institutions and departments have developed their own versions of PFF. These programs incorporate many, if not all, of the essential elements of PFF programs described above. For example, many of the institutions with programs similar to PFF are providing a course on college teaching, a series of seminars that address different aspects of faculty life, and visits to different colleges and universities.

PFF allows one to broaden one’s horizons beyond the research university. PFF also exposed me to educational issues that I had rarely discussed outside this forum.

— PFF Fellow, Psychology, Northwestern University



What makes PFF so valuable?

The Association of American Colleges & Universities and the Council of Graduate Schools established the Preparing Future Faculty Program in 1993 to address the mismatch between doctoral education and the needs of colleges and universities that employ new Ph.D.s. The traditional Ph.D. is a research degree, preparing, for example, historians, chemists, and sociologists. The degree does not prepare these highly skilled research professionals to be faculty members. Academic employers increasingly also expect new faculty to be excellent teachers. More and more new faculty need collaboration skills, and they should be aware of how an educational program as a whole contributes to overall student growth. Also, they are expected to render professional service and engage in shared governance. The changing expectations for faculty members tend not to be reflected in most doctoral programs.

Partner Institutions

Doctoral students learn about the academic profession through exposure to the full range of professional responsibilities in the variety of academic institutions—such as liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, and community colleges—that may become their professional homes. Becoming aware of the variety of institutions in U.S. higher education

enables future faculty to find an appropriate “fit” between their own interests and competencies and the needs of institutions.

Mentoring

PFF programs include a formalized system of mentoring in all aspects of professional development. Just as doctoral students have a mentor to guide their research, they also need guidance as they develop their teaching and service repertoire. Indeed, students benefit from multiple mentors. A mentor may be at a different institution, perhaps one with a mission that gives high priority to the teaching and service responsibilities of its faculty.

Visits to other campuses have been the most beneficial. I went to Howard University and Keene State. Howard is an historically black private school in an urban setting; Keene is a comprehensive masters granting institution and is much smaller than UNH. Their priorities are different. This experience will help me decide what jobs I want to apply for. The PFF initiative provides essential information if you're going to do a job search.

***—Martina Arndt, Assistant Professor of Physics,
Bridgewater State College and Former UNH PFF Fellow***

Diversity Among Students

PFF experiences prepare future faculty for the diversity among students who will be in most of their classrooms. Future faculty will need to be more competent in understanding and addressing issues presented by the diversity of learning styles and backgrounds. They also need to be more sophisticated in their use of newer collaborative and experiential approaches to teaching and learning, methods that research has shown to be more effective with today's students.

Integration into Sequence of Degree Requirements

Academic departments that have subscribed to PFF are integrating professional development experiences into their existing academic programs. Future faculty are given progressively more complex assignments, more responsibility, and recognition associated with increased professional capacities. Progressive assignments allow future faculty to build skills and gain confidence in their knowledge and professional growth. The aim is to avoid lengthening time to degree.

More than a Teaching Development Program

PFF is consistent with the best practices of teaching assistant development, while also advancing to another, more comprehensive level of preparation. Teaching assistant development programs are valuable in supporting certain faculty roles and in teaching new pedagogies; PFF programs broaden the preparation by including teaching experience at different institutions, stressing professional service and governance responsibilities of various sorts, and providing faculty mentors for these roles.

PFF was one of the key things that helped me see the breadth of opportunities in the academy. It also taught me the kinds of skills each of these opportunities would require and therefore how to be a viable candidate. For me, in other words, it really made an academic position possible.

— PFF Fellow, Mathematics, Northwestern University

What are the current activities of Clusters and Partners?

Working in clusters of institutions and departments, and in response to local opportunities, a wide range of activities has been developed and incorporated into PFF programs. Each cluster is encouraged to develop its own program and to include activities in three loci: in individual departments, across the university, and on partner campuses. Some programs require relatively short time commitments, such as attending a series of seminars over the course of the academic year. Others are more extensive and require enrollment in courses, weekend activities, and routine travel to another campus.



Examples of PFF activities at the *departmental level* include:

- forums for faculty members from different institutions to describe and reflect on their professional lives;
- forums for doctoral alumni to talk about how their careers connect with their graduate program;
- courses on teaching in the discipline and in a multicultural setting;
- seminars and forums on professional issues, such as the tenure process and faculty governance issues;

- revision of doctoral program guidelines to provide PFF experiences for students planning academic careers; and
- support for graduate students attending professional meetings and making presentations with faculty.

Examples of *campus-wide* PFF activities include:



- seminars on topics in college teaching, professional and career issues, often taught by faculty and administrators from different institutions and held on different campuses;
- certificate programs in PFF that note accomplishments on students' transcripts;
- reviewing academic governance systems and inviting graduate students to attend faculty meetings or committee meetings;
- providing TAs with "promotion" opportunities through titles and compensation to reflect expanded responsibilities or professional growth;

- workshops on developing portfolios documenting expertise in teaching, research, and service; and
- training for faculty mentors.

On *partner campuses*, graduate students can:

- learn about distinctive institutional missions and different academic cultures;
- work with a teaching and/or service mentor;

The PFF program helped me build confidence in myself as a scholar, as well as what I have to bring to the table as a young professor.

—Cristal McGill, PFF Fellow, Educational Psychology, Arizona State University

- teach a unit and/or an entire course and receive feedback from their mentors;
- attend faculty, committee, or departmental meetings and discuss their interpretations;
- shadow professors or academic administrators and review the activities observed;
- share the graduate school experience with undergraduate students; and
- participate in faculty development activities.

How does PFF benefit doctoral student participants?

The PFF national office conducted program-wide surveys of doctoral students in PFF programs during the spring of 1995 and again in 1996. When asked whether they would recommend PFF to other doctoral students, 99% of the students said yes. The top four benefits of participation graduate students cited were that PFF:

- strengthened understanding of faculty roles and their interest in an academic career;
- broadened their awareness of diverse institutions;
- enhanced their ability to compete in the job market; and
- assisted them in understanding the job search process.

As PFF graduates have taken academic positions, their experiences as new faculty continue to provide anecdotal evidence suggesting that they are better prepared than many of their colleagues to meet the expectations for new faculty at their institutions.

The changes precipitated by PFF programs constitute a win-win-win strategy:

- better preparation for the doctoral students,
- better faculty candidates for the colleges and universities that hire them, and
- stronger, more engaging programs for doctoral degree-granting departments.

A PFF Fellow in mathematics at Northwestern University captures this situation best when she explains:

Thanks to the PFF program, I have a deeper appreciation of how my role models' academic careers were born, and more importantly, how they were able to find, sustain, and enrich their place in the profession.

PFF broadened this student's awareness of the different kinds of institutions in U.S. higher education, as well as what the needs and expectations would be for faculty generally, across different types of institutions. Further, PFF helped her acquire the knowledge and skills that would bolster her success as a faculty member of the 21st century.





The Council of Graduate Schools is dedicated to the improvement and advancement of graduate education. Its members are colleges and universities engaged in research, scholarship, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees.



*Association
of American
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The Association of American Colleges & Universities is devoted to advancing and strengthening liberal learning for all students. AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning to reinforce a collective commitment to liberal education to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work.



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PFF Staff and Contact Information

Jerry Gaff, Co-Director
Vice President for Education and
Institutional Renewal, AAC&U
gaff@aacu.nw.dc.us

Anne Pruitt-Logan, Co-Director
Scholar in Residence, CGS
apruitt@cgs.nche.org

Preparing Future Faculty National Office
1818 R Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20009-1604
(202) 387-3760 • (202) 265-9532 fax
pff@aacu.nw.dc.us

How to learn more about the PFF Program?

The PFF national office maintains a vast collection of materials from the participating campuses as well as from the higher education literature. In addition to PFF occasional papers published by AAC&U and CGS, the resources include speeches and reports, sample syllabi and seminar outlines, and much more.

The national staff also manages an electronic mailing list, PFFNET, which is available to anyone interested in the program.

Information about all these resources and papers is available on the PFF website <www.preparing-faculty.org>