

March 25, 2024

Dear AVC Hillyard and other members of the search committee,

I enthusiastically apply to be the next Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Success (AVC-FS). As the Executive Director of the Science Teaching Experience Program ([STEP](#)) since 2014, I have expertise in mentoring academics as they navigate their careers. Through seven years on the Campus Council for Promotion and Tenure (CCPT), including three as chair, I contributed to systemic improvements that support faculty. As AVC-FS I would wed these skills into one role that supports individuals and advances positive systemic change. Below, I explain that I am, as the ad says, “a collaborative leader with a history of advancing faculty success and developing innovative programs, along with an unwavering commitment to equity and justice.”

Leadership Philosophy

Listening to needs leads to solutions. As our caseload increased, CCPT indicated that it was unsustainable for all members to read all cases closely. Members from Schools that had only one-or-two of about thirty cases had too much work; members from Schools with several colleagues applying for promotion could be recused from as many as a third of the cases. We created a system modeled from grant review panels to distribute cases equitably.

I strive for efficiency. Extra work in the moment can save time and increase justice. As CCPT chair, I revised the template that CCPT uses to write its recommendations, implementing a policy that saves time and—more notably—minimizes bias in the review process.

I co-author research to benefit junior members of a team and present UWB as a leading institution. I encouraged Dr. Eva Ma (then at UWB, now at UW Tacoma) to publish about a STEP training she led ([Ma et al. 2021](#)). We also co-authored two other articles about STEP with Dr. Salwa Al-Noori (UWB: STEM; [McCullough et al. 2020](#), [Price et al. 2021](#)).

I design interventions alongside strategies for collecting evaluative data. In STEP, a mentor follows a specific protocol to observe the classes that trainees teach. The written observation helps the postdocs and becomes data about the program’s efficacy.

Strong communication is essential. I hold meetings at the appropriate frequency. Between them, I note questions, concerns, and successes that arise, and these notes form the basis of agendas. As AVC-FS, I would use project management software to track and delegate items.

I strive to be aware of my biases and weaknesses. I will develop an Advisory Board of people with complementary and varied perspectives to offer feedback on both my leadership style and initiatives by the Office of Faculty Success. The Board will also help me be constantly attuned to what faculty members experience and what they require to succeed.

Teaching and learning

UWB can be a national leader in student-centered, multicultural, and anti-racist pedagogy. As AVC-FS, I will work to sponsor and publish about high-impact pedagogies that we develop (i.e., [Price et al. 2021](#)). Research about teaching, as Dr. Rachel Scherr and Dr. Carrie Tzou have admirably demonstrated, is an opportunity to obtain extensive, collaborative, and cross-disciplinary grant funding. Research cost recovery can fuel more pedagogical initiatives, based on faculty needs.

I look forward to developing initiatives that help colleagues strengthen their teaching and demonstrate teaching effectiveness for promotion. I provide workshops on active and inclusive learning, including innovative topics like ungrading and basics—essential for belonging and inclusion—like constructively interpreting student evaluations of teaching. I also have a workshop about compiling evidence of teaching success, co-developed with Dr. Kristin Gustafson (UWB: IAS). I am on the Advisory Board for [UW Future of Teaching and Learning](#), and I look forward to interpreting and implementing their final recommendations for UWB. I would be delighted to collaborate with Deborah Hathaway, Director of Learning and Teaching.

Career navigation

The UWB mission states our aim to “[a]ctively recruit and support outstanding faculty scholars.” As a member of CCPT, I can confirm that our Schools have, indeed, recruited outstanding colleagues. Nonetheless, the promotion and tenure process reveals that we can be much more supportive, especially for faculty with marginalized identities. One strategy I will implement to improve this process is offering casual one-on-one meetings to help faculty members assess their readiness for nonmandatory promotion. More than anything, offering this support to faculty members as they prepare for promotion motivates me to become AVC-FS.

Supporting faculty begins with onboarding. I will offer a combination of workshops and self-paced online programs about campus resources and policies. The workshops developed by Equity Across the Curriculum offer an excellent model. Also, Faculty Learning Communities can re-emerge specifically to invite new faculty members into conversations with established colleagues. I will explore a “buddy system” ([Segura-Totten et al. 2021](#)), in which small groups of new and experienced faculty and staff members meet twice at the start of the academic year.

Academics must consider quality of life. At UWB, with our rapidly increasing cost of living and relatively low salaries ([AAUP 2023 State of the Faculty Report](#)), faculty members must entertain the trade-offs between academic careers and other options. People will be happier if what they gain at UWB is consciously worth their sacrifices. I will also seek ways to increase salaries.

The ad specifies that the AVC-FS must “[i]dentify systemic barriers to faculty success for all ranks/tracks via inquiry-based strategies.” Meeting this goal requires a strong relationship with CCPT, which has the most comprehensive look at how faculty careers unfold within and across Schools, ranks, and tracks. A complementary approach is talking to people directly through listening sessions, office hours, faculty meetings, and the Advisory Board. I will also review the promotion guidelines for each School, collaborating with Deans and Elected Faculty Councils to

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revise and socialize them. A barrier to promotion can be service. With other campus leaders, I will strive to make service equitable and fulfilling across ranks, tracks, and identities.

Scholarship (including sponsored research)

Smaller institutions necessarily have faculty members with the broad knowledge necessary to teach requisite courses. While breadth fosters cross-disciplinary understanding, our structure makes it challenging to find collaborators from other Schools. As AVC-FS I will work to facilitate more collaborations on campus, as well as bridge to UW Seattle and UW Tacoma.

Collaborations can lead to grant funding. I am eager to partner with the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR) to improve support for colleagues when they apply for grants. I would like to grow staff to help write and revise grant proposals, perhaps funded by research cost recovery.

Communication can inspire collaborations, so I will work with OSR to create spaces for sharing ideas. Composing broader impacts and evaluation plans for NSF grants, for example, offer such spaces. AVC-FS Udell is creating a database of faculty expertise to which I will add videos about different colleagues, similar to the [Conversations on Good Teaching](#) series. (The videos would be produced with the Office of Marketing & Communications to also be disseminated broadly.) I will use the database to find scholars who share interests and then facilitate their meeting.

Program development

The job description emphasizes the best practice that the AVC-FS should implement and evaluate its programs with data. I model my mixed-methods approach to evaluation in a paper about STEP ([Price et al. 2021](#)). As a smaller scale example, consider the idea of videos to onboard full- and part-time faculty members. First, I would check with recent hires to see if and how a series like this would have been helpful and whether it would be constructive to accompany the videos with a Faculty Learning Community. Next, we would write scripts and circulate them among Elected Faculty Councils, the General Faculty Organization Leadership, and appropriate staff for feedback. Once videos are recorded and distributed, we would collect data about the number of views and conduct a brief survey to assess efficacy.

I am thrilled by the possibility of leading the Office of Faculty Success; the chance to support the faculty in its teaching, research, service, and social justice; and the opportunity to grow as a campus leader. Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,



Rebecca M. Price, Ph.D.

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