CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITMENT OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS: AN OVERVIEW

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It is clear that we are facing a critical shortage of faculty in Communication Sciences and Disorders departments. The number of positions is all ready exceeding the number of Ph.D. students in the pipeline. The situation is expected to get considerably worse given the substantial number of current faculty between the ages of 55 and 65. There are a number of factors that have brought the profession to this crisis. Since the predominant educational track is for students to pursue the graduate clinical degrees and since in recent years the compensation for clinicians has far exceeded that of most academic salaries, there has been an economic disincentive to pursue further education. Chuck Madison from Washington State University is reporting on the results of a survey of Speech-Language Pathologists and the reasons that they do not pursue or complete a doctorate. Elaine Stathopoulos at the State University of New York at Buffalo University is reporting on strategies that she and her colleagues have undertaken to increase the pool of individuals pursuing doctoral studies.

I would like to touch on a few issues that I believe contribute to the unattractiveness of pursuing careers in academe and then highlight a few initiatives we at the University of Iowa have taken to try to address the issue.

First and foremost, the image that we project of how we live our lives as faculty may very well turn prospective students off. If we are seen as harried and overworked and not necessarily happy in our work, then it should not be surprising that our students will not want to emulate our lifestyle especially if they can get paid more doing other things. While students see and experience the teaching that we do, they rarely get to see much of the rest of what we do. Only a few students get to go behind the scenes and see us at work outside of the

classroom and clinic. Research is seen as this distant and rarified activity. We make little effort to showcase it in the didactic and clinical teaching activities we engage in. We project that it is hard to do, that it is very time consuming and often frustrating and we fail to explicitly demonstrate how it impacts on everything else that we do. Our students like the general public do not understand research; we need to demystify it if we hope to attract more students to research and increase the public's support of those efforts.

We also may be guilty of presenting research to our students in a manner that is elitist and which fails to accurately convey the reasons why we do it. In other aspects of the curriculum we have actively considered the distinction between introducing a particular subject matter, say ethics, as a separate course or by infusing it across the curriculum. We have a tendency to not draw the connections explicitly for students when we discuss research in the clinical training curricula. Many programs put research into an intellectual ghetto and force students to take a Research Course which they perceive as an unrelated burden and waste of time.

Finally we may also be guilty of not exposing students to the wide range of research in the field, thereby leaving them thinking that research is this laboratory thing that a different species of students engage in. We have not been as good to highlight clinical research and have not drawn the parallels for students between problem solving in clinical work and in research. The students think there is a secret handshake needed to do research.

The solution to many of these problems lies in our exposing students early and often to what we do. We must engage them in our research and let them see why we are so passionate about doing it. We must, in mentoring them, spend at least as much time talking about what makes being a teacher-scholar a great career as we do grousing about being overworked and underpaid. It is evident that we must focus our activities not only on the immediate pool of

prospective doctoral students (the students in clinical training programs), but also on our undergraduates and high school students.

At Iowa we continue to encourage students in our clinical training programs to become engaged in research. We showcase the wide range of research in our Proseminar in which faculty and students present research that they are engaged in. This weekly forum brings all students and faculty together. In some cases presentations focus on completed projects while in other cases proposed research is presented. Each year students are exposed to a wide range of research from clinical efficacy studies to basic neuroscience projects. Students in our Master's programs must also have two research registrations that can take the form of seminars or independent registrations. These registrations are aimed at letting students pursue areas of interest and to delve more deeply into the research in those areas. Finally we encourage students to do a thesis, though like in many programs the time constraints make it a choice that only some students exercise.

To encourage undergraduate students we provide a number of opportunities to become involved in research activities. We offer a Research Practicum that allows a student to work with a faculty member on an ongoing faculty research project. This registration is designed to allow a student to become involved in a project without the stress of developing and independent project. In addition, we provide undergraduate students the opportunity to take independent study registrations and if they qualify to participate in our Honor's program. This program includes a seminar as well as a thesis. To alleviate the stress of this program we have moved it back into the Junior year to allow students more time to work on the thesis project and to leave with a positive experience.

Through both grants to the department as well as to the university we are engaged in a number of research mentoring programs that bring high school students, undergraduates as well as master's students from around the country to spend time with our faculty on research projects. Our laboratories are not the

hallowed turf where only doctoral students can be found. Instead they are becoming very active communities with students from a wide range of backgrounds and over a wide range of ages interacting in a very positive and productive manner. This community really breeds a type of cross mentoring and portrays the very best of a research career.

We will not survive as profession unless we all take steps to actively engage and recruit our students. Not everyone who passes through my lab is necessarily suited to pursue a doctorate at Iowa. There may be a better fit with the interests of a mentor at another institution. I think we need to re-invent the process by which we hand students off to each other. This is not just a job for the doctoral training programs. It is essential that we develop pipelines that take students from their undergraduate programs to master's programs and then on to doctoral study. Better links between institutions is essential. Nothing leads to a better handing off of students than ongoing relationships between faculty at different institutions.

Everything takes time and resources. It is clear that we must make these activities a priority and commit institutional resources to these efforts. T here is, however, some support that NIH provides. They, too, are worried that the pool of R-01 principle investigators is graying and that the pipeline is not producing very many new investigators.