



**National Science Foundation**

4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22230

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Dr. Lynn Singer

Principal Investigator, NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Project  
Academic Careers in Engineering & Science (ACES)  
Case Western Reserve University  
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Dear Dr. Singer,

Attached please find the NSF Site Visit Report for your ADVANCE Institutional Transformation program. Overall, the team was pleased with your accomplishments: "The site visit team commends the members of the ACES team for their commitment, efforts, and determination, and recognizes that its achievements could not have been realized without the strong support at the highest levels of CASE administration." We believe that the site visit team presents a balanced view of the status of your project, and provides valuable analysis and recommendations for improvement and continued success of your efforts toward an institutional transformation. To that end, we request that you pay full attention to the recommendations listed at the end of the site visit report. In particular, please respond to the following issues/concerns (we have listed them in order of priority from NSF's point of view) at your earliest convenience, but *no later than December 01, 2006*.

1. **External Evaluation of ACES:** Given the accomplishments of ACES noted in the site visit report, it is critical that we understand what is working at Case and why in order to inform the national dialogue on how to support the advancement and full participation of women in academic science and engineering. The external advisory board serves as an additional aspect of formative evaluation, but this board's functions are different from those of an external evaluator. This corresponds to point 8 of the Cooperative Agreement about implementing both formative and summative evaluation. The functions of an advisory board are separate from that of an evaluator, and are best kept separate. External evaluators who can provide an independent assessment of the project as well as a summative report of accomplishments should perform the evaluation tasks. NSF requests that Case develop a plan for obtaining the services of an external evaluator and report them to NSF by December 01, 2006. ACES may wish to consult with Joan Ruskus on identifying and working with appropriate external evaluators.
2. **SOM Faculty Involvement:** Detailed plans on engaging more active involvement by the SOM are needed. The use of ADVANCE resources by the SOM without a corresponding willingness to participate in the systemic work necessary for institutional transformation is troubling. NSF requests that CASE-ACES provide a more substantive plan for actively engaging any faculty in the SOM that show

interest in participating in ACES. For example, a key resource, the Faculty Diversity Specialist, has never been used by the SOM but could if asked. If participation by the SOM faculty in core institutional transformation work is not feasible at this stage, please provide a plan for adjusting the resources allocated to the SOM in a commensurate fashion.

3. **Endowed Chairs:** Five endowed chairs were promised but only three such positions have been created and filled so far. NSF requests that Case provide a plan for fulfilling the original commitment.
4. **Distinguished Lectureships:** Despite indications from interviews that this program was well received, the program seems to have been de-emphasized. NSF requests ACES' assessment on how to re-vitalize this part of the project.
5. **Data Collection and Analysis:** The data collection and analysis functions are currently engaging considerable time and financial resources of the ACES staff. At this point in the project, NSF expects to see movement toward assumption of these core functions by the institution, given the importance to the institution of such a nuanced and accurate accounting of faculty resources. NSF requests that ACES provide a plan to institutionalize these functions over the remaining period of the award.

We look forward to your response.

Please accept our sincere thanks for a very informative and enjoyable visit, and for the hospitality extended by CASE to the entire site visit team. It was great to see the energy, motivation, efforts and goodwill of the ACES team and the participants of the project.

Thanks and best wishes for your continued success.

Fahmida Chowdhury  
Program Director, ADVANCE/NSF

Alice Hogan  
Program Director, ADVANCE/NSF