



*Enhanced Mentoring Program
with Opportunities for Ways to
Excel in Research*

EMPOWER Progress Report

2023

Table of Contents

S T I Z E T H I C S C O N T E N T S

01. Introduction

02. History

03. Timeline

04. Program activities

05. Cohorts

09. Participant overview

12. Participant outcomes

15. Recommendations

MENTORING

The EMPOWER experience supports UMaine and University of Maine at Machias faculty at multiple stages of career development in their quest to achieve significant professional growth and advancement, including in research and scholarly activity, and is offered by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School in partnership with the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost.

Mentors and mentees meet on a regular basis and develop individual goals throughout their one-year mentoring relationship. Mentees work towards at least one significant accomplishment during this process, typically a submitted application for external funding.

Both parties receive limited funds in support of research and professional development. The program will be fielding its fourth cohort of faculty in the fall of 2023.

In cases where mentees face unique challenges that would impact them professionally, including in their research and scholarly activity, their primary mentors are complemented by others university colleagues who are qualified to assist.

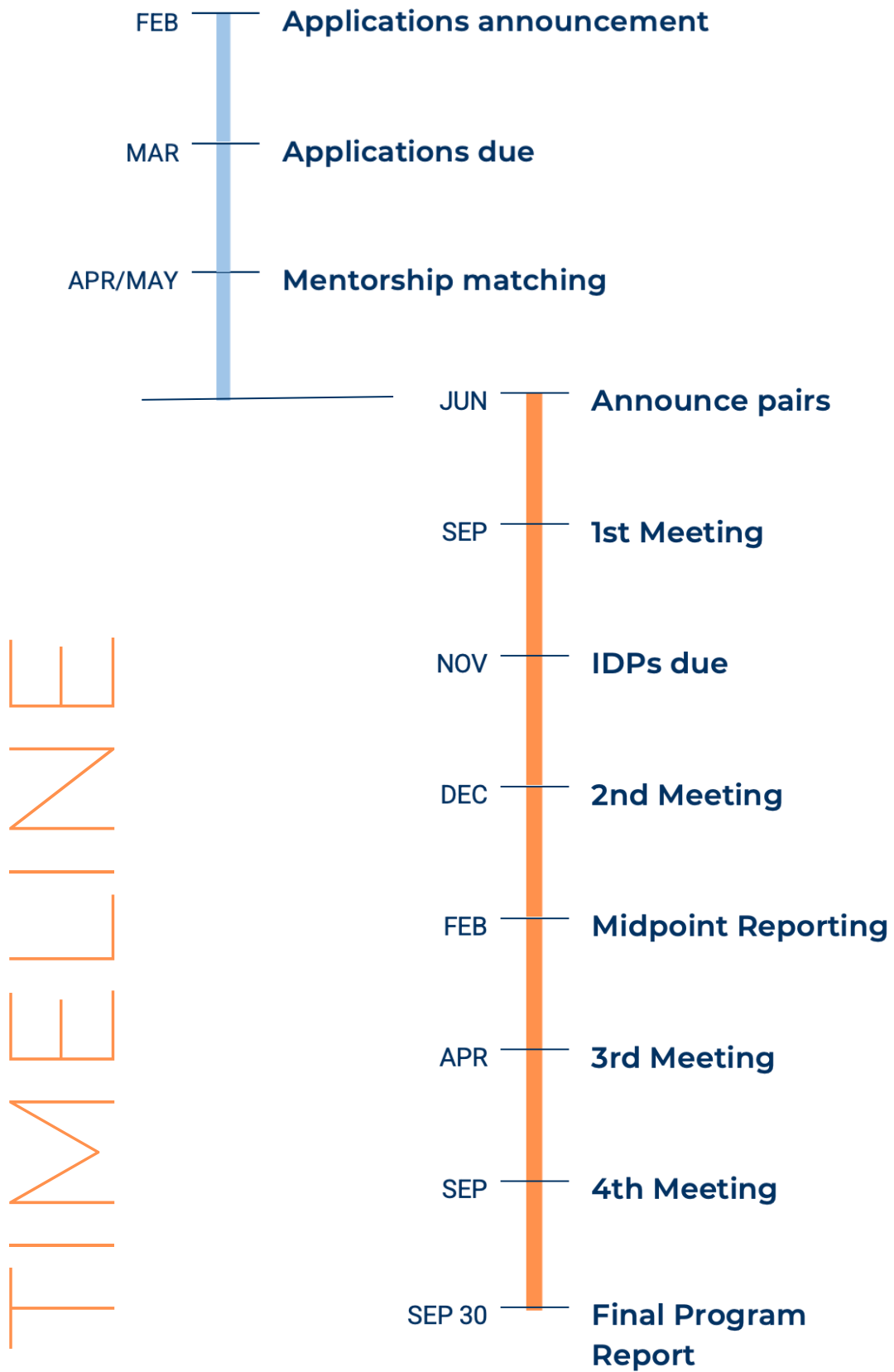
HISTORY

The EMPOWER experience reflects a multi-leveled collaboration between faculty, administrators, and leadership at the University of Maine. The seeds of the project lay in productive discussions across the year 2020 between the Vice President for Research, the Provost, College Deans, and members of the Faculty Senate Research and Scholarship Committee. Recognizing a gap in faculty mentoring culture at UMaine that emerged in the winding down of the Rising Tide Center (originally funded by an NSF ADVANCE grant), these parties articulated a vision for a mentoring and research support program.

The goal for this program is clear: help faculty, especially faculty identifying as members of historically underrepresented groups, thrive at the University of Maine.

The EMPOWER experience, as launched in early 2021, is modeled directly on a successful program bearing the same name with a decade-long history at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). It was developed and launched under the leadership of Dr. Kody Varahramyan, who at the time was IUPUI's Vice Chancellor for Research. One of the architects of that program, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Development Dr. Etta Ward, was involved in early discussions with the UMaine team spearheading the effort. she generously shared IUPUI's experiences and provided a framework for UMaine's program. Ward spoke at the inaugural meeting of supported mentoring pairs and facilitated a mentoring workshop delivered to the first two EMPOWER cohorts in the spring of 2022.





PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1st Meeting (Sept)

Introductions

Program outline, outcomes, and resources

Definitions/characteristics of mentoring, types of mentoring, mentor/mentee

Roles and responsibilities, challenges and opportunities, benefits of mentoring

Shared drive- resources, reporting templates

How to be an effective mentor

How to be an effective mentee

National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity Resources

2nd Meeting (Dec)

Mentoring Check-in

Successes

Challenges

Strategies

Share individualized development plans

Improve success of mentoring relationships

Emotional intelligence, phases of mentoring, different styles

National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity Training Module

3rd Meeting (Apr)

Share and shine

Research interests

Funding goals

IDP outcome status

4th Meeting (Sept)

Celebration networking meeting

Share and shine

Preparing for program completion

Redefining the mentoring relationship

Moving from formal to informal mentoring relationships

Program evaluation

Final reporting announcement: re

COHORTS

Three cohorts have been successfully completed since program implementation in 2021. The following tables summarize participants by academic areas of mentees, gender and EMPOWER track.

Cohort 1 Fall 2021		Cohort 2 Spring 2022		Cohort 3 Fall 2022	
Title	Mentees	Title	Mentees	Title	Mentees
Assistant Professor	11	Assistant Professor	10	Assistant Professor	13
Associate Professor	3	Associate Professor	4	Associate Professor	6
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
11	3	8	7	11	8
Unit	Mentees	Unit	Mentees	Unit	Mentees
Animal and Veterinary Sciences	1	Anthropology	1	Anthropology	1
Anthropology	1	Biomedical Engineering	2	Art	1
Communication and Journalism	2	Earth Climate Sciences	1	Climate Change Institute	1
Communication Sciences and Disorders	1	Education and Human Development	2	Education and Human Development	1
Computer Science	1	Engineering	1	Engineering	2
Education and Human Development	1	English	1	English	1
Engineering	2	Mathematics	1	Food and Agriculture	1
Extension	1	Physics	1	History	2
Modern Languages	1	Psychology	1	Maine Business School	3
Nursing	1	School of Biology and Ecology	1	Philosophy	1
Psychology	1	School of Forest Resources	1	Psychology	1
Social Work	1	Sustainable Agriculture	1	School of Biology and Ecology	3
				School of Forest Resources	1

COHORT DIRECTORY

(Mentees/Mentors)

Cohort 1: Sept 1, 2021 to Aug 31, 2022

[Emily Haigh](#), Associate Professor & Director of Clinical Training, Dept. of Psychology
[Gayle Zydlewski](#), Professor and Director of Maine Sea Grant

[Amelia Couture Bue](#), Assistant Professor of Media Studies
[Laura Rickard](#), Associate Professor Communication and Journalism

[Deborah Saber](#), Assistant Professor of Nursing
[Jeff Hecker](#), Professor of Psychology

[Jane Puhlman](#), Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders
[Rebecca Schwartz-Mette](#), Associate Professor of Psychology

[Bonnie Newsom](#), Assistant Professor of Anthropology
[Daniel Sandweiss](#), Cooperating Professor School of Earth and Climate Sciences Professor,
Department of Anthropology and Climate Change Institute

[Suzanne Ishaq](#), Assistant Professor of Animal and Veterinary Sciences
[Anne Lichtenwalner](#), Associate Professor of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, Extension
Veterinarian and Director University of Maine Animal Health Laboratory

[Liliana Herakova](#), Assistant Professor of Communication and Journalism
[Cindy Isenhour](#), Associate Professor of Anthropology and Climate Change

[Carlos Villacorta](#), Associate Professor of Spanish, Chair of Modern Languages and Classics
[Greg Zaro](#), Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Administration, College of Liberal Arts
and Sciences; Associate Professor of Anthropology and Climate Change

[Bee Chim](#), Assistant Extension Professor, Assistant Professor of Sustainable Agriculture
[Ellen Mallory](#), Extension Professor, Cooperative Extension Professor, School of Food and
Agriculture

[Elizabeth Armstrong](#), Assistant Professor of Social Work
[Jessica Leahy](#), Professor of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources; Associate Dean

[Catharine Biddle](#), Associate Professor of Educational Leadership
[Kathleen Bell](#), Professor of Economics

[Bashir Khoda](#), Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering
[William Gramlich](#), Associate Professor of Chemistry

Cohort 2: Jan 1, 2021 to December 31, 2022

[Karissa Tilbury](#), Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering
[Rosemary Smith](#), Professor of Biomedical Engineering

[Babak Hejrati](#), Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering
[Vincent Caccese](#), Professor of Mechanical Engineering

[Ian Mette](#), Associate Professor in Educational Leadership
[Shannon McCoy](#), Associate Professor of Psychology

[Liping Yu](#), Assistant Professor of Physics
[Robert Lad](#), Professor of Physics

[Caitlin Howell](#), Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering
[Nicholas Giudice](#), Professor of Spatial Computing

[Lisa Neuman](#), Associate Professor of Anthropology and Native American Studies
[Jasmine Saros](#), Professor of Paleolimnology and Lake Ecology

[Rachel Schattman](#), Assistant Professor of Sustainable Agriculture
[Timothy Waring](#), Associate Professor of Social-Ecological Systems Modeling

[Yongjiang \(John\) Zhang](#), Assistant Professor of Plant Physiology
[Ivan Fernandez](#), Professor in the School of Forest Resources and Climate Change Institute;

[Peter Stechlinski](#), Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Statistics
[David Hiebeler](#), Professor of Mathematics and Statistics

[Mollie Ruben](#), Assistant Professor of Psychology
[Lenard Kaye](#), Professor of Social Work

[Alicia Cruz-Uribe](#), Associate Professor of Mineralogy and Petrology
[Heather Leslie](#), Director of the Darling Marine Center and Professor of Marine Sciences

[Sarah Howorth](#), Assistant Professor of Special Education
[Alan Cobo-Lewis](#), Associate Professor of Psychology

[Jay Wason](#), Assistant Professor of Forest Ecosystem Physiology
[Shawn Fraver](#), Associate Professor of Forest Ecology

[Hollie Adams](#), Assistant Professor of English
[Kirsten Jacobson](#), Professor of Philosophy

Cohort 3: Sept 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023

[Uriah Anderson](#), Chair of Arts and Letters Division (UMM)

[Heather Ball](#), Assoc. Dean Academic Affairs; Interim Dean & Campus Director (UMM)

[Suzanne Angeli](#), Assistant Professor of Molecular & Cellular Biology

[Clarissa Henry](#), Professor of Biological Sciences; Director, GSBSE

[Christine Beitel](#), Associate Professor of Anthropology

[Jasmine Saros](#), Professor of Paleolimnology and Lake Ecology

[Ryan Dippre](#), Associate Professor of English

[Justin Dimmel](#), Associate Professor of Math Education and Instr. Technology

[Robby Finley](#), Assistant Professor of Philosophy

[Jessica Miller](#), Professor of Philosophy

[Mary Freeman](#), Assistant Professor of New England History

[Mike Socolow](#), Associate Professor of Communication and Journalism

[Jacquelyn Gill](#), Associate Professor of Paleoecology & Plant Ecology

[Brian McGill](#), Professor of Biological Sciences

[Erin Grey](#), Assistant Professor of Aquatic Genetics

[Damian Brady](#), Associate Professor of Oceanography

[Nadège Levallet](#), Assistant Professor of Management and Information Systems

[Caroline Noblet](#), Associate Professor of Economics

[Yanyan Li](#), Assistant Professor in Food Science and Human Nutrition

[Dorothy Klimis-Zacas](#), Professor of Clinical Nutrition

[Andy Mauery](#), Associate Professor of Art

[Gretchen Faulkner](#), Director, Hudson Museum

[William Obenauer](#), Assistant Professor of Management

[Mario Teisl](#), Director, School of Economics

[Amanda Olsen](#), Associate Professor School of Earth and Climate Sciences

[Lee Karp-Boss](#), Professor, School of Marine Sciences

[Kara Peruccio](#), Assistant Professor Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies & History

[Justin Wolff](#), Professor of Art History & Chair

[Daniel Puhlman](#), Assistant Professor of Family Studies

[Sandy Butler](#), Director and MSW Program Coordinator

[Nicole Rogers](#), Assistant Professor of Silviculture

[John Daigle](#), Professor of Forest Recreation Management

[Andrew Rominger](#), Assistant Professor of Ecological Bioinformatics

[Darren Ranco](#), Associate Professor of Anthropology

[Amrit Verma](#), Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering

[Andy Goupee](#), Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering

[Luis Zambrano-Cruzatty](#), Assistant Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering

[Roberto Lopez-Anido](#), Professor of Civil & Environmental Engineering

Program Categories and Eligibility

Category:

A. Assistant Professor Category: This category is intended for assistant professors in tenure-track faculty positions. The goal is to assist these faculty members in becoming productive in research and scholarly activity, and better positioned to successfully get through the tenure and promotion process.

B. Associate Professor Category: This category is intended for associate professors in tenured faculty positions. The goal is to assist these faculty members in achieving a high level of excellence in research and scholarly activity, and be better positioned to get promoted to the rank of professor.

C. Associate Professor and Professor Category: This category is intended for associate professors and professors in tenured faculty positions. The goal is to assist these faculty members who desire to be **administrators** and gain **administrative experience**.

ELIGIBILITY:

Category A: Full-time tenure-eligible assistant professors from all units at either UMaine or UMM are eligible to apply as mentees, except those who are in the year that are going up for promotion and tenure. All full-time tenured associate professors or professors from all units at the university are eligible to serve as mentors, following recruitment by the program.

Category B: Full-time tenured associate professors from all units at either UMaine or UMM are eligible to apply as mentees. All full-time tenured professors from all units at the university are eligible to serve as mentors, following recruitment by the program.

Category C: Full-time tenured associate professors or professors from all units at either UMaine or UMM are eligible to apply as mentees. All administrators from all units at the university are eligible to serve as mentors, following recruitment by the program.

Funding Support and Duration

Funding Support and Duration:

Categories A and B: Funding support is provided to each mentor-mentee pair, consisting of internal grants for one-year duration. Funding is to support research and scholarly activity. This consists of \$7,000 in support of the mentee's research and professional development. Specifically, the mentee will receive \$3,500 for beginning the mentoring program, and \$3,500 on submission of a qualifying grant proposal. These funds can be used to support research activities,, receive professional development, or otherwise advance the mentee's academic career.

Funding to the mentor consists of \$2,500 to support their research and scholarly activity, and/or professional development. During the one year period of the internal grant, the mentor is expected to spend at least 40 hours providing mentorship support to the mentee.

The mentor and mentee will receive their respective grant funds in separate accounts. Moreover, EMPOWER program administrators will work closely with Deans, Directors, Chairs, and Departmental leadership to ensure broad support for EMPOWER mentees during their participation in the program.

Category C: Funding support will be made available to each mentor-mentee pair, consisting of internal grants for one year duration. Funding to the mentees is to support their professional development in gaining administrative experience. This will consist of \$7,000 in support of the mentee's research and professional development, and leading to the assumption of at least one significant administrative assignment, beginning no later than six months after the end of the mentoring period. Specifically, the mentee will receive \$3,500 for beginning the mentoring program, and \$3,500 on the assumption of at least one significant administrative assignment. These funds can be used to buy out teaching time, receive professional development, or otherwise advance the mentee's career.

Funding to the mentor consists of \$2,500 to support their research and scholarly activity, and/or professional development. During the one year period of the internal grant, the mentor is expected to spend at least 40 hours providing mentorship support to the mentee.

The mentor and mentee will receive their respective grant funds in separate accounts. Moreover, EMPOWER program administrators will work closely with Deans, Directors, Chairs, and Departmental leadership to ensure broad support for EMPOWER mentees during their participation in the program

Award Requirements

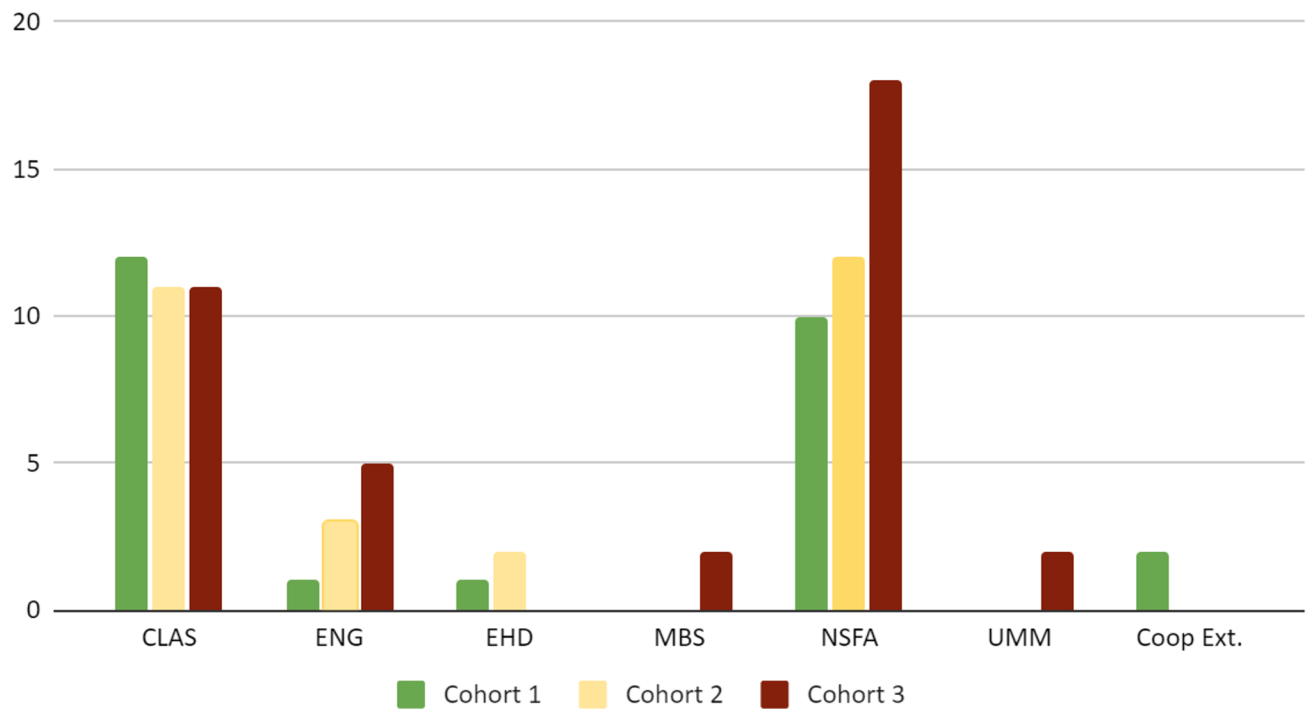
AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- Mentees must apply by completing the EMPOWER application form on the InfoReady platform.
- The applications will be reviewed by a committee of faculty and administrators from UMaine and UMM, who based on the criteria highlighted in the application form, will determine and recommend to Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School the mentees to be selected each year.
- Mentors will be recruited for participants selected in the program – and a potential mentor can be identified at the point of application.
- Mentees are required to attend an introductory workshop, and encouraged to attend university professional development opportunities.
- Within the first two months of the internal grant award period, the mentee in close consultation with the mentor develops a plan on the goals and objectives to be realized during the given twelve month period of the internal grant, and submits it to the Office of Research Development.
- A final report and program evaluation, from the mentee and mentor, must be submitted within 30 days of the termination of the twelve month internal grant period.
- A mentee can receive this award once.

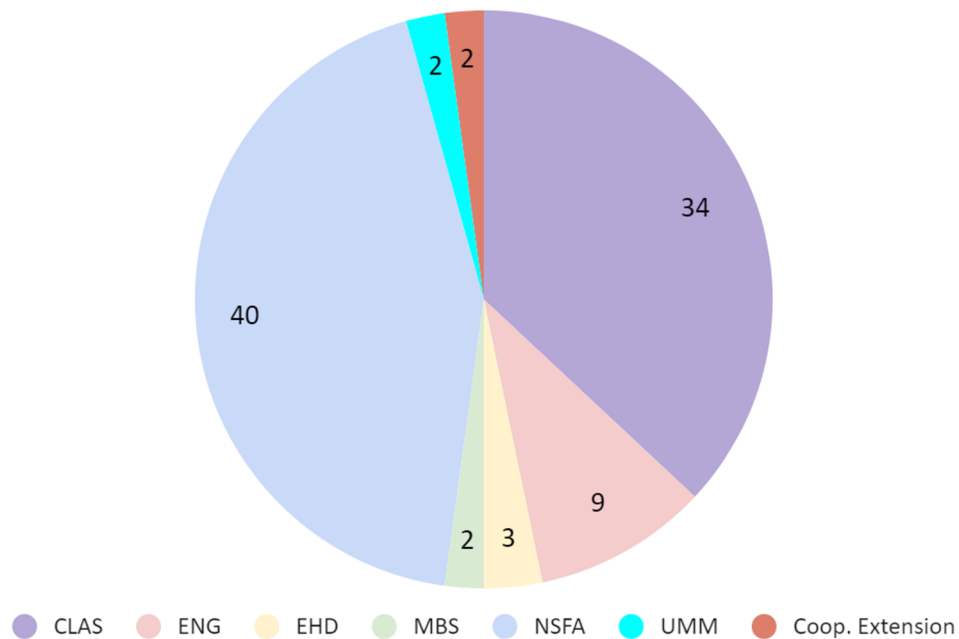
Cohort	1	2	3	Total
CLAS	12	11	11	34
COE	1	3	5	9
COEHD	1	2	0	3
MBS	0	0	2	2
NSFA	10	12	18	40
UMM	0	0	2	2
COOP Ext.*	2	0	0	2
Total participants	24	28	38	90

Cohort Participant Data (UMaine College/UMM/Cooperative Extension)

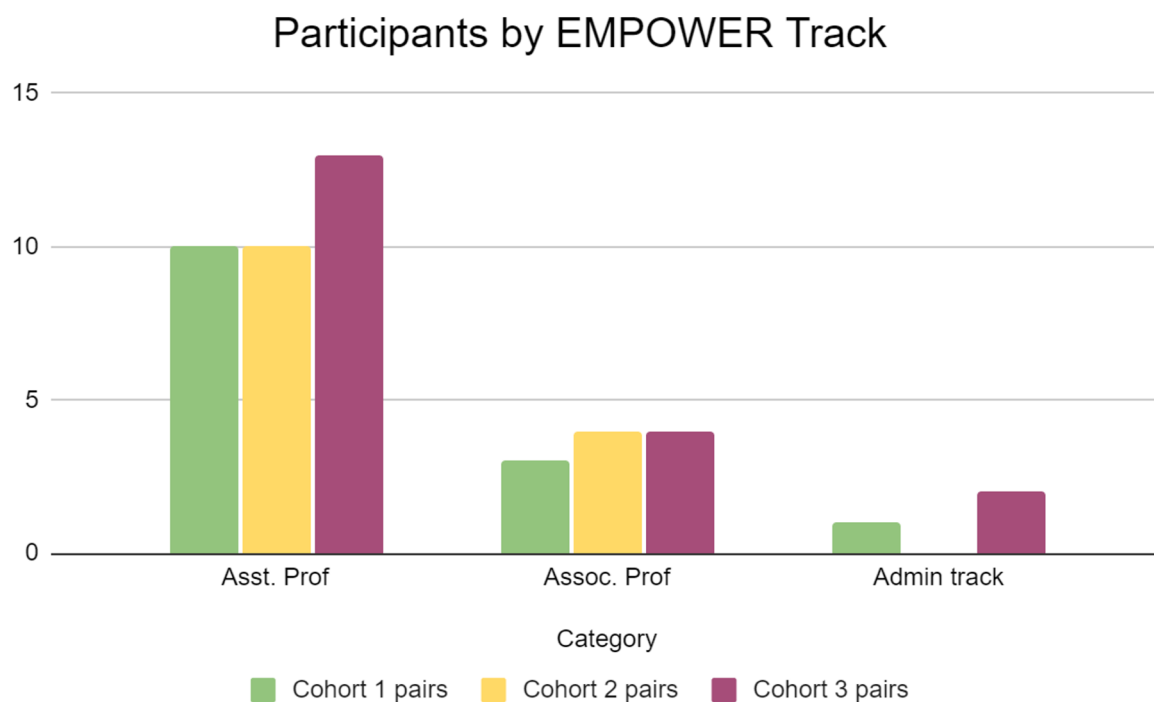
Cohort Participants by UMaine College/UMM/Cooperative Extension



Total # of Participants by UMaine College/UMM/Cooperative Extension



Cohort Participant Data (EMPOWER Track)



Category	Cohort 1 pairs	Cohort 2 pairs	Cohort 3 pairs	Total
A. Asst. Prof	10	10	13	33
B. Assoc. Prof	3	4	4	11 [92% women with children, 8% men with children]
C. Admin track	1	0	2	3

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

EMPOWER mentees and mentors work cooperatively to create an Individualized Development Plan (IDP), based on mentee needs; to support faculty growth, professional success, and guide the year-long mentoring relationship.

The Academic Affairs Office provides insight on faculty promotion and tenure questions and support for mentoring partnerships, and quarterly mentoring professional development trainings. All participants have access to mentoring resources through the [National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity](#).

The Office of Research Development supports researcher success with funding goals and proposal development; through consultations, trainings on Pivot and SciENCv, and proposal development resources. ORD also tracks program metrics (mid-point survey and final survey/program evaluation) for data analysis of programmatic design and creation of an end-of-year report.

Cohort 3: added opportunities, based on participant feedback:

1. Email accountability group: Weekly check-in with mentees on successes of the prior week, goals for the coming week, and plans for task completion.
2. Zoom accountability groups: Weekly, virtual check-ins that foster peer support conversations; sharing experiences, effective strategies, resources, and identification of mentee needs.
3. Small group writing circles: The goal is to offer low-drag, high-impact time windows where writing group members can advance their work in a supportive atmosphere (while benefiting from systems of mutual accountability and visibility).

Cohorts 1 & 2 Mentee Final Evaluation (23 responses)

How did you utilize the EMPOWER stipend?

Stipend Uses	Number of Responses
Research Materials/Equipment	8
Research Assistant	7
Conference Attendance/Travel	7
Publication Costs	1
Course Fee	1
Funding Match	1
Writing Retreat	1
Course Release	3
Summer Salary	2

What is the most important tangible result of your participation in the EMPOWER experience?

Outcome	Number of Responses
Grant Submission	24
Publication Submission	5
Best Practices of Mentoring	1
Personal Strategic Plan	1
Promotion and Tenure Support	1
Networking	1
Research Insight	1
Grant Submission Process and Support	2

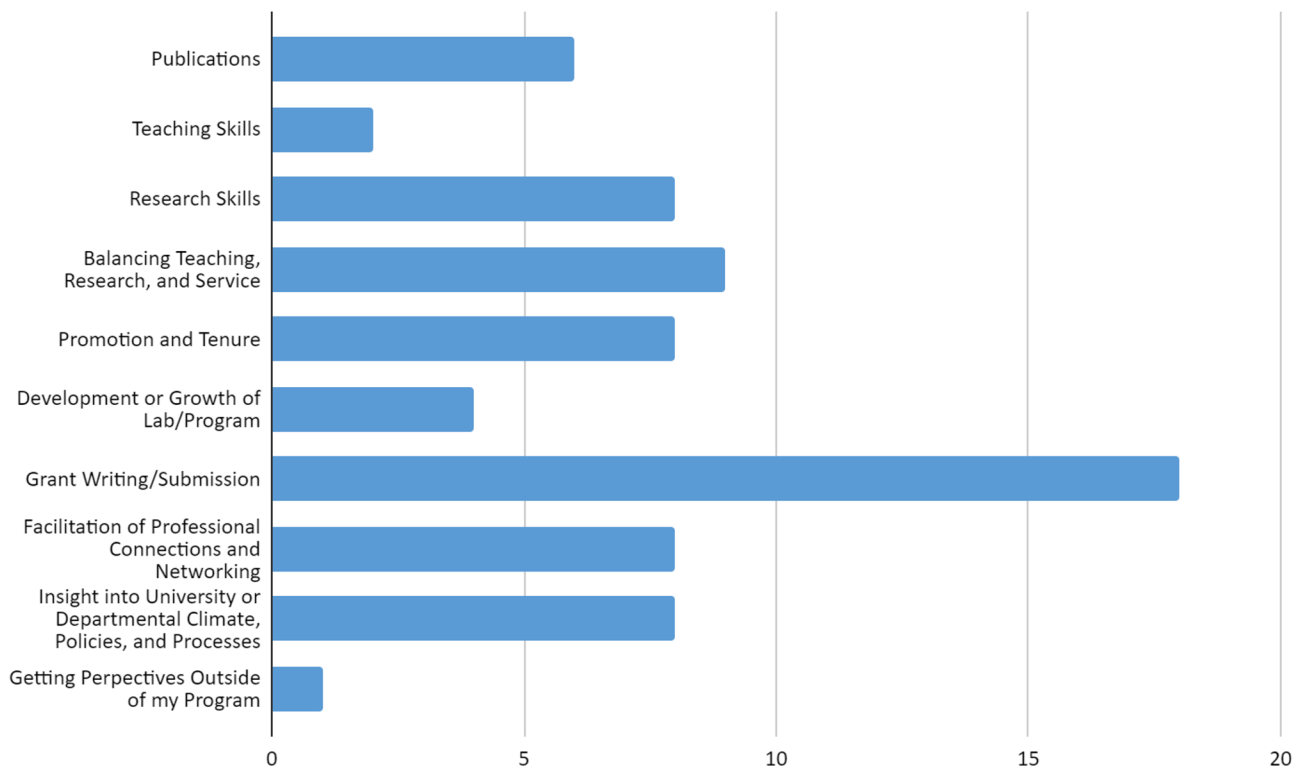
Selected specific responses included,

- Travel funding to present the research I have worked on with my mentor.
- Took a course through the IPSCR
- I was awarded external funding that required cost-share. I am using my EMPOWER stipend to pay for a graduate student's work on the project (funding match).
- My first lead submission on an NSF proposal.
- I finished revisions on my creative manuscript and sent it out to a number of publishers and agents.
- I received an NSF CAREER award. I also improved my mentorship with my research group.
- Having someone outside my unit to talk through prepping tenure and promotion materials was incredibly valuable.

Cohort Participant Data (Professional Development)

Which type of the following professional development milestones has resulted from interactions with your mentor?

23 responses



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon cohort evaluations and conversations with participants, the program is implementing the following:

- 1) Promoting greater Track C participation, especially in the context of retirements and shifts in departmental leadership
- 2) Creating opportunities to celebrate and promote mentoring culture, including by inviting EMPOWER participants to share about their experiences to other university audiences such as the University Research Council; the Dean's council; or a speakers series.
- 3) Feature EMPOWER pairs in the monthly *IMPACT Newsletter*, and invite EMPOWER alumni to share their work in the monthly research speakers series.

Programmatically, EMPOWER will move towards a more consistent calendar and front-load needed participant information in the first meeting. Adhering to the model calendar will benefit all mentoring pairs.

Optimizing communication and coordination with program stakeholders (mentee/mentor pairs, chairs, directors, deans, program administrators, and financial administrators) will help foster participants pathways to success.

An EMPOWER webpage will be launched imminently, showcasing the program as well as sharing the process for recruitment and participation.

Clearer documentation of EMPOWER involvement, on all sides of mentoring, will be included in personnel files through official letters.

Program impacts can be highlighted at the final EMPOWER meeting; coinciding with the next year's first cohort meeting.

In AY 23-24 the program will pilot the addition of select, invited faculty from other UMS campuses, who participated in the Research Ambassadors' program and have expressed interest in joining the EMPOWER community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The EMPOWER experience is sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School in partnership with the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost.

We thank all faculty mentor and mentees for their hard work, and the program staff who make this effort possible, including Saul Allen and Danielle O'Neill from ORD. Special thanks to Senior Advisor to the President and Executive Director of Research Development Jason Charland and Professor of Philosophy Dr. Jessica Miller for leadership within and service to this initiative.

We would also like to recognize our colleagues and partners from IUPUI - Etta Ward, (Assoc. VP for Research Development), Kathy Grove (Dir. of the Office for Women) and Alicia Gahimer (Interim Director of Funding Service)- who bring the EMPOWER experience to other colleges and universities..