Title of Abstract: 3 New Initiatives for FOCUS: Expanding our Efforts

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Purpose of program or project: Since 1997, FOCUS has been a Dean-funded program with a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing recruitment, retention and advancement of Penn women faculty. We continue to explore new activities to provide the most effective mentoring and be a change agent for gender equity and diversity. We monitor our effectiveness by annual comprehensive collection and analysis of faculty gender statistics and by measuring other appropriate outcomes based on the particular initiative.

Methods of design and evaluation: FOCUS has become a trusted program through which faculty suggest new activities to advance women’s success and create a collegial and diverse faculty environment. Three examples of initiatives that emerged from faculty concern are highlighted: (1) FOCUS Writing Group is a 9-month workshop for 15 junior faculty facilitated by 2 senior faculty members. A structured curriculum guides participants through key steps of writing and publishing a manuscript. (2) FOCUS CV Review Session is a new element of our annual WIM conference. Junior women meet one-on-one with senior women who review their CVs and progress towards promotion. Efforts are made to pair faculty from different departments but on similar tracks. (3) FOCUS facilitated the creation of an organized, visible LGBT faculty group by being a safe conduit to tap into SOM networks and garner support.

Summary of results: (1) Writing Group has mentored 28 junior faculty over 2 years. Participants report increased writing productivity. (2) CV Review Session has mentored 54 junior faculty with 94% finding the session helpful, 82% received new advice, and 59% have continued contact with mentors. (3) An LGBT Faculty organization has been established with the Dean’s public endorsement and a dedicated website.

Conclusion(s): FOCUS illustrates how a WIM Program endorsed by leadership and trusted by faculty can be the nexus for transforming faculty concerns into concrete change strategies that allow a diverse faculty to flourish.