

Engaging Everyone in the Life of the Department¹

“Getting lost in the crowd” is a common problem faced by new faculty and staff, and particularly women and people of color. These individuals may be overlooked for departmental assignments that would bring them into a collegial circle. Often an intentional effort is made to shield a new faculty member from departmental duties, but it is worthwhile to consider how to involve them without jeopardizing their scholarship.

Women in traditionally male departments and people of color are often in high demand for campus committees and efforts because of the diverse perspectives they bring. Ask to be made aware of these campus activities and wherever possible help those involved bring back to the department what they are doing at the campus level.

This grid can be adapted by department chairs. Use this chart when assigning people to various roles and committees to ensure those opportunities are well distributed and that each person has some role in the life of the department.

The column on the far left includes standing committees, task forces, ad hoc work, and on-going activities in your department. All faculty/staff members are written at the top of each column. Check an individual’s column when they are assigned a departmental duty.

Committee/Activity	Jones	Smith	Their	Chavez	Bloom	Ono
Personnel committee						
Budget committee						
Research committee						
Undergraduate committee						
Equity committee						
Graduate committee						
Search committee						
Symposium committee						
Receptions & social events						
Faculty senate						
Department representative to campus committee X						
Member of key professional organization						
Conference planning committee						

1. UW—Madison Office of Strategic Consulting, formerly the Office of Quality Improvement (OQI)