



## PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY

### Annual Report

May 2005

"I believe that the best argument [for PFF] is that it will raise the prestige and reputation of ISU in the long run by producing professors that increasingly perform at a higher level than other graduating Ph.D.s."

*-Ph.D. student in the College of Engineering, ISU*

"I applied for the PFF program before I realized its potential benefits. It wasn't until I was accepted into the program that I appreciated how it could fill the gaps in getting from a postdoctoral to a faculty position."

*-Postdoctoral Associate in Biomedical Sciences, ISU*

"I thought that having faculty panelists from a variety of colleges was one of the most valuable parts of the PFF program."

*-Anonymous Evaluation Comment*

"I have greatly enjoyed my interactions with my PFF mentee. The experience of sharing perspectives on being a faculty member, and creating opportunities for him to see aspects of faculty life that I never saw previous to my position is rewarding. I believe that this is a wonderful program!"

*-Associate Professor of Plant Pathology, ISU*

The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program was established by the Graduate College during Fall 2001 and became a part of the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching in 2004. This program for master's students, Ph.D. students, and postdoctoral fellows supplements departmental graduate preparation by offering new teaching, mentoring, and learning possibilities.

The mission of PFF is to better prepare graduates for faculty careers through a combination of seminars, mentoring, and practical classroom and departmental service experiences, while giving them further credentialing for a competitive academic job market.

### PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PFF offered seven courses during the academic year 2004-2005. New topics added to the seminars included "Classroom Management," "Interactive Classroom Activities," "Research Integrity and Ethics," and "Scholarship of Learning and Teaching."

#### *Core Courses*

PFF's first course, Gr St 585, PFF Introductory Seminar, was offered for 36 students. In addition, 24 faculty participated as presenters and 33 served as mentors. Topics covered included hiring, promotion and tenure, getting started as new faculty, and balancing research, teaching, service, and personal life. Speakers came from Grinnell College, Central College, Wartburg College, Drake University, UNI, ISU, and DMACC. Partner institutions showed a most pleasing willingness to continue trips to Ames to share with the PFF classes aspects of faculty life at their campuses.

PFF's capstone course, Gr St 586, PFF Intermediate Seminar, was offered for 41 students. In addition, 37 faculty participated as presenters and 36 served as mentors. Topics covered included grant proposal writing, legal and ethical issues in research and teaching, diversity issues, job letters, vitae, public speaking, learning styles, and teaching strategies. All students participated in a teaching experience, met with a PFF mentor, prepared job portfolios, and began teaching portfolios.

"I cannot imagine trying to begin an academic job without having PFF. Through seminars, mentoring, and teaching, the program exposed me to so many different aspects of the academic community that I would have never even considered without it."

*-Ph.D. student in Chemical Engineering, ISU*

"Preparing Future Faculty, I can honestly say, is one of the best programs for graduate students I can imagine. My overall assessment of PFF is that it is indispensable. Every university should have a program like this to prepare their graduates for real life."

*-M.A. student in English, ISU*

"There are times when graduate school can seem very much like slogging through one thing after another, with little sense of where it is all going. Participating in the PFF program has helped me regain that sense of the "big picture." In particular, it has helped me focus on what I need to do to become not just a graduate, but also the best prospective faculty member I can be."

*-Ph.D. student in Sociology, ISU*

"One of the premier benefits of this program is being around other students who are highly motivated and have similar goals to mine. It was really great to hear perspectives from a wide range of disciplines and be exposed to new ideas."

*-Ph.D. student in Agriculture, ISU*

"I would have to say that this was most definitely one of the most useful courses I have taken while at Iowa State University. I think that every graduate student working on his/her Ph.D. should take the opportunity provided by the PFF program."

*-Ph.D. student in Curriculum and Instruction, ISU*

### *Advanced Courses*

Gr St 587, PFF Teaching Practicum, was offered for 16 students. This course provides an in-depth teaching experience. Fourteen different faculty members provided teaching mentoring. Students taught a variety of courses, including upper-level courses for majors.

Gr St 588, PFF Special Topics, was offered for 11 students. This course provides students an in-depth professional experience. Sixteen different faculty mentors supervised. Students in 588 developed projects including grant writing, course development and design for ISU and other institutions, and a series of faculty teaching seminars.

Altogether this year 104 students participated in PFF classes. They were joined by 167 faculty participating as presenters and mentors.

### **STRENGTHS OF THE IOWA STATE PFF PROGRAM**

As compared to PFF programs at other higher education institutions, the program at Iowa State has demonstrated a number of particular strengths.

First, ISU's program is comprehensive. While many programs offer a few seminars and meetings, ISU's program offers four graduate credit courses.

Second, because PFF receives internal funding, we have been able to tailor the program to the needs of our institution and students. Programs at other institutions have encountered problems when outside funders earmarked money in ways that made it difficult to execute the program. Those programs are experiencing even larger problems as that external funding ends.

Third, Iowa State's PFF program includes master's students, Ph.D. students, and postdocs from 51 departments and every college in the university. Such a diverse program is unique; very few programs admit master's students or postdoctoral students. Many other PFF schools have participants from only one department or college. Our students, on the other hand, are developing an interdisciplinary network that will serve them well in their future careers. Student comments indicate that this programmatic diversity is a major strength of our PFF program.

Fourth, Iowa State has developed a particularly strong relationship with partner schools. Students have already benefited from this relationship in seminars and in one-on-one email interactions with faculty at other institutions. Several of these schools have had advanced students from our PFF program assist with or teach courses at their institutions.

“This class was the most extraordinary one I have taken at Iowa State. The diversity of the topics and a number of great speakers made it a huge success.”

*-Ph.D. student in Foodservice and Lodging Management, ISU*

“PFF was a unique experience, which has helped me to evaluate how I interact with my own students.”

*-Assistant Professor of Animal Science, ISU*

“A big thanks goes to you. I remember sitting down with you last December and asking what would be an acceptable load for me to take on for 587. Without hesitation you replied that I should take the whole course. As I walked across campus, thinking about our brief meeting, my knees were a little watery but my face was beaming. I was intimidated by the enormity of actually instructing a class on my own. At the same time I was beginning to believe that I could do it—thanks in large part to you. This was a quantum leap for me as I am a terminally modest/self-conscious person.”

*-Ph.D. student in Forestry, ISU*

“I sometimes wish that I had had an opportunity to attend ‘professor school’ before my own baptism by fire, so to speak. The students can be about as merciless and unforgiving as an opera crowd. They’ve seen Jay Leno; now they want to know what you can do. I think the PFF is an excellent way to bridge this gap and give hopeful future faculty the skills and advance preparation they need to make the right beginnings.”

*-Professor of Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics, ISU*

Fifth, Iowa State faculty participation in the program has been encouraging. A number of major professors strongly encouraged their students to apply to PFF. This year 167 faculty actively participated in PFF by presenting in classes or by serving as mentors. Faculty are expressing appreciation for the opportunity to focus on teaching and research in new ways with sharp young minds.

Sixth, Iowa State’s PFF is particularly flexible. Students may choose among four levels of participation and four different courses. In addition, the courses offer flexibility in both content and credit hours.

Seventh, Iowa State’s PFF program attracts strong students. Most of them have written and presented papers, some at international conferences; some of them have won national and international awards for those papers. A number of them have already published multiple articles. Some of them are also reviewers for professional journals. Some of them have been awarded grants, patents, and prestigious national fellowships.

Eighth, PFF students are active campus citizens. They sit on department committees, help with undergraduate mentoring, help develop new courses and renovate existing ones, and participate in Graduate Student Senate. Many of them are quite experienced as teachers: included in the PFF class are graduate students who have taught upper-level courses for majors, worked on web courses, presented units in large lectures, co-taught graduate level courses with a faculty member, supervised practicums, helped train teaching assistants, been Wakonse Teaching Fellows, and taught at other institutions of higher education.

## CONCLUSION

Perhaps the best indication of the success of the PFF program comes from the praise of faculty and students who have been involved with the program. For this reason, we end this report with some thoughts from those who have participated in PFF:

“The panels and the activities from the PFF program made me understand much better the American academic system, and realize what possibilities are available for a person interested in a career that involves teaching. It is amazing for a foreigner like me to see the variety of colleges and from that of the types of jobs that you can chose from. Making an educated choice when my life is in question is very important, and without this program it would be almost impossible. Beside all the knowledge that I have acquired, I met very interesting people and heard excellent speakers. The enthusiasm and dedication of all the participants in this program is inspiring and make me feel even better about my choice of pursuing a career that involves teaching.”

*-Ph.D. student in Chemistry, ISU*

"The question is not 'why should anyone go through the PFF process?' but 'why isn't everyone going through the PFF process?'"

*-M.A. student in History and English, ISU*

"Writing assignments were very helpful (I hate saying that, teeth are clinched!)"

*-Anonymous Evaluation Comment*

"I think the topics we talked about in class are more valuable for potential future faculty members than the textbook knowledge in classes."

*-Ph.D. student in Genetics, ISU*

"I have gained lots of knowledge about faculty life that would have taken me years to learn by myself."

*-Anonymous Evaluation Comment*

"Of all the classes that I have taken at Iowa State University, PFF has been one of the most practical and useful for my future career in academia. I looked forward to coming to class every Tuesday night. I am amazed at the breadth and scope of the PFF curricula. I now have two three-ring binders (585 & 586) chock full of advice and references to pull from when I become a faculty member. These references are invaluable for my future, and give me an enormous competitive advantage over others who have not had PFF instruction."

*-M.S. student in Foodservice and Lodging Management, ISU*

"PFF has been one of the best parts of my graduate school experience."

*-Ph.D. student in Computer Science, ISU*

"I have discussed the PFF program with many faculty members, both at ISU and at other institutions. Uniformly they tell me that they wish they had such a program when they were graduate students. I feel extremely fortunate to be able to participate in the program and am grateful to all those whose efforts have made it possible."

*-Ph.D. student in Computer Science, ISU*

"I've been humbled. I realize how much I don't know about faculty life and most importantly teaching. PFF has opened my eyes to a world I knew nothing about... I didn't realize that you needed to have clear goals right from the start... I've learned an enormous amount from the panels especially the new faculty panel and the hiring panel."

*-Ph.D. student in the College of Engineering, ISU*

"Meeting students from other colleges and departments, and indeed other countries was the highlight of the class. Students in this class are as diverse as diversity can get, not only in terms of their ethnicity and academic majors, but also in their age and experience. It is my hope that this class will continue as it is one of the best services ISU can give to students seeking academic positions in other universities and colleges."

*-Ph.D. student in Human Development and Family Studies, ISU*

"During many of the class periods of PFF I felt exhausted, distressed about the hours of work time I was missing, or starving. I almost always, however, left the class with a new found respect for and desire to enter the academic profession. I hope that I will be able to serve on a Preparing Future Faculty panel discussion at whatever institution I later join. Thank you for allowing me to participate in this truly wonderful program."

*-Ph.D. student in Textiles and Clothing, ISU*

"Overall, I can't say enough positive things about my PFF experiences. I can honestly say that my time in PFF has been the most helpful and beneficial of all the things I have done during graduate school. I believe that every graduate student should be given the opportunity to participate in this program should they choose to."

*-Ph.D. student in Human Development and Family Studies, ISU*

"I want to mention that PFF has had a significant effect on my outlook as a graduate student. I've had to think long and hard about where I want to go, how I want to get there, and (perhaps most importantly) how my future options are shaped by decisions I make right now."

*-Ph.D. student in the college of Liberal Arts and Sciences, ISU*

# APPENDIX A

## PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

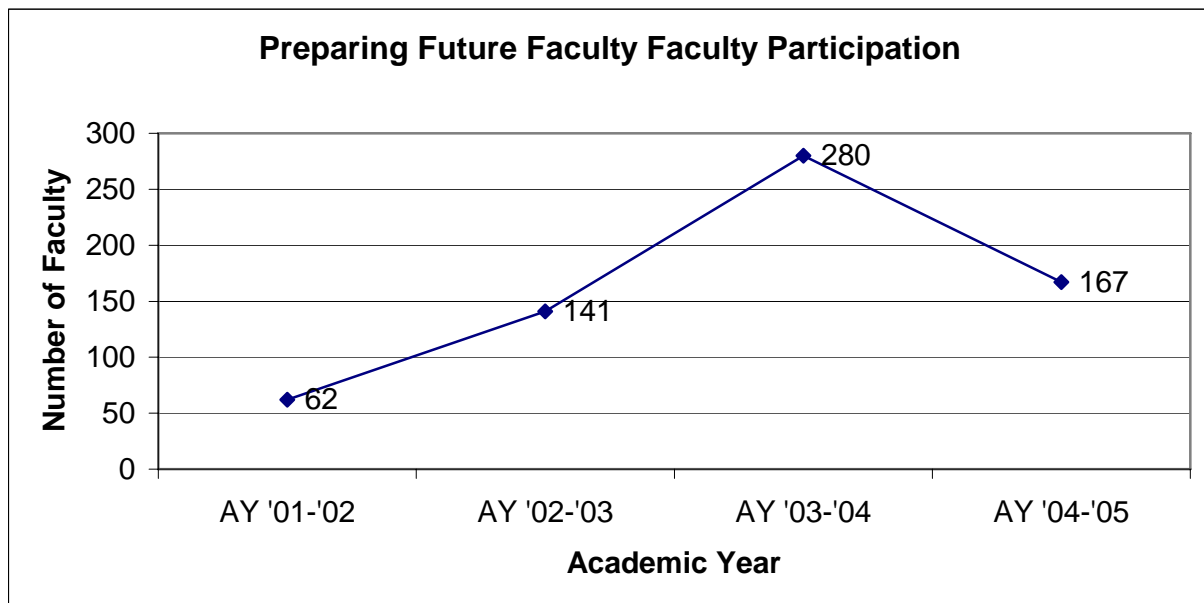
8 institutions have contributed to PFF as partner institutions:

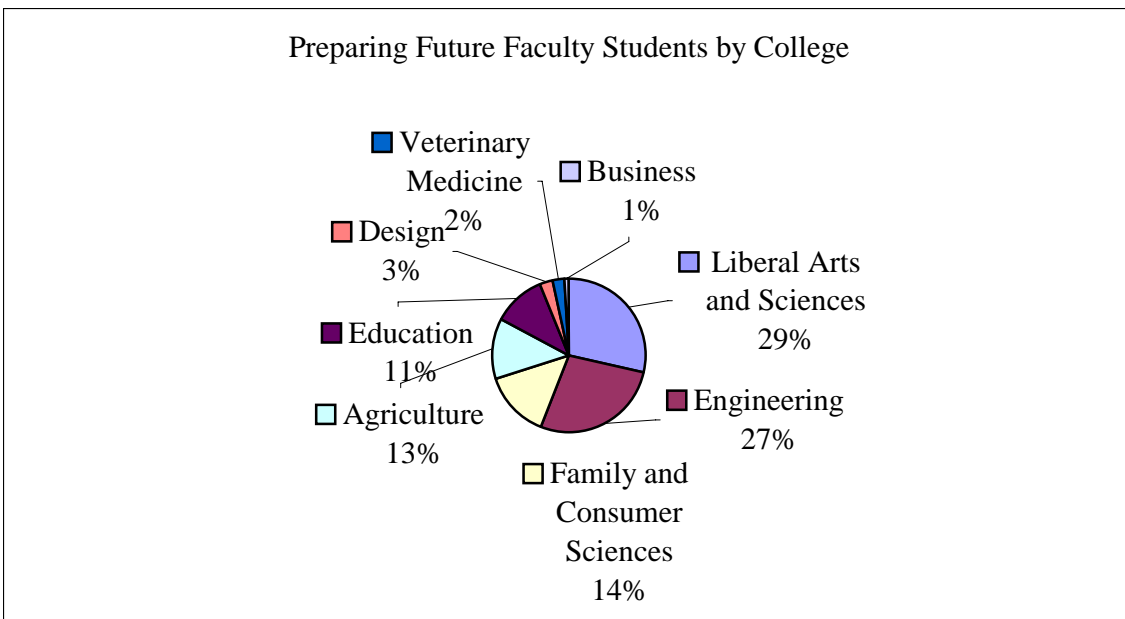
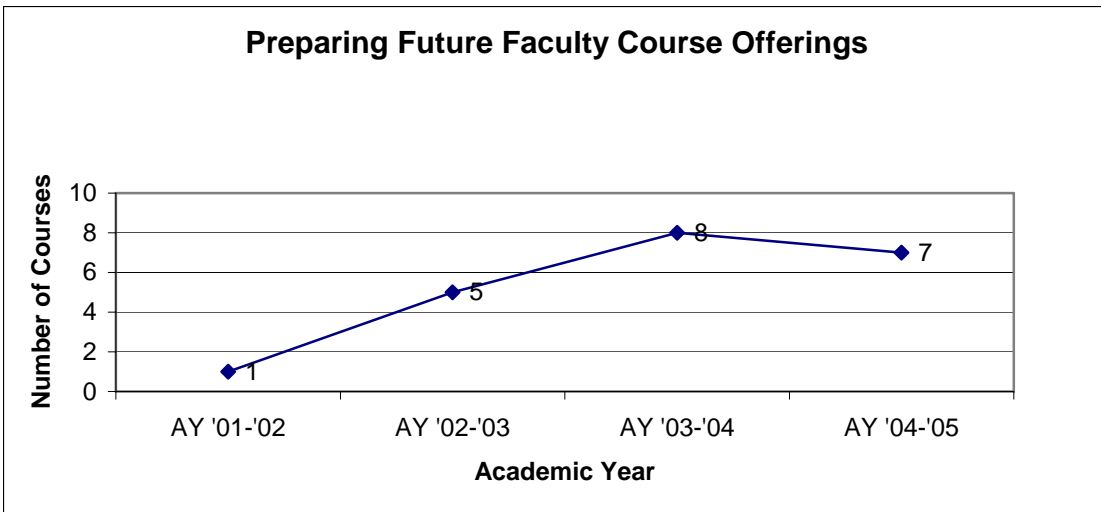
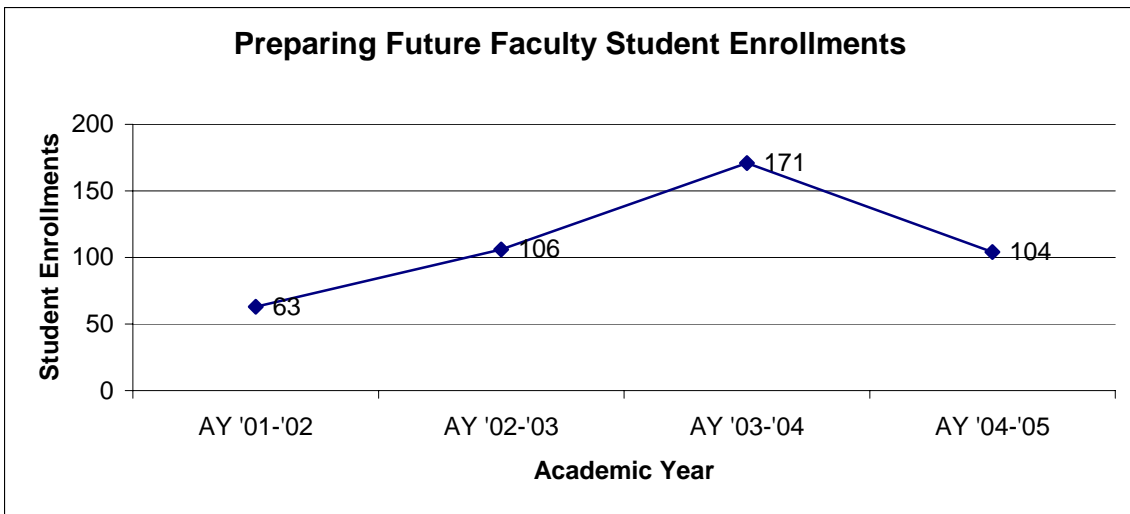
- Central College
- Des Moines Area Community College
- Drake University
- Grinnell College
- University of Iowa
- University of Missouri
- University of Northern Iowa
- Wartburg College

“Bringing in a variety of academic administrators, including deans, provosts, and chairs, to our class to discuss what they did in each of their respective institutions in terms of the tenure and promotion process was tremendously beneficial.”  
*-Postdoctoral Associate in Plant Pathology, ISU*

### PFF partner participants include these administrative levels:

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Position</b>
Central College	Vice President
Central College	Associate Dean
Des Moines Area Community College	Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
Des Moines Area Community College	Dean of Sciences and Humanities
Des Moines Area Community College	Academic Dean, Advanced Technology Center
Drake University	Provost
Drake University	Dean of Arts and Sciences
Drake University	Dean of Education
Grinnell College	Vice President/Dean of the College
Grinnell College	Associate Dean of the College
University of Northern Iowa	Dean of the Graduate College
University of Northern Iowa	Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Wartburg College	Vice President/Dean of Faculty





## Preparing Future Faculty Students by College Department

Total Departments	51		FSHNF	1
A B E	1		GDCBS	1
AE EM	3		GENET	1
AGRON	5		HD FS	9
AN S	6		HIST	6
ARCH	3		HORT	1
ART	3		IED T	3
B M S	2		IMSE	3
BBMBA/S	2		JL MC	1
BUSAD	2		M E	17
C C E	8		M S E	4
C I	11		MATH	5
CCE E	1		MCDB	1
CH E	8		NEURO	1
CHEM	9		NREM	3
COM S	12		P PHY	1
E CPE	13		PHYSA	1
ECON	1		PL P	4
EEB	1		PSYCH	5
EL PS	9		SOC	3
ENGL	7		STAT	5
ECON	1		T C	4
ENT	3		V P M	1
FCEDS	1		VMICR	1
FLM	11		VMPM	1
FSHN	2		ZOOL	1