**Mentoring and career development resources**

There are numerous mentoring activities designed to help new investigators launch, grow, and sustain a vigorous research program and navigate the other important activities of a VU faculty member including teaching and service obligations. Some of these activities are listed below with most available to all faculty regardless of rank. Even more important is the culture in the Department of Biochemistry and Vanderbilt Basic Sciences. This is a community of colleagues that genuinely wants to help each other succeed. We value sharing, cooperativity, mentoring, and collaborating. We also have an inclusive environment in which everyone’s participation is welcomed and encouraged. Combined with individual initiative, the culture provides the support our faculty need to be successful. Below is a list of career development resources and DEI efforts in the Basic Sciences, the School of Medicine, and Vanderbilt University.

**WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY AND THE BASIC SCIENCES**

**Onboarding**

We have established processes for pre- and post-arrival onboarding. We want to make sure that your laboratory space, equipment, personnel, and current funding are all ready to go upon your arrival. Once you arrive, we make sure that you meet key staff and faculty who can help you understand pre- and post-awards, HR processes, how to get on our training grants and Open Lab List so that you can recruit graduate students, help with building a lab website, and how to use our numerous core laboratories.

**Departmental mentoring committee**

A group of at least three faculty members meet with each assistant level professors at least once per year to provide advice and evaluate progress. Assistant professors or the chair of the committee may request more frequent meetings. The department chair will attend these meetings with the invitation of the committee chair or assistant professor. The chair of the committee will provide a written report of the meeting to the department chair. If there are significant concerns about progress towards promotion, then the department chair may request more frequent meetings or convene ad hoc meetings of additional faculty to provide advice and assistance.

**Annual Review with department chair**

The department chair will have at least one annual review meeting with each department faculty member to discuss progress, concerns, and expectations. This meeting will include a summary of the evaluation by the department Promotions and Tenure committee for individuals below the rank of Professor.

**Annual Review with Associate Dean for Faculty**

Each year, all assistant professors meet with the Associate Dean for Faculty. These meetings are usually offset by 6 months from the departmental mentoring committee meetings. The Associate Dean for Faculty sits on the Faculty Appointments and Promotions Committee and can provide advice on progress toward promotion as well as the promotion process.

**EMBO Laboratory Leadership course**

This 3-day course is intended to help you, as an early career investigator, explore your own approach to laboratory leadership, to provide insight into how teams work best together, and to identify and resolve barriers to the efficient operation of teams. While individuals usually must travel to the EMBO in Heidelberg to take the course, together with VUMC, we host an annual meeting for our early career faculty on-site.

**Quarterly Workshops**

The Associate Dean for Faculty hosts quarterly workshops for all assistant professors in the four Basic Departments. Topics such as funding strategies, workplace workstyles, conflict resolution, financial management, time management, and creating a mentoring statement have been discussed in the past. This allows not only for discussion of these topics, but also provides an opportunity to develop relationships with faculty members who are at a similar career stage.

**Early Career Investigator Development Program**

This program is designed for School of Medicine early career faculty conducting biomedical research. The intent is to provide information and tools that will enhance skills and knowledge of Vanderbilt resources, processes, policies, and regulations in support of implementing an independent scientific research mission, (e.g., core facilities, grant writing, manuscript writing, grant submission and management, purchasing, hiring and evaluation of personnel, and mentoring of trainees). The program consists of six 2-hour sessions.

**Dean’s Faculty Fellows**

The School of Medicine Basic Sciences has established a new Dean’s Faculty Fellows program designed to recognize the efforts of faculty in the early stages of their career. The award targets assistant professors who have shown a strong track record of scientific accomplishment and are likely to continue producing high-quality science in their respective fields.

**OUR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES**

We specifically serve the faculty, staff, students, and postdocs of the School of Medicine, Basic Sciences, totaling greater than 1100 individuals. Each department in the School of Medicine, Basic Sciences has a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) committee. Additionally, we have a DEI Coordinating Committee comprised of the four Basic Sciences Departments with the addition of the Brain Institute/Neuroscience, Vanderbilt Institute for Infection, Immunology, and Inflammation (VI4), and the Program in Cancer Biology. We work closely with the Institutes and Cancer Biology because many of our trainees are in their labs, and we want to ensure that we provide inclusive environments for all of them. We also work with the Diversity Designates, which meets with Vanderbilt’s Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion on a monthly basis. More information about DEI initiatives in the School of Medicine Basic Sciences can be found at this [link](https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/dei/).

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **DEI Initiative** | **Contact(s)** | **Frequency** |
| Discovery Sciences Emerging Scholars Lecture Series | Tina Iverson, PhDFelysha Jenkins, PhD | ~ 6 speakers per year |
| Initiative for Maximizing Student Diversity (IMSD) | Digna Velez Edwards, PhDHenrique Serezani, PhDJulie Rhoades, PhDKafond Wilder, PhD | Ongoing |
| FairPlay Workshop | Irina Kaverina, PhD | semi-annual |
| Culturally Aware Mentoring Workshops | Tina Iverson, PhDFelysha Jenkins, PhD | annual |
| Bystander Training  | NIH, online | annual |
| Lou DeFelice Travel Awards | Felysha Jenkins, PhD | annual |
| “Celebrate Immigrants” video profiles that honor our community’s unique immigrant experiences | Aaron Conley | Monthly |
| Climate, Culture and Career Plans survey for graduate students. | Felysha Jenkins, PhD | annual |

**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND UNIVERSITY-WIDE RESOURCES**

**Nature Master Classes**

These online classes and workshops provide professional development for researchers on topics ranging from paper and grant writing to establishing effective collaborations. These highly effective and professional quality classes are made available to the entire VU/VUMC community by the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center. [Link](https://masterclasses.nature.com/?gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAAqb7Nhp59Rj3GW-ACvFQKcxVLcrJj&gclid=CjwKCAjw-JG5BhBZEiwAt7JR63NbapeD3VNUpEL6fB2ER4fCvYOncJD4qedv1356tWQa2DcVcaGcXhoCuk8QAvD_BwE#nmo).

**Edge for Scholars**

**Edge Reviews**

Offers an internal review by senior faculty of any R, K, or F application, as well as applications for other federal and foundation funding sources. https://my.vanderbilt.edu/ctcareerdevelopment/edge-reviews/

**Edge for Scholars grant pacing workshop**

Helps to pace yourself to successfully write a grant. https://my.vanderbilt.edu/ctcareerdevelopment/grant-pacing-workshops/

**Funded grants library**

Maintains a library of over 350 funded grant applications written by Vanderbilt and Meharry investigators.  The majority are R01s, but they also have examples of all possible types of K (K01, K08, K23, etc., as well as K24 mentoring awards), R61s, R03s, R21s, NIH Loan Repayment Program applications, NIH diversity supplements, VA Merit, PCORI, and U01 grants.

**Edge for scholars manuscript sprint**

A manuscript sprint harnesses the power of peer accountability and review to get a manuscript from zero to out the door in 6-8 weeks.

**Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (VICTR)**

**VICTR Studios**

* **Design Studio** will assist investigators with developing improved research protocols that take advantage of the breadth of study design options available to address the specific research hypotheses. Expertise in evaluating commercial opportunities for new intellectual property available when applicable.
* **Grant Review Studio** offers a critical review of the research strategy and overall grantsmanship to enhance the chance of funding. More specifically, this focused studio will examine the scope of the specific aims, the background and significance, the preliminary studies, and the research design/methods.
* **Hypothesis Generation Studio** will assist investigators with generating clear, concise, meaningful, and innovative research questions and hypotheses that ultimately lead to funded, executed and productive projects.
* **Implementation Studio** will assist investigators with executing and monitoring research projects that adhere to the best standards in research methods.
* **Manuscript Studio** offers critical review of the draft manuscript to enhance the chance of publication in the preferred journal. This focused studio helps target appropriate journals for publication and assists the researcher in presenting the data in the most compelling manner.
* **Specific Aims Studio**offers critical review of the Specific Aims to answer the following questions: 1.) Is there a clear over-arching hypothesis to the grant?  2.) Do the specific aims represent testable hypotheses that develop logically from the main focus of the grant? 3) Are the aims feasible or over ambitious? 4) Are the aims interdependent/interconnected? 5) Are they mechanistic or descriptive?  The goal is to provide a solid foundation on which the investigator can develop a strong research proposal.

**Women on Track**

The overall mission of “Women on Track” is three-fold: To promote the retention and advancement of tenure track women faculty in medical science; to provide mentorship, support, and career education for junior faculty women; to construct a framework from which to attract and retain talented women from the house staff and post-doctoral levels of our organization.

https://www.vumc.org/women-on-track/welcome

**Mid-Career Skills Building Program**

The Mid-Career Skills Building Program (MSBP) is a year-long, professional development program for Associate Professors at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. The program allows participants to engage in self-reflection, networking, and education in the realms associated with faculty life at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

**Mid-Career Leadership Development Program**

This program targets Associate Professors who show exceptional promise as future leaders and is by nomination only. The program provides the foundation for success of selected Associate Professors exhibiting leadership abilities. The program engages distinguished faculty members from the Owen School of Management, senior School of Medicine leaders, and selected leaders from regional and national Academic Medical Associations. Topics in this year-long program include: Development Planning, Being an Effective Team Leader, Management, Conflict Management Styles, Strategic Planning, Finance and Budgeting Fundamentals, Graceful Self-Promotion, Academic Medical Centers as Organizations, Strategic Plan Presentations.

<https://www.vumc.org/faculty/mid-career-leadership-development-program>

**Chancellor’s Faculty Fellows**

On a competitive basis, the Provost’s Office will award tenured associate professors the title of Chancellor Faculty Fellow. The designation will include funding of $40K a year for two fiscal years. Other resources available to the Fellow will remain in place and be budgeted separately. The funds are designed to support the professional development of the awardee. As part of this award, the Chancellor Faculty Fellows will be expected to attend at least four CFF events each academic year. Events may include: dinner with the Board of Trust, lunches with university leaders, and workshops. The events will allow them to share academic interests and expertise, aimed at building interdisciplinary connections and fostering a broader intellectual community.

**Faculty development website**

https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/basic-sciences/for-faculty/faculty-development/

**https://edgeforscholars.org**

“Edge for Scholars is a space for candid discussions about life in academics”