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Contact: Travis Brickey
Director of Marketing & Communications
Academy for Academic Leadership (AAL)
404-350-2098
tbrickey@aalgroup.org
www.AALgroup.org

Academic Faculty Advance Careers with Online, Interprofessional Program

Atlanta, GA – The Academy for Academic Leadership (AAL), an international consulting and professional development organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, held the 2016 Compass Program for Academic Advancement over a five-week period beginning with an orientation on September 1 and concluding on September 29, 2016. Nearly 60 early and mid-career academic faculty from U.S. institutions and abroad attended this interprofessional online course.

“The Compass Program is hosted by a cadre of experienced leaders in health professions education,” explains Randy Danielsen, Ph.D., PA, DFAAPA, Professor and Dean of the Arizona School of Health Sciences at A.T. Still University and AAL Senior Consultant. “The program provides a safe place for new faculty or those who want to move into academia, enabling them to discuss important scholarly activities.”

Launched in 2012, AAL’s Compass Program is designed to provide participants with a better understanding of the culture of higher education. In 2015, AAL converted the program to a distance learning approach as a convenient and cost affordable way for academic faculty to earn continuing education credits, collaborate across disciplinary lines, and promote the exchange of ideas and experiences to help improve interprofessional cooperation.

“What’s exciting about being involved with the Compass Program for Academic Advancement is the opportunity to share insights which would have been useful during my early academic career,” said Gayle Brazeau, Ph.D., Professor and Dean of University of New England College of Pharmacy and AAL Senior Consultant. “It is a dynamic environment where everyone is learning from each other, all while using the online platform which is interactive and easy to navigate.”

The orientation plus four weekly sessions are presented live and recorded, with assignments meant to enable each participant so that they may apply the lessons to their own projects and exchange interprofessional feedback with others. A sampling of topics discussed on the 2016 curriculum included:

- Creating an educational research niche
- Reasons for rejection of manuscripts
- Strategies for finding sources of funding
- Key components of grant applications
- Strategies to maximize scores with grant reviewers
- Understanding the culture of higher education
- Work-life balance and coping with academic pressures
- Function, structure, and content of an academic portfolio

“The Compass Program is specifically designed to help early to mid-career faculty master a variety of skills outside the classroom or clinic,” said N. Karl Haden, Ph.D., AAL President. “The skills learned in this program will benefit the participants for a lifetime as they strive for career advancement. The uniqueness of the Compass Program includes quality online instruction, the ability to collaborate interprofessionally, and the opportunity to focus on academic skills rarely taught on a formal basis.”

“This program offered by AAL provides an excellent foundation for the participant to begin developing a plan for their academic career path,” said Compass Program participant Leslie Smithey, DDS, MPH, New York University College of Dentistry. “In many respects, the Compass Program is a catalyst for self-reflection and helped me put into perspective what is important in my career.”

The 2017 Compass Program will kick off with its online orientation on August 31, 2017. The four live 90-minute course modules are scheduled for September 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2017. To learn more or to register for the 2017 Compass Program, visit AALgroup.org/compass.

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About the Academy for Academic Leadership

For more than a decade, the Academy for Academic Leadership (AAL) has been dedicated to advancing people and institutions through professional development and consulting services. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, AAL provides customized professional development and consulting services for academic healthcare executives, educators, practitioners, institutions, and associations. AAL activities include leadership development, coaching, strategic planning, change management, team building, and curriculum development. For more information about AAL’s consulting services or professional development programs, please visit AALgroup.org.