

Gender Equity Workshop
Breakout Session 2: Striving to balance work and family issues.
Notes from Group 4, Scribe, Barry Andrews

Some women (and men) choose non-tenure track academic options, e.g., research scientist, instructor, as a means to balance work/life issues.

1. Could we encourage a path from these to tenure track positions?

This change could be encouraged but should not be forced against the will of the individual. In general, the improved job stability of the tenured position will be more important to a younger faculty member than to one that has been at the institution for an extended time period. A non-tenure track faculty member could be encouraged to work to build accomplishments that could eventually count towards tenure. This approach would minimize the anxiety associated with not making the time limit normally imposed for gaining tenure.

2. Could we encourage women in industry to consider moves to tenure track positions?

Success may be tied to the ability to overcome the perception that one cannot separate work and life issues at a university. Some of the group felt there was a better perceived separation between work and life issues in industry than at a university. The establishment of a good family friendly policy at the university may make the position more attractive.

3. What practices can we introduce into the operation of our departments to make them more family friendly?

Teaching/work schedules could be established with the child care (or parental care) requirements of the individual in mind. However, one must avoid penalizing employees who do not have care giving requirements by assigning undesirable schedules. Establish a structure for mentoring through an individual or circle of advisors. The mentoring should include family friendly matters. Be certain to convey university policy during an interview.

Breakout Session 2. Group 6.

Jerry Floro

Moderator: Peter Green

Scribe: Jerry Floro

Priscilla Nelson

Angus Rockett

Bob Cammaratta

Molly

Judith Yang

Tenure: can we mitigate the intense pressure that junior faculty feel that will drive them to make huge sacrifices, e.g., family, in order to get tenure?

Establish trust in the tenure process – it's fairness, consistency and collegiality. Ensure that senior faculty's role is to promote success amongst junior faculty rather than punishing failure.

Recognize that tenure is a long process that begins from the start of a junior faculty's career at an academic institution..

Establish clear, written policies for the tenure evaluation process expectations, metrics, family leave, modified duties, etc. Chairs should exercise zero tolerance towards inappropriate behavior on the part of senior faculty during the evaluation process.

Provide training for department chairs and faculty on proper evaluation methods, criteria, and make sure training has components specifically addressing gender bias and family issues.

Provide dedicated mentorship from the beginning of the tenure process. Should family issues arise, focus on planning to minimize gaps in research progress.

Make teaching / service relief a mandated right for both female and male faculty who become primary caregivers. Use this to mitigate interruptions in research progress.

Session 2. Group 7.

Robert Hull

Performance Reviews: *Less sympathetic to male than female partner taking leave.* How do you handle statistics of effect of leave of absence – *tenure decision on integrated body of work rather than rate / year.* Clear / consistent modified duty policy.

Gaps in publication record not viewed as primary concern for typical leave of absence. Good mentoring of grad studs would help continuity. More of an issue external applications than internal promotions? Again selection criteria would help.

Opportunity to explain publication gaps on funding applications.

P&T system can adapt, but often don't, especially when tenure rates are low. *E.g. National Academy Policy / Guidelines: family friendly standards on ads.*

Policies clear, accessible and consistent. Expectation of faculty to attend workshops / training etc. Considerate of timing of meetings etc. *Guidelines for bringing children into workplace.*

Realistic expectations for performance / tenure consistent with a reasonable work-life balance.

Session 2. Group 8.

Subhash Mahajan

#1: What are the costs.....?

Missed out on family activities; chairs should pay attention to the Faculty needs in scheduling classes and meetings.

#2: What are the benefits?

Few critical constraints; freedom of action; competence of colleagues and likeability.

#3: How has this changed.....?

Reduced funding per faculty member; high expectations; communication demands; less support staff for faculty members.

4: Under what conditions.....?

Creative; has a lot of initiative; leadership qualities; also share pros and cons with her or him.

#5: Are our family-friendly

Yes. They are well accepted by the administrators and the faculty.

#6: If the policies are effective

Yes; transparency and equitable enforcement.

#7: Does their use.....?

Do not think so; data are scanty; do not get penalized in industry; pick up the trajectory where you left.

#8: Are they available.....?

Available to both; used mostly by women;

#9: Are part-time.....?

Part-time tenure track positions are available at Ohio State University; ten years for tenure; ASU does not have this policy;

I hope the above answers suffice. If you have any questions, please let me know.

S. Mahajan