Retaining Postdoc Women Through Effective Postdoctoral Policies

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URI ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Program Components

Recruitment
- Faculty Fellows Program
- Supplemental Start-up Funding
- Best Search Practices Training

Faculty Development
- Incentive “mini-grant” Fund
- Topical Lunches
- Career Workshops
- Mentoring Program

Work-Life Initiatives
- Parental Leave Policy
- Dual Career Hiring Program
- Lactation Policy and Program
- Creation of a Work-Life Standing Committee
Evaluation

- Academic Work Environment Survey (pre and post)
- Benchmark Data Collection
- Program Evaluation
- Dissemination

Climate Change

- Internal Advisory Action Council
- Department Climate Workshops
- Public Events, Workshops, Literature, Manuals, etc.
- Chairs’ Discussion Forum
- Integrated Theoretical Model for Climate Change
How does change occur? The traditional model:

- **Top Down**
  - (Formal policy change, administrative leadership)

- **Bottom Up**
  - (Individual, grass roots)

Climate Change

*or*

“Institutional Transformation”
Work-Life Integration

responding to workers’ needs on and off the job

Family Leave
- Parental leave
- Elder care leave
- Sick-leave bank
- Care for other dependents

Dual Career Assistance
- partner placement
- regional network

Flexible Work Options
- full-time, modified duties
- Part-time options
- Job sharing
- Reasonable options for self-care, wellness, and personal commitments
- Tenure clock stops

Community Resources & Support
- Health & wellbeing
- Housing & relocation
- Community organizations
- Transitional financial support
- Networking & connections
- Advice & guidance

Child/Elder Care
- child/elder care facilities
- Resources for caregivers
- financial support during significant family transitions

Education & Awareness
- Policy review and development
- URI community education
  education about work-life integration
- Research and data collection

Lactation Program
- Lactation Policy
- Lactation sites across 3 campuses
- Information and Support
- RI Dept. of Health
Parental Leave at URI

History
2003: Lack of standard agreements petition for policy

PCOSW/ADVANCE collaboration

Business Case:
http://www.uri.edu/advance/work_life_support/general%20recommendations%20new.html

Philosophical Framework:
http://www.uri.edu/advance/work_life_support/parent_leave%20_philosophical%20framework.html
Presented to University President at formal meeting;

President took it to Board of Governors (BOG).

BOG brought it to bargaining table from the Administration
• eliminated resentment (nothing “given up”)
• made room for other inclusive work-life proposals

Modeled for other bargaining units advised on strategy
URI’s Parental Leave Policy
AAUP Policy as of July 2004

http://www.uri.edu/advance/work_life_support/parental_leave_policy.html

• 6 weeks of paid leave, independent of sick leave;
• Modified duties before or after can be negotiated;
• May be used in combination with sick leave.

Not perfect yet!
3-Level Structural Model

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Are administrative offices in support of adequate leave options for parents?

**INTERACTIONAL**
Do Chairs, HR, etc., offer information and help proactively? Does a *culture of coverage* exist among colleagues?

**INDIVIDUAL**
Are parents using the policy openly and without fear of negative repercussions? Do non-parents endorse the policy?
URI’s Dual Career Policy

History
URI acknowledges family-friendliness with Paid Parental Leave Policy: July 2004

The “March 30 Summit” at URI: 2005

ADVANCE Fellows dual-career needs: 2003 – 2005

Small study of dual-career issues on URI campus: 2004 - 2005
Creation of Dual Career Committee

Research best practices
Work with PCOSW
Work with AAEEO
Use Philosophical Framework
President’s Strategic Plan: inclusiveness & diversity

Draft policy
Present to Council of Deans
   Deans need it; but wary of Departments’ strategic hiring plans

Back-to-Drawing Board #1
Confronting Collective Bargaining issues

(URI has 9 unions; 3 categories of state workers)

“bumping” and seniority

*Back-to-Drawing Board #2: more rationale provided*

URI President withdraws support: wary of nepotism potential

AAUP wary of too much rationale re nepotism (a “red flag” to the BOG)
President wants AAUP to waive “grievability;;” AAUP says no;

President and Provost worried about “white male spouse” issue;

President and Provost protest that URI is different than other universities with successful dual career programs;

Back-to-Drawing Board #3
One more time!

Present a one-page summary: what this policy does, and what it doesn’t do;

President endorses policy statement with caveats;

Legal scrutiny, State Ethics Commission;

“Guidelines,” not “Policy”
Policy Statement
2007

“The University of Rhode Island acknowledges the importance of supporting dual-career partners in attracting and retaining a quality workforce, and in its long-range economic benefit to the University, and is committed to offering placement advice and assistance whenever feasible and appropriate.”

http://www.uri.edu/advance/work_life_support/dual_career_partners.html

• policy statement and guidelines
• background information
• resources for dual-career couples
• dual-career handbook
Dual Career Guidelines

• Advertising

• Providing information

• Definition of Domestic Partner

• Responding to a request

• Accommodation strategies
Summary: Strategies for Creating and Implementing Family-Friendly Policies and Programs

**Research**
Best practices

**Rationale**

a) *Business Case* (recruitment and retention)

b) *Philosophical Framework*

**Use theory**

Embed policy in three-level model of institutional transformation
Patience
Two steps forward; one step back;
Downtime is useful as cooling off

Work with known entities and committees

Be inclusive

Tie to university’s strategic plan

Plan for implementation

Educate
Information and Training is essential