

# **FACULTY RETENTION TOOLKIT**

**for the College of Engineering and  
the College of Arts & Sciences**

**ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change**

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## Executive Summary

This toolkit was written to assist Department Chairs in retaining their faculty across all ranks. These best practices should be applied to all faculty, not just the stars of a department. Retention efforts, when applied equitably to all faculty, can improve the general climate for everyone and can lead to better productivity and greater satisfaction for all faculty. Faculty retention is critical to the health of a University department both for morale reasons and also for economic reasons, as faculty replacement costs tend to be much higher than retention costs.

This document addresses nine key areas which can impact faculty retention. These practices help all faculty and are particularly important to women and underutilized minorities. This executive summary includes nine recommendations to department chairs. Details of how to implement these recommendations can be found later in this document.

1. Systematically monitor decisions to eliminate unintentional bias and create opportunities for all faculty.
2. Encourage transparency in operations, sharing information equitably with all faculty.
3. Foster a supportive environment. While this support is critical for pre-tenure and underrepresented faculty, all faculty benefit from a supportive environment.
4. Recognize important faculty contributions in all areas including teaching, research, service, and creative activities.
5. Utilize a variety of resources (salary adjustments, chaired professorships, reduced loads, leaves, bridge money, research support, mentors, etc.) to recruit and retain faculty. Resources decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis.
6. Recruit and support diverse faculty, recognizing that excellence can be achieved in many areas. Work with departments and college Promotion and Tenure committees to value diverse career paths.
7. Offer opportunities for faculty professional development, collaboration and networking.
8. Advocate flexible and accommodating policies and practices that can improve the experience of faculty and help with retention.
9. Gather information from faculty through individual conversations, faculty focus groups, department chairs and deans, and exit interviews with faculty who are leaving UW to identify factors in retention. Identify solutions to remove these barriers.

## Best Practices for Faculty Retention

A number of often overlapping practices, outlined below, can help retain productive faculty. This toolkit advocates proactive, thoughtful measures which can have great impact on faculty satisfaction. Specific areas of focus include

1. Monitoring the Health and Welfare of Departments
2. Transparency in Operations Including Fair and Open Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
3. Creating a Welcoming Department Climate
4. Mentoring
5. Valuing Diversity in the Department
6. Supporting Career Development of Pre-tenure Faculty
7. Encouraging Mid-Career Professional Development
8. Faculty Development Programs, Benefits, and Resources
9. Flexible and Accommodating Policies and Practices

### 1. Monitoring the Health and Welfare of Departments

Avoiding blatant disparities in resources and salary can play a key role in faculty retention. Regularly reviewing salary-levels, start-up packages, merit raises, allocation of office and lab space, committee assignments, and awards, recognition, and leadership opportunities at a department level will help remove disparities and ensure all faculty, and in particular women and underutilized minorities, are appropriately afforded the same benefits and resources as others. In contrast to systematic, carefully reviewed decision-making processes, ad hoc decision-making processes rely too heavily on intuition or consider only one opinion and can lead to unintentional (and potentially systematic) bias. The groundbreaking MIT report [\*A Study on the Status of Women Faculty in Science at MIT\*](#) offered concrete evidence that such unintentional, systematic bias can and does occur, even at the most prestigious universities, when ad hoc processes are used. If disparities are discovered, the administration should address them and work to correct them as soon as possible.

#### REGULAR STATE-OF-THE-DEPARTMENT REVIEWS:

Departments already review individual faculty for annual salary raises. These reviews present an opportunity to make pro-active salary adjustments in cases of inequity. The reactive strategy of waiting for faculty to bring in outside offers both lowers morale and encourages faculty to seek external employment opportunities. Instead, by regularly reviewing department faculty salaries and making pro-active salary adjustments based on performance and salary equity issues, by allocating chaired professorships to outstanding current faculty, and by taking other approaches to recognizing and rewarding excellent work, a department chair may be able to significantly reduce the practice in his/her unit of seeking competitive offers.

### MONITORING WORKLOAD:

One tool for monitoring workload is a database for tracking committee assignments and committee chair appointments (both departmental and institutional levels). It could also maintain information about course assignments, space allocation, promotion decisions, merit raise decisions, and nominations for University and national awards. By consolidating all this information in one database, administrators can conveniently monitor equity. Moreover, the database can track faculty who are interested in leadership positions, thus facilitating the leadership appointment process.

### ANNUAL INDIVIDUAL FACULTY REVIEW MEETINGS:

Annual reviews are another opportunity to apply a more consistent process and assess the health and welfare of a department. While guidelines exist regarding the annual review (see the [Faculty Code](#) Section 24-57), additional topics that can be addressed at the annual review include:

- course and committee assignment requests
- a faculty member's general progress and merit review status
- the [faculty professional development opportunities document](#) which can initiate a professional development discussion
- feedback and the faculty member's personal assessment of the year, as well as plans for the upcoming year
- ideas from the faculty member to improve his/her experience and the department
- any events over the course of the past year that might necessitate a tenure clock extension

Faculty should be told about these questions before their annual review meetings so they have a chance to thoughtfully consider their responses.

## **2. Transparency in Operations Including Fair and Open Promotion and Tenure Guidelines**

Maintaining open communication is one of the keys to creating a welcoming and healthy department climate. A department chair should be honest and fair, and provide concrete, constructive feedback. Sharing relevant information and maintaining open communication help create a sense of trust. The more information people are given, the greater the likelihood that they will perceive the environment as open and the chair as someone they can trust. Moreover, making decisions openly and encouraging feedback from faculty help to create a sense of buy-in and ownership, which in turn leads to improved leadership in a department.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ROTATION:

Different committees have access to different information. By rotating committee membership and leadership, different people have the opportunity to gain exposure to various elements of departmental operations. While it is not advisable to frequently change responsibilities or assignments, it is important that all faculty have the opportunity to take on important positions. New people bring new ideas and perspectives and reduce stagnation. Moreover, some faculty may feel excluded or frustrated about not being given important roles.

## TRANSPARENCY IN THE PROMOTION AND TENURE PROCESS:

Transparency in operations should also be applied to the Promotion and Tenure (P&T) and salary increase processes. A common perception of the P&T process is that it is not always objective. To allay concerns about the process, departments could develop and maintain objective criteria for granting tenure and promotions and inform their faculty of these expectations. Although it is impossible to guarantee any element of the faculty reward system, the process should be openly communicated to prevent unnecessary anxiety. Chapters 24 and 25 of the [Faculty Code](#) describe the P&T process. This formal description should be supplemented with more informal information-sharing opportunities. For example, this information can be reinforced through promotion and tenure workshops such as the College of Arts and Sciences Promotion and Tenure workshops or at annual review meetings (see Chapter 24, Section 24-57 C.). Although there may be no single scale against which all cases are measured, it is still useful to share as much detail as possible. (e.g. UW College of Arts and Sciences [Promotion and Tenure Guideline](#).)

- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS:

The ADVANCE CIC has hired two senior faculty members as professional development consultants to help create transparency in the P&T process. These consultants, one from the College of Engineering and one from the College of Arts & Sciences, are available for confidential discussions on career paths with individual faculty members, particularly on how to best prepare the curriculum vitae during the period before promotion. Having previously served on their respective colleges' Promotion and Tenure committees, they have a unique perspective on the criteria for excellence that the College values. This program does not ensure promotion or career advancement but can help dispel some myths about the P&T process. (For additional information, please contact CIC Director [Eve Riskin](#).)

- ACCESS TO EVALUATION PROCESS:

Just as all faculty gain valuable information about what makes a good proposal by serving on proposal review boards, pre-tenure faculty could also benefit from serving on tenure portfolio preparation or annual review evaluation committees. (See, for example, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, [Principles for Best Practices](#) or the University of California, Irvine, [Faculty Recruitment Manual](#).) If committee membership is not feasible, the faculty could be allowed to observe the process, perhaps outside their department. As with proposal reviews, all committee discussion would remain confidential. It is best if pre-tenure faculty have this experience before their own portfolios are evaluated. By experiencing the process first-hand before being reviewed, pre-tenure faculty can truly see how tenure portfolios and/or annual review documents are evaluated. This kind of information will help pre-tenure faculty better understand expectations and strategize how to successfully present their work.

### **3. Creating a Welcoming Department Climate**

An unwelcoming organization is sometimes described as having a chilly climate. In a chilly climate individuals or groups feel unsupported, isolated, and/or invisible. They may also

experience a lack of respect, a sense of powerlessness, and/or discrimination (either intentional or unintentional). Research on chilly climates has emphasized disparate experiences relating to gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, and other types of differences. Improving the climate by addressing issues such as unintentional and unconscious biases against underutilized groups will benefit all members of the organization.

Professional isolation is a frequently cited reason for leaving an institution. For example, underrepresented faculty may be left out of the social networks that provide access to crucial information. Creating a sense of community may help reduce isolation, lead to productive research collaboration, and increase willingness to buy into the department decision-making process. While the responsibility for creating a sense of community is shared by everyone, the department chairs (and other senior leaders) often bear the bulk of it.

#### INFORMAL SOCIAL NETWORKS:

One way to create a sense of community is to help build informal social networks. Several ideas for building these networks include:

- regular department chair or senior faculty member hosted department social events such as monthly or weekly social hours
- department-sponsored quarterly lunches for subgroups of faculty members; groups could vary each quarter so that the faculty have a chance to interact with different groups of colleagues
- invitations to lunch by the department chair to groups of young faculty to “show them the ropes”
- monthly dinner outings of the assistant professors organized by one young faculty member (this should count as department service)

Building relationships in an informal capacity can lead to stronger relationships and better understanding when it comes to formal decision-making interactions.

#### ACTIVE APPRECIATION:

All people appreciate being valued. Faculty are no different. If faculty become disengaged from the department, it may be because they no longer feel part of the community. There are many small ways that department chairs can demonstrate active appreciation.

- checking-in with faculty in their offices rather than having them always come to the chair’s office; knowing that someone in a leadership role has a personal interest in him or her can make a big difference to a faculty member
- assuring faculty that their departmental and institutional service contributions are appreciated both in public and private forums (i.e., faculty meetings, one-on-one conversations)
- sending personalized messages can be very powerful morale boosters
- extending praise and attention beyond research accomplishments or funding successes; for example, annual reviews should be upbeat and constructive, focusing not only on what needs to be improved, but also recognizing positive contributions, including good mentoring and excellent student interaction

See <http://depts.washington.edu/asccp> for additional resources and ideas on improving department climate.

#### **4. Mentoring**

Mentoring is a powerful tool for creating a welcoming department climate, fostering a sense of community, and supporting faculty careers. A number of colleges and universities have made mentoring a central part of retention. Mentors are more than just people to talk to; they are people who actively advocate and create opportunities for their mentees. Mentors and mentoring programs cannot ensure career success, but can serve as useful resources for faculty at all ranks.

##### MULTIPLE MENTORS:

Faculty can benefit from multiple mentors at different levels, as each mentor may have different strengths. Unfortunately, faculty who are not well connected to the community, such as faculty from underrepresented fields or backgrounds, may not receive mentoring; as a result, each of these faculty must reinvent the wheel to discover existing resources and networks. A formal mentoring program can aid career development at all faculty levels, but is particularly important for pre-tenure faculty. Some examples of what mentors do include

- create bridges for their mentees and connect them to the community
- provide feedback on papers, proposals (such as NSF CAREER proposals), or teaching
- help navigate the organizational structure and politics
- serve as a sounding board
- collaborate on projects of mutual interest

Well-mentored faculty will be outstanding contributors to the department and have higher levels of satisfaction. Finally, it is worth pointing out that mentoring goes both ways and the senior mentor is also likely to benefit from collaboration with the mentee.

##### AVOIDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

A person may feel a conflict of interest when mentored by people in his or her own department, particularly if the mentor is part of the evaluation process (i.e. P&T committee). One way to alleviate this conflict of interest is to match new faculty with retired, but still research-active, faculty mentors (implemented at Portland State University). Deans or department chairs could recruit these faculty members to serve as mentors. Because retired faculty are no longer part of the promotion and tenure process, pre-tenure faculty may feel safer confiding in them.



## **5. Valuing Diversity in the Department**

Not all faculty fit the traditional model of the professor, but they may have different strengths and contribute to the department in a variety of ways. Some faculty may engage in non-traditional approaches to the field. Departments should seek to appreciate diversity in their faculty. Such nontraditional paths can (and should) also be considered as paths towards excellence.

Departments should acknowledge that excellence can be reflected in different arenas. By using more encompassing criteria for excellence that more fully document, recognize, and reward the scholarship of teaching, professional service, outreach, and non-traditional approaches to research, departments can take a more active stance on valuing diversity. In all cases, the expectation remains that the faculty are doing outstanding work and are good citizens. Encouraging a balance of values in academia between traditional and nontraditional faculty work will ultimately strengthen the department.

Non-traditional ways of working, such as part-time appointments and nontraditional funding sources, should also be recognized. Departments should openly discuss how these alternative models will be evaluated. Valuing alternative contributions is one way to help retain faculty who are doing outstanding work but may be pursuing their path in a non-traditional manner that is not traditionally valued.

## **6. Supporting Career Development of Pre-tenure Faculty**

New faculty and pre-tenure faculty may need extra attention with respect to retention. Issues facing new faculty include joining a new academic community, establishing their research and teaching activities, identifying resources, and navigating the new institution. Chairs should recognize that new faculty are in a new department, university, and city. New faculty may feel isolated or disconnected from the new academic community. This feeling is likely in stark contrast to the warm, social welcome they generally experienced on their interview visits. Efforts should be made to help maintain this type of community connection with new faculty once they arrive on campus.

### CONNECTING TO A NEW COMMUNITY:

There are many ways to help new faculty connect with their new community. College and university orientations are a good starting point. Such orientations offer a chance for new faculty to interact and become acquainted with resources on campus. Faculty may also benefit from a department level orientation that could be done on an informal basis. A general resources webpage or handout is another effective orientation tool. (See for example, a mock version of the [UW Computer Science and Engineering Guide for New Faculty](#). Please note some links will not work because they are password protected.)

Once the orientation stage is completed, new and pre-tenured faculty will still benefit from coordinated efforts to bring them into the department, college, and university community. The suggestions discussed in Section 3 are particularly applicable to new faculty.

### MENTORS:

Mentors are another great resource. Mentors can introduce new faculty to their networks and might invite pre-tenure faculty to collaborate with them. Mentors can also advocate for the pre-tenure faculty members, offering advice when necessary. New faculty can benefit from multiple mentors (at different ranks, from different departments, etc.) as each mentor can offer a different perspective.

### WORKLOAD AND SUCCESS:

Workload balance is critical to the success of pre-tenure faculty. They must be given the opportunity to succeed; this opportunity is directly linked to startup resources they are afforded at hiring time. (See the [faculty recruitment toolkit](#) for some ideas regarding recruitment.) Several additional ideas to support pre-tenure faculty include the following:

- Assigning pre-tenure faculty classes that will help them integrate into the department. At the beginning of their appointment, they should not be assigned large service courses or the most unpopular course in the curriculum. Rather, they should be assigned classes in their area, enabling them to recruit students to their research while establishing their own teaching style.
- Offering pre-tenure faculty reduced teaching loads both at the start of their career and again after they have successfully received their three-year contract renewal. (See, for example, the pre-tenure [faculty development program](#) in the College of Arts and Sciences.) Receiving a course buyout allows the pre-tenure faculty member more time and resources to focus on their research and grant writing.
- Allowing new faculty to repeat courses so they can minimize the course preparation time.
- Encouraging senior faculty to share course materials (syllabi, homework sets, lecture notes, etc.) so new faculty do not have to reinvent courses from scratch.
- Limiting service responsibilities for new faculty to afford more time for research and teaching.

### INFORMATION ACCESS:

In addition to the promotion and tenure process, new faculty need information about the resources on campus and the various university policies. While faculty orientation is a starting point, the programs often contain a lot of information that is presented quickly (“too much, too soon”). After new faculty have had time to settle into their new positions, they may have additional questions. Taking pre-tenure faculty to lunch and informally discussing university policies and procedures is a great follow up to a formal orientation program. Hosting get-togethers with pre-tenure faculty and key resource people from around campus is another way to help develop the new faculty members’ awareness of campus resources.

### VISIBILITY:

To help new faculty establish their reputations, department chairs should identify ways in which pre-tenure faculty can increase their research exposure. Some ways for department chairs to promote external visibility for pre-tenure faculty include:

- involve them in group proposals to broaden research contacts and collaboration as well as help them identify possible research extensions

- provide opportunities to attend national meetings to present their research and network with colleagues; departments should provide travel funds to pre-tenure faculty as part of the startup package
- encourage them to go on “tenure tours” to gain visibility near promotion and tenure time
- nominate them for university and national awards
- encourage them to write survey or review papers
- help them establish research relationships outside the home university.

Additional tips for supporting pre-tenure faculty can be found at [http://www.aahe.org/fftr/principles\\_brochure2.htm](http://www.aahe.org/fftr/principles_brochure2.htm).

## **7. Encouraging Mid-Career Professional Development**

Faculty at all levels appreciate being recognized for their contributions. In addition to the active appreciation ideas listed in Section 3, department chairs are also encouraged to actively nominate their faculty for awards and recognition. National and university awards are excellent professional development opportunities. Department chairs should work closely with all their faculty to identify potential opportunities and to create strong nomination packets.

Sometimes faculty are unsuccessful at making the mid-level transition from associate to full professor. In some instances, the faculty member has changed focus to an area that is no longer part of the strategic direction of the department. More often, though, faculty become “stuck” at mid-level. Possible indicators include little or no research, few or no publications, no graduated Ph.D. students and none in the pipeline, poor teaching ratings, and/or a lack of research funding. Perhaps the field has changed or external funding is no longer available and the faculty is unable to transition to a new area, or perhaps s/he has simply become discouraged. Frequently, faculty in these positions can identify a specific moment that caused them to stop being productive. Such moments are often identified as times when they felt they were no longer being valued, for example, when being denied a sabbatical or promotion; being passed up for a leadership opportunity; or discovering that their accomplishments were ignored by their colleagues and/or chair. (Ironically, passing up people at a time when they wish to become more involved with the institution may ultimately cause them to become substantially less involved.)

This transition problem should be viewed as a career development issue rather than a promotion issue. Unfortunately, there are not many mid-career faculty development programs. However, there are steps that department chairs can take to help.

Most of the ideas for helping these faculty relate to sharing resources and giving them some extra attention. Sharing something like the [Faculty Professional Development Opportunities](#) document is one way to begin a conversation. A stalled faculty member may not be thinking broadly about all these different opportunities.

### **ADDRESS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EARLY AND OFTEN:**

The best time to address transitioning from associate to full professor is immediately upon promotion from assistant to associate professor. The faculty member has just received a strong vote of confidence in their abilities and their value to the department. At this time, they may be more receptive to constructive suggestions and to career

development planning. Pro-actively helping faculty with their career development can lead to great pay-offs in the long-term.

#### ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY:

To encourage creativity, a department may need to make some small, but worthwhile investments in a faculty's career. Providing some bridge money or seed money (See Transitional Support Program in Section 9) to encourage risk can give people an opportunity to transform their focus. Sometimes a small investment, such as seed money, can reap larger rewards later as the stalled faculty member now has some resources to invest. Stalled faculty may need to be taught how to be competitive with organizations other than their standard funding agencies. For example, the Associate Dean for New Initiatives in the College of Engineering offers a workshop on writing proposals for the National Institutes of Health, a nontraditional funding source for most engineering faculty. Department chairs could consider giving stalled faculty an internal sabbatical. Having more time may be all that they need to boost their research efforts. Or, the faculty may wish to focus temporarily on a new area such as education or leadership development. If they become energized in one area, they often can transfer that energy to their research interests. Success begets success.

#### MENTOR:

Mid-career faculty also need mentoring. A department chair might work with these faculty on the presentation of their ideas, serving as a sounding board or offering extra guidance on communicating ideas. Matching the stalled faculty with research-active faculty both within and outside of the department creates another mentoring forum. People who may have been previously stalled and now are experiencing success may also be good mentors. For example, they may have failed at a granting agency several times before finding multiple successes at the very same agency. Talking with someone who has overcome a similar challenge can be inspiring. By finding ways to help create opportunities to achieve some level of success, chairs can help these faculty become productive (and satisfied) again.

## **8. Faculty Development Programs, Benefits, and Resources**

Formal faculty development programs introduce new faculty to the benefits and resources available on campus and provide a venue in which to address career development for all faculty. The University of Washington has formal university-wide faculty development programs; and individual colleges, such as the College of Arts & Sciences and the College of Engineering, offer their own orientation and faculty development programs. These programs help connect the faculty to their university community and may renew and invigorate the faculty, regardless of level.

#### **TARGETED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:**

- The College of Arts & Sciences conducts promotion and tenure workshops annually. The workshop is offered to assistant professors who have received their contract renewal, department chairs, and deans. In addition to discussing research, teaching and service expectations, the workshop outlines factors that influence the assessment of the work

quality (see their [Promotion and Tenure Guideline](#)). For new department chairs, the College conducts a two-day orientation. This workshop covers personnel, faculty career management and development, faculty code, budget, and department affairs management.

- The College of Engineering offers several workshops for faculty. The half-day new faculty workshop provides an overview of College resources for new faculty and includes tips for success in balancing teaching, research, and service. The College also offers several research-focused workshops. Each year the CAREER workshop, offered to eligible faculty, gives tips on applying for the NSF CAREER award. An annual grant-writing workshop provides guidance on writing successful proposals (both government and industry), details the mechanics of the grant submission process, and gives tips on interdisciplinary grant writing and information regarding intellectual property. A workshop on research group management teaches faculty how to manage a large research group, including organizing the work; creating an organizational plan and managing the lab; and supervising technical, professional and classified staff. Lastly, each year the Dean of Engineering hosts a workshop on “Navigating the Tenure Track” which is offered to all pre-tenure faculty.
- Under the ADVANCE program, cross-department half-day leadership development workshops have been offered to department chairs in the 19 ADVANCE departments (science, mathematics, and engineering). The Chairs are encouraged to invite an Emerging Leader to each workshop so that more people can be exposed to the issues academic leaders face. Workshop topics focus on issues such as navigating dual career hire situations, transitioning from associate to full professors, dealing with difficult people, etc. Besides offering leadership training, these workshops provide a forum for department chairs from different colleges to interact.

In addition to these College programs, the University offers a University-wide orientation program for new faculty. The [Faculty Fellows Program](#) orients new faculty to the UW, provides a forum to meet other new faculty as well as senior faculty, and assists them in improving their teaching skills and preparing their teaching portfolios. Two additional campus teaching resources include the [Center for Instructional Development and Research](#), which provides help with the improvement and assessment of teaching and learning, and the [Center for Engineering Learning and Teaching](#), a national leader in engineering education research that provides engineering faculty professional development assistance in the area of pedagogical innovation.

## **9. Flexible and Accommodating Policies and Practices**

The University of Washington is committed to supporting the work-life balance of its faculty and received a 2006 Alfred P. Sloan award for Faculty Career Flexibility. The UW has developed several policies and practices which department chairs will find useful for faculty productivity and retention. Described below are several key policies and practices.

### **DUAL CAREER PARTNERS**

The number of dual career partners has increased substantially and is often a critical component to the hiring process. A dual career hire situation is one in which one partner has received an offer (or perhaps has made the short-list) at the institution and a suitable

career opportunity must be found for the other partner. Dual career situations can be excellent retention opportunities as people may appreciate a university's responsiveness to the needs of a dual career couple (also, it is usually a challenge to find good career opportunities for both partners).

In addition to the resources listed on the University of Washington's [Academic Human Resources Webpage](#), ADVANCE has generated [recommendations](#) for department chairs regarding dual career hires. The recommendations include strategies for dealing with some of the challenges of dual career hires.

Departments are also encouraged to include language in their job ads stating that the University of Washington has an active dual career hiring program and is responsive to the needs of its applicants. This statement encourages the applicant to not wait until the last minute to divulge that s/he has a partner who will need job placement assistance. With more time, the chances of finding a job for the partner are greatly increased.

### FAMILY LEAVE AND TENURE CLOCK EXTENSION

The UW has an official family leave and tenure clock extension policy that allows a faculty member to take a medical and/or family leave (such as leave surrounding the birth of a child). If a leave of six months or more is taken, that year automatically does not count towards mandatory tenure review. In the case that a faculty member did not take leave or did not take enough leave to trigger an automatic tenure clock extension, the faculty can request a one-year tenure extension any time prior to the year of the review.

This tenure clock extension policy recognizes that, under special circumstances, faculty may be significantly distracted from their research and academic capabilities. Unfortunately, many pre-tenure faculty are reluctant to use this policy, believing a bias or stigma exists. Faculty at all ranks should be educated on how to properly evaluate faculty who have taken family and/or medical leave. The chairs must assure faculty that the time on leave will not be unfairly evaluated. The department chair and other levels of leadership should try to improve communication about this policy and investigate why people are reluctant to use it. By taking a leave, faculty should be better able to manage the extra demands on their time and will be better positioned to successfully contribute to their university responsibilities when they return.

Lastly, faculty (particularly pre-tenure faculty) may find that professional goals compete with personal goals. Nowhere is this competition more prevalent than with the prospects of raising a family. Given that the tenure clock generally coincides with the biological clock, women faculty face difficult timing decisions regarding this balance. To that end, departments should seek to offer supportive solutions to help faculty find balance between their personal and professional lives. The best practices highlighted in the following paragraph not only benefits new mothers, but also benefits new fathers or other faculty who are experiencing major life transitions.

#### FAMILY LEAVE BEST PRACTICES:

Many of these practices would hold for adoptive parents as well, and could be applied to new fathers. Often when women in SEM departments become pregnant, there is no precedent for a family leave package in their departments. Department chairs should help guide the negotiation for leave. Some examples of best family leave practices include:

- offering course release in both the quarter the baby is due (bearing in mind that older women tend to have high-risk pregnancies) and the following quarter. (At the UW, leave paid by the state is not available in the summer. Paid leave is available to women as disability leave associated with childbirth and recovery. Unpaid leave is available to men and women for the purpose of care of newly born or adopted children.)
- facilitating opportunities for the mother to continue nursing her child if she chooses
- creating funding resources which could be used to support salary, cost-share post-docs, etc.
- encouraging all faculty to be supportive (such as allowing infants to be brought to meetings and scheduling meetings not too early or late in the day to arrange for daycare drop-off and pickup)
- providing extra student teaching support for the first quarter the faculty teaches after returning from family leave
- working closely with the faculty member to determine course and committee assignments that may be more manageable during the quarter of her/his return

### ADVANCE'S TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

Although a university may have excellent leave policies, certain situations may require extra steps. Departments may choose to provide a course buyout or offer graduate research assistants, travel funds, and lab supplies to a faculty member in need of additional support. These reasonably low-priced options allow faculty members to strike a balance by allowing them to be more productive at work, while attending to their personal needs.

Department chairs should also remember that the University of Washington's ADVANCE Program offers a [Transitional Support Program \(TSP\)](#) for tenure-track faculty. The TSP is available for outstanding science, mathematics, and engineering faculty in the midst of major life transitions, such as the birth or adoption of a child, personal medical needs, family illness, and/or caring for an elderly parent. The TSP helps faculty as they deal with the difficult challenges of balancing career and personal life. Examples of support that the program provides include release time and funding for research personnel in a faculty member's lab. The TSP may also provide bridge money for outstanding faculty who need some funds to help restart a stalled program or change their research direction. The TSP complements tenure clock extension.

The Provost has agreed to expand the TSP program to faculty campus wide. The program is being managed by the ADVANCE staff in consultation with the Vice Provost. Information about the campus-wide TSP program can be found online at: [http://www.washington.edu/admin/acadpers/procedures/transitional\\_support.html](http://www.washington.edu/admin/acadpers/procedures/transitional_support.html).



The [Academic Human Resources website](#) also contains information on other UW policies and programs that assist with work-life balance, including other leave policies, eldercare, and childcare visit. Additional information about childcare and eldercare options is discussed at the [Work/Life website](#). Also, as part of the 2006 Alfred P. Sloan award for Faculty Career Flexibility, the UW created [Balance@UW](#), a comprehensive package of policies and programs designed to support UW faculty in balancing productive academic careers with satisfying personal lives.

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