

What We Have Learned So Far and Where Do We Go Next?

**Presentation to the
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What is the *AdvanceVT* Project?

- 5-year NSF grant to promote institutional change with the goal of increasing the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers
- Challenges recipient institutions to help rethink academic careers, policies, and practices
- Change initiatives at Virginia Tech across all colleges



Institution-specific data help drive the change efforts

- Annual reporting of NSF indicators
- Faculty climate survey (January 2005); to be repeated Fall 2007
- Focus groups (faculty, graduate students)
- Assessments of interventions, monitoring of policy usage & outcomes
- Interviews with new faculty cohort, dual career couples, other target groups
- Faculty departure data; exit surveys
- Child care needs assessment & utilization study
- COACHE survey, fall 2006, with 5 peer institution comparisons

Work-life balance is a critical issue for both men and women

- More than 50% of men and 75% of women faculty believe it is difficult to have a personal life and be promoted or earn tenure
- 41% of men and 51% of women have seriously considered leaving their job to achieve better balance between their personal and professional life
- These issues have an even bigger impact on women
- A faculty career is all consuming:
 - “I am feeling more and more that you sign on as a faculty member to work 24/7.”
 - “...the university creates a culture that encourages this behavior by not allowing time for anything else if you want to be successful.”

Dual career issues are important to Virginia Tech for both recruitment & retention

- 45% of women and 30% of men have seriously considered leaving to improve their partner's employment opportunities
- 61 dual career couples assisted during 2005-06 (55 new hires/offers and 6 retention cases)

Actions to improve work-life issues

- Revised the stop the clock policy
- Approved a policy on modified duties
- Established an office to assist dual career couples
- Converted lab school to day care facility; task force on child care about to release an RFP to increase local availability of childcare
- Disseminating new policies – see new brochure in packet

Women experience the climate at Virginia Tech very differently from men

- Less than 50% of women and more than 75% of men agree that the campus is free of intimidation, harassment, and discrimination
- Women are less likely than men to feel they “fit in”
- Only 25% of women, but 71% of men, believe there is accountability for sexist behavior
- There is also a large gap between whites and non-whites concerning perceptions of accountability for racist behavior
- 41% of women, but 78% of men, agree that faculty members are treated fairly regardless of their gender

Virginia Tech is less successful retaining tenure-track women faculty than men

- Women tenure-track faculty members leave at twice the rate of men
- Women are more likely than men to cite relations with co-workers, opportunities for social interaction, and harassment as factors influencing their decision to leave
- Women were also LESS likely than men to:
 - Feel they were treated with respect
 - Feel that they received fair treatment
 - Feel their work was valued in their department
 - Be recognized for their contributions in the department
 - Agree that their department was a good place to work

Strongest predictors of faculty job satisfaction are things we can change

Virginia Tech Work Environment

- Treated with respect
- Provided adequate opportunities to participate in governance
- Allowed free and open input

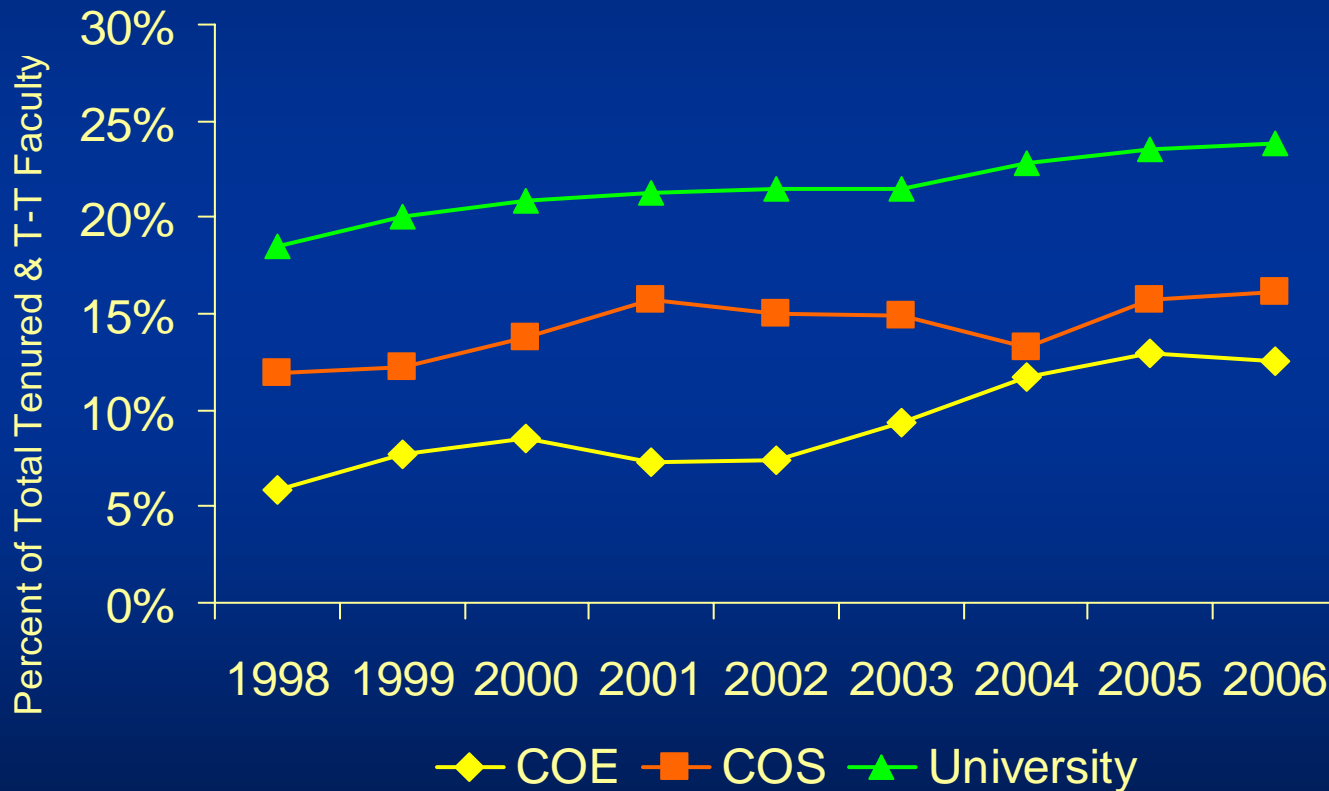
Departmental Administration

- Fair treatment by department administration
- Leadership of department can be trusted
- Department administration is approachable
- Department is well managed
- Free to express opinions

Strongest predictors of job satisfaction...

- **Collaboration**
 - Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues at Virginia Tech who share interests
 - Field of study is valued by colleagues in department
 - Collaboration is rewarded in department
 - Good relationships with co-workers

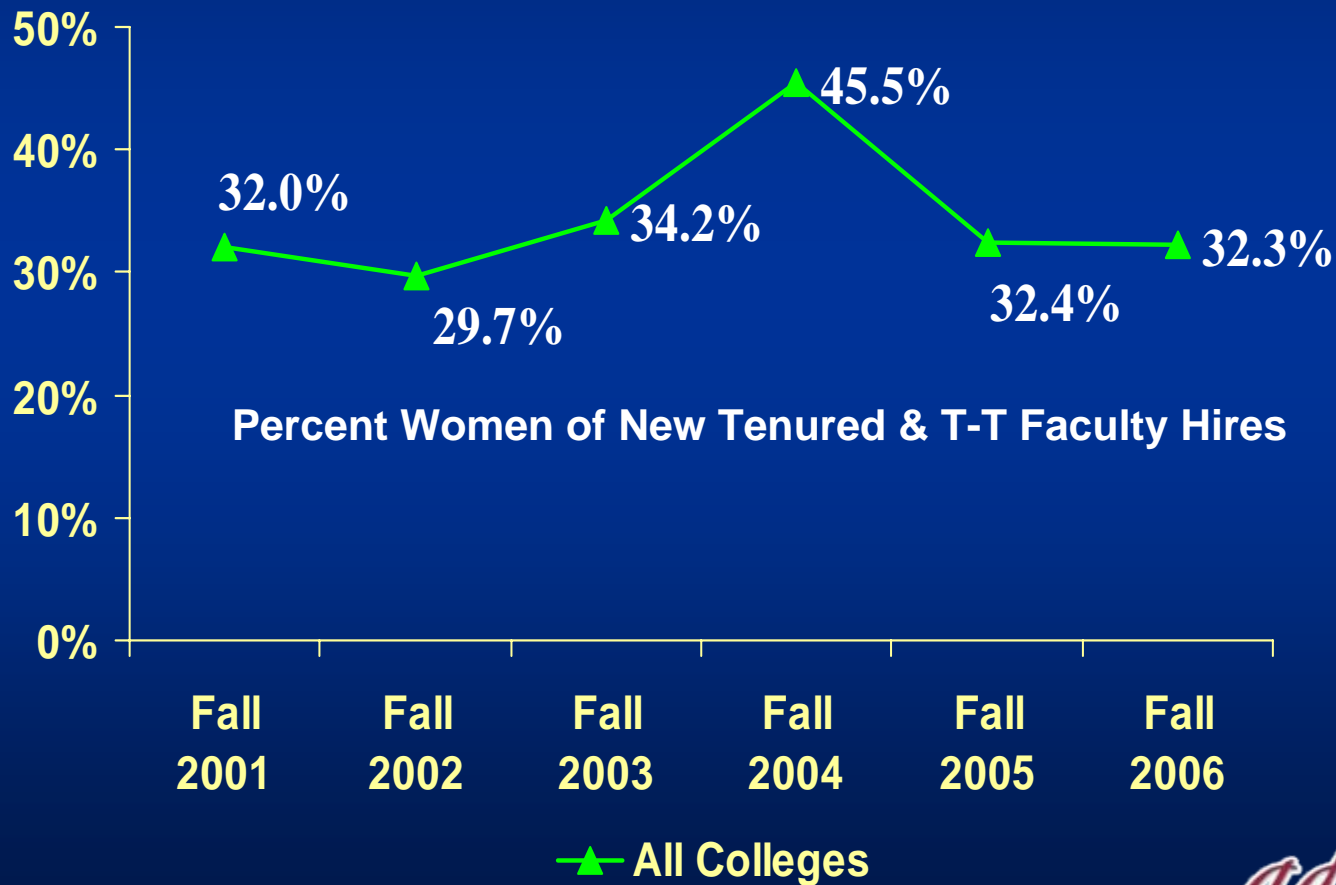
Profile of tenure-track faculty changing, but slowly



Progress, but slow

- In fall 2001, Virginia Tech had 303 women tenure-track faculty (21% of 1417); in fall 2006, 324 women (24% of 1360)
- After years of having about 65 women at the full professor rank (retirements and resignations equaled promotions), now have 78
- College of Engineering has made significant progress – from 13 women in 2001 (7.3%) to 39 women (13%) in 2006

Fall 2004 a hiring standout, but pattern remains consistently about 33% women while availability of women among Ph.D.s is 45% (all fields) and 39% in science & engineering disciplines



Current *AdvanceVT* and institutional initiatives

- **Leadership development**
 - Beth Grabau, Karen Thole, Beate Schmittmann, Valerie Hardcastle have moved into significant leadership roles
- **Participation in Harvard COACHE survey of untenured faculty**
 - Results & peer comparisons available late spring 2007
- **Design of repeat climate survey for fall 2007 and additional assessment projects**

Current *AdvanceVT* and institutional initiatives

- Continuation of pipeline and seed grant programs
- Part-time tenure track policy
- RFP to stimulate increase in local day care slots
- Department head development
- Interactive theater
- Task Force on Race & the Institution
- Diversity training

Current *AdvanceVT* and institutional initiatives

Special focus of this conference and efforts over next few years:

- Departmental climate
- Recruitment and support for searches
- Institutionalizing *AdvanceVT*



Questions?

Comments?