Faculty Work-Life Issues at Virginia Tech

October 24, 2005
Deans and Department Heads Meeting
Reports Related to Current Faculty

- **Work-Life Issues at Virginia Tech: Faculty Focus Group Report** (Joint Task Force, Commission on Faculty Affairs and AdvanceVT Policy Workgroup)
  - Conducted 5 focus groups, April 2005
  - 62 participants (26 M, 36 F)

- **AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey** (E. Creamer, AdvanceVT Assessment Team)
  - Surveyed all instructional and research faculty, February 2005
  - 816 Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents (599 M, 217 F)
Reports Related to Former Faculty

- **Faculty Exit Survey** (S. Willis-Walton, Center for Survey Research)
  - Sent to all faculty who departed, May 2002 - Dec. 2004 (excluding retirements, deaths, dismissals)
  - 49 Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents (23 M, 26 F)

- **Voluntary Departures Among Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty at VT: A Gender Perspective** (C. Amelink and P. Hyer, Provost’s Office)
  - BANNER data for all voluntary departures 1997-2004, excludes retirements, deaths, involuntary terminations
Faculty Focus Groups
April 2005
Question Posed to Faculty Focus Groups

What are the issues of work-life balance that have been, or are currently, concerns for you or for close colleagues?
Summary of Focus Group Findings

- Changing University mission
- Resource constraints
- Unclear direction from administration
- Lack of recognition, rewards, compensation
- All time is university time
- Lack of diversity and collegiality
- Lack of flexibility in tenure and promotion
- Lack of mentoring
- Consequences for family life and personal health
Changing University Mission – Resource Constraints

“There is a whole new mission with nothing to cover new responsibilities. There are insufficient resources for achieving Top 30 status yet the expectations are that we perform like one.”

“Faculty must work for money, resources, research, space… this leaves faculty feeling as though they cannot do any part of their job well…the Top 30 mentality makes matters worse.”
All Time is University Time

“I am feeling more and more that you sign on as a faculty member to work 24/7.”

“Right now I feel like everyone thinks they own my soul, I feel abused.”
Lack of Flexibility in Tenure and Promotion

“Expectations are built around men at this university who have stay-at-home wives…”

“I requested family leave after the birth of our child and my department head laughed in my face… I used vacation time so I could spend time with my child and I did the same with our second child.”
Lack of Flexibility in Tenure and Promotion

“I waited until post tenure to start a family and now it is too late—my biological clock stopped before my tenure clock did.”
Consequences for Family Life

“For some faculty…work is their life… My daughter best summed it up to her teacher when asked if she wanted to be a professor like her dad …, my daughter replied, “No, professors neglect their families.”
“Work becomes the faculty member’s life…they neglect family. It is an individual choice…but the university creates a culture that encourages this behavior by not allowing time for anything else if you want to be successful.”
2005 AdvanceVT
Faculty Work-Life Survey
# AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work-Life Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Total VT Population Sept. 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Caucasian</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Work-Life Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Total VT Population Sept. 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Life Sciences</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture and Urban Studies</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts and Human Sciences</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Work-Life Balance Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% Agree M</th>
<th>% Agree F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VT cares about the family/home life of its faculty</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty in my dept. respect responsibilities I have outside of work</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>59.0 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is difficult to have a personal life and be promoted/earn tenure</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>75.5 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My personal/family responsibilities have slowed my advancement</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>59.5 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional demands force me to make unreasonable compromises about personal/family responsibilities</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>55.1 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;

*Items significantly different by gender, p < .05*
Seriously Considered Leaving Current Job to Achieve Better Balance Between Personal and Professional Life*

Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;

*Items significantly different by gender, p < .05
Dual Career Issues: Employment Status of Spouse/Partner

- Not employed, n=199, 28%
- Employed, not at a college/univ, n=238, 33%
- Seeking an academic job, n=45, 6%
- Currently employed at VT, n=202, 28%
- Currently employed at other college/univ, n=32, 5%

Currently employed at VT, n=202, 28%
Dual Career Issues

Spouse/partner not employed (n=199) *:

- Males: 33%
- Females: 15%

*Item significantly different by gender, p<.05
Dual Career Issues

*Satisfied with partner's employment opportunities in region

*Seriously considered leaving to improve partner's employment opportunities

Includes combined responses of very and somewhat satisfied or strongly and somewhat agree

*Items significantly different by gender, p<.05
Dual Career Issues

Policies that facilitate the hiring of faculty spouses/partners strengthen the success of the university’s efforts to recruit the most highly qualified faculty:

- Science: 87%
- Natural Resources: 87%
- Business: 83%
- Engineering: 76%
- Agriculture and Life Sciences: 75%
- Liberal Arts and Human Sciences: 73%
- Architecture and Urban Studies: 63%
- Veterinary Medicine: 62%
## Stopping the Tenure Clock at VT
### 1996- July 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for stopping the clock:</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26 (36.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent care (ill family member, adoption of special needs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9 (12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children, paternity leave)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ext circum – Job (delays in setting up research lab/equipment;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change in college; change from extension appt, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ext circum – Personal (death of spouse or family members,</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divorce)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late initial appointment (initial appointment in late Nov/Dec</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but tenure clock started in Aug.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave without pay</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical reasons (stroke, cancer, back injuries/disability)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8 (11.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed degree late</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 (7.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in prior service credit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6 (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stopping the Tenure Clock

How supportive are faculty in your department of faculty who extend the tenure clock:

- Very Supportive, n=17, 34%
- Somewhat Supportive, n=18, 36%
- Not at all Supportive, n=3, 6%
- Don't Know, n=9, 18%

Virginia Tech
Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

Reported average number of hours spent on activities related to profession and family responsibilities, by gender:

- **Women, n=80**
  - With Children: 51 hours per week
  - Without Children: 38 hours per week

- **Men, n=203**
  - With Children: 52 hours per week
  - Without Children: 27 hours per week

- **Women, n=23**
  - With Children: 55 hours per week
  - Without Children: 26 hours per week

- **Men, n=161**
  - With Children: 54 hours per week
  - Without Children: 20 hours per week

Legend:
- Profession
- Family
Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

Interested in working part-time if benefits like health care were available:

- Strongly Agree:
  - Males: 16.6%
  - Females: 18.8%

- Somewhat Agree:
  - Males: 17.9%
  - Females: 22.4%
Climate Issues
2005 AdvanceVT Faculty Work-Life Survey and Faculty Exit Survey
Climate Issues: Perceptions by Gender

- Campus free of intimidation, harassment, discrimination
- Read/heard/seen offensive comments/materials in workplace
- Faculty treated fairly regardless of gender
- Faculty treated fairly regardless of sexual orientation
- There is accountability for sexist behavior
- Dept. head unlikely to intervene if sexist behavior occurred

Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;
*Items significantly different by gender, p ≤ .05
## Departmental Climate Issues

Includes combined responses of strong or somewhat agree

*Items significantly different by gender, p ≤ .05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AdvanceVT Survey n=816</th>
<th>Exit Survey n=49</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Treated with respect by faculty members in dept.</strong></td>
<td>% M Agree</td>
<td>% F Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>74.7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others in my dept. seem to know about policies/opportunities of which I am unaware</strong></td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>41.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt excluded from an informal network in my dept in which others seemed to know about policies or opportunities of which I was unaware</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I am (was) recognized for the contributions I make to the department</strong></td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likely to leave position at VT at some point in next two years:

- About one-third of both women and men respondents say they are very or somewhat likely to leave their position within two years.
- Gender differences are not significant on this item.
Voluntary, University Wide Departure Rates Among Tenured & Tenure-Track Faculty by Gender

*Sept. 30th census date used for each year to determine the total number of full-time faculty*
Voluntary Departure Rates Among Assistant Professors by Gender

*Sept. 30th census date used for each year to determine the total number of full-time Asst. Prof.
Current and New Initiatives
Work-Life Initiatives

- Dual Career Assistance
  - Guidelines on web; tracking data base
  - New Coordinator -- Beverlyn Samuels, 1-7748
- Stop-the-Clock: policy under revision (CFA)
  - Language adopted for external letters for P&T
  - Letter from Provost to deans/dept heads
- Modified Duties: policy in draft form
  (AdvanceVT policy workgroup then CFA)
Work-Life Initiatives

- Temporary Part-time Appointments (under consideration by CFA)
- Benefits for salaried part-time faculty
  - Retirement >50%
  - Full health care >80%
- Child care
  (Univ-wide child care task force, Linda Woodard, chair)
Climate-Related Initiatives

- Strengthening EO Office Capacity and Effectiveness
- University-wide on-line harassment prevention training
  (CALS pilot Oct, remaining areas beginning fall 2005, EO Office)
Climate-Related Initiatives

- Major new investments in Office of Multicultural Affairs
- New Director of Education and Training (Jane Ann Williams)
Climate-Related Initiatives

Policies Approved by the Board of Visitors:

- Principles of Community
- Revised Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Policy 5615 Campus and Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
Next Steps?

- Engaging the university community in reviewing the data, discussing the issues, and developing strategies to be implemented at all levels.

- Setting goals and making commitments as part of the revised strategic plan.