

Perceptions of the Promotion and Tenure Process Among Pre-Tenure Faculty: Results of the COACHE Survey

September 7, 2007

Mandatory Tenure Cases by Year

College	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
CALS	6	1	4	8	13	15	14
CAUS	3	1	3	7	5	8	6
POB	2	1	0	1	0	6	6
COE	11	5	16	16	18	19	12
LAHS	11	7	4	24	20	18	16
NR	3	0	2	6	4	4	4
COS	1	2	2	4	8	13	13
VM	0	1	4	3	3	2	3
VBI *	0	0	3	0	2	0	0
Total by Year	37	18	38	69	73	85	74
(but will be evaluated for tenure by relevant academic department)							

Focusing on Pre-Tenure Faculty

- The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey is conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Survey measures the institutional experiences and job satisfaction of full-time, pre-tenure faculty
- 221 tenure-track faculty hired at VT before Jan 2006 were surveyed in fall-spring 2006-07

COACHE Survey Overview

- Results provide:
 - Descriptive statistics and significant differences within institution by gender and race, by discipline, AND by college
 - Ranking compared to 5 selected peer institutions
 - Comparisons of mean scores to all 54 *university* participants in COACHE
 - overall, gender, race, and discipline

COACHE Survey Overview

- Survey questions focus on five major themes (number of items per theme):
 - Tenure (19)
 - Nature of Work (17)
 - Policies and Practices (22)
 - Climate, Culture, and Collegiality (10)
 - Global Satisfaction (5)

Selected Peer Institutions

Virginia Tech chose five peer institutions to compare survey results:

- Iowa State University
- Michigan State University
- North Carolina State University
- Ohio State University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Virginia Tech COACHE Response Rates

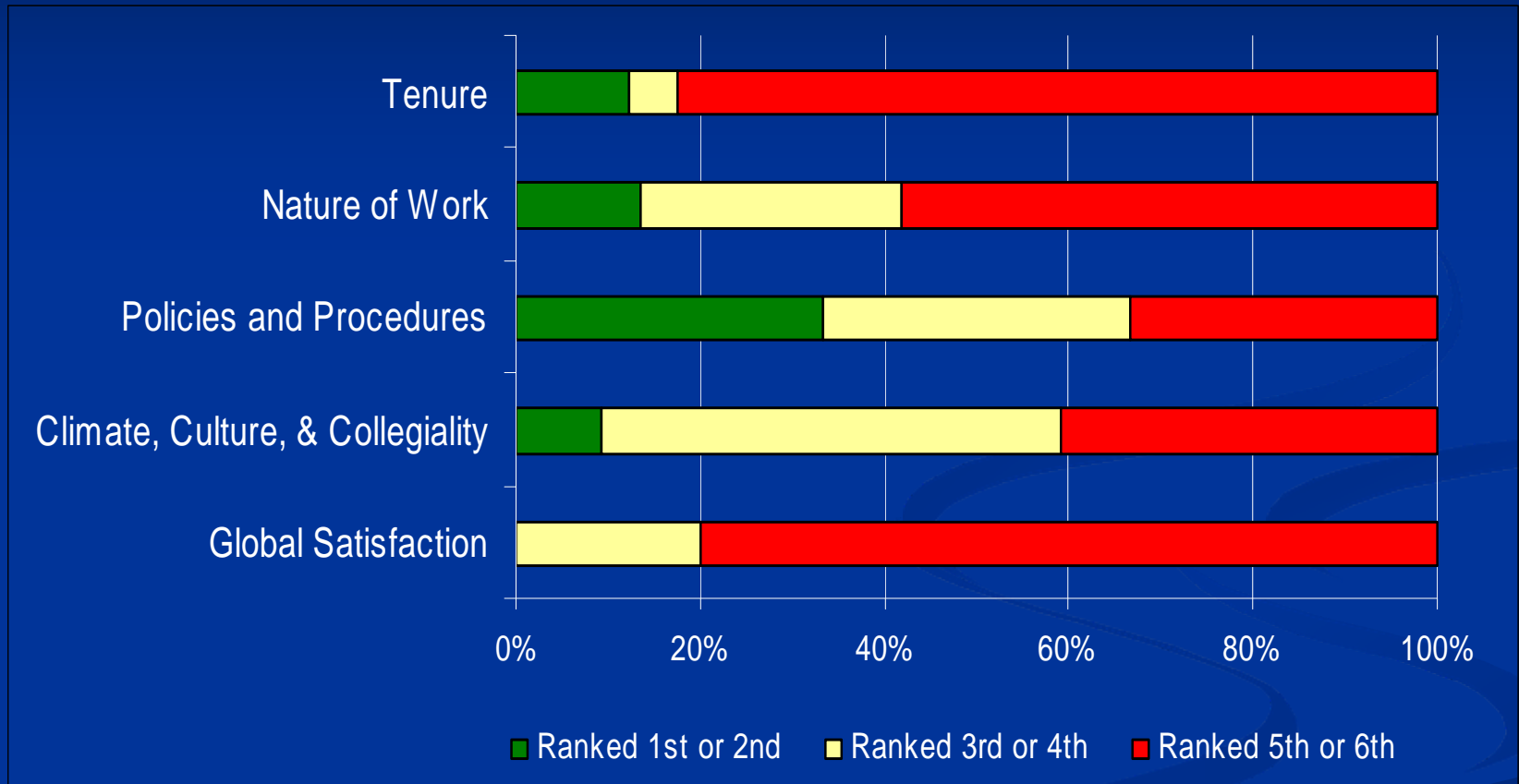
	Virginia Tech			All Universities
	Total Population	Responses	Response Rate	Response Rate
Overall	211	157	71%	59%
Men	130	90	69%	55%
Women	91	67	74%	64%
White	150	115	77%	61%
Fac. of Color	71	42	59%	56%

About VT's 157 Respondents

(Weighted to reflect proportions in population)

- 42% have held a postdoc appointment
- 90% first tenure-track position
- 64% hired in since 2004
- 29 Asian, 10 Black, 10 Hispanic, 1 Nat Amer, 1 multi-race, 106 White
- 28% non-U.S. citizens
- 82% have spouses or partners; 26% of these employed at VT; 14% (13) living apart for work reasons
- 48% have one or more children under 18 at home; 20% have adult dependents at home

Virginia Tech's Profile By Theme





Results of Interest to Department Heads and P&T Committee Members

- Transparency of the Tenure Process
- Clarity and Reasonableness of Tenure Standards
- Policies and Practices Related to Tenure and Work-Life

Transparency of the Tenure Process

- Compared to peer institutions junior faculty report relatively favorable views in relation to insights from colleagues and believe tenure decisions are made based on performance.

Agreement on a scale of 5 (strongly agree) – 1 (strongly disagree):	VT Mean	Peer Mean	VT Peer Rank	All Univ.	VT %ile of All Univs
I have received consistent messages from senior colleagues about the requirements for tenure.	3.24	2.75	1 st	2.86	83%
In my opinion, tenure decisions here are made primarily on performance-based criteria (e.g., research/creative work, teaching, and/or service) rather than on non-performance based criteria (policies, relationships, and/or demographics).	3.81	3.56	1 st	3.49	87%

Transparency of the Tenure Process

- Responses across groups at VT were relatively consistent on questions related to tenure clarity.

Clarity on a scale of 5 (very clear) – 1 (very unclear):	Overall	Gender		Race	
		Male	Female	White	Fac of Color
I find the tenure process in my department to be...	3.69	3.75	3.59	3.59	3.89
I find the tenure criteria (what things are evaluated) to be...	3.57	3.61	3.52	3.49	3.76
I find the tenure standards (the performance threshold) to be...	3.20	3.20	3.21	3.09	3.47
I find the body of evidence that will be considered in making my tenure decisions to be ...	3.47	3.47	3.47	3.43	3.54

- Although VT scores are 5th or 6th in peer group for these questions, scores are comparable to mean of all universities in COACHE dataset.

Clarity of Tenure Expectations

- Overall junior faculty at VT were less clear on tenure expectations related to various aspects of their role compared to peer institutions and to all COACHE universities.

Clarity on a scale of 5 (very clear) – 1 (very unclear):	VT Mean	Peer Mean	VT Peer Rank	All Univ.	VT %ile of All Univs.
A scholar (e.g., research/creative work)	3.60	4.01	6 th	3.75	30%
A teacher	3.48	3.78	6 th	3.76	9%
An advisor to students*	3.15	3.35	6 th	3.28	22%
A colleague in your department	2.99	3.25	6 th	3.29	6%
A campus citizen*	2.73	3.28	6 th	3.17	9%
A member of the broader community (e.g., outreach)	2.89	3.10	6 th	2.95	41%

*Faculty of color found the expectations for performance as a student advisor and campus citizen to be significantly clearer than white faculty.

Reasonableness of Tenure Expectations

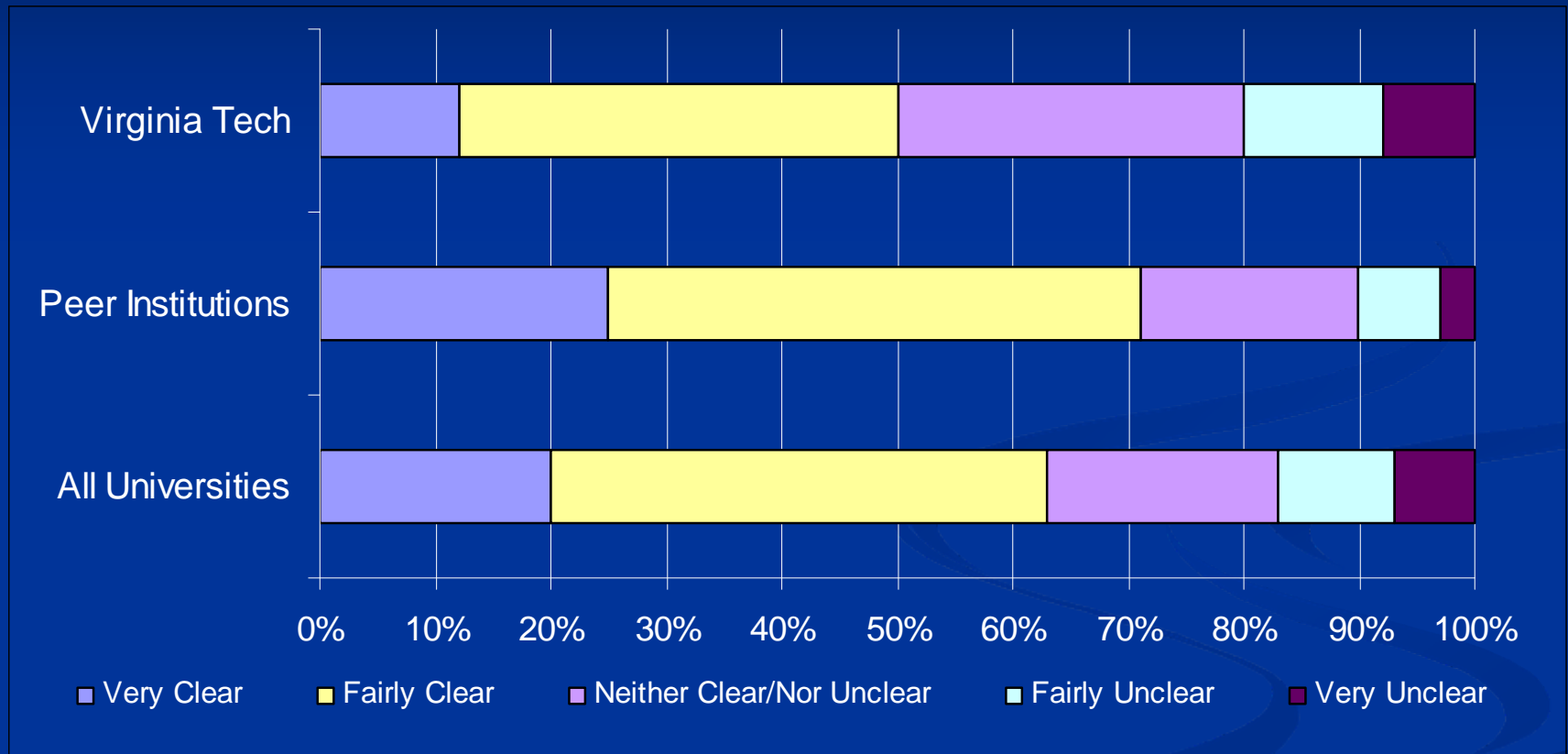
- Overall junior faculty at VT reported tenure expectations were less reasonable compared to peer institutions and universities nationally.

Reasonableness on a scale of 5 (very reasonable) – 1 (very unreasonable):	VT Mean	Peer Mean	VT Peer Rank	All Univ.	VT %ile of All Univs
A scholar (e.g., research/creative work)*	3.50	3.99	6 th	3.79	15%
A teacher	3.77	4.17	6 th	3.98	20%
An advisor to students	3.40	3.96	6 th	3.73	19%
A colleague in your department*	3.36	3.90	6 th	3.76	6%
A campus citizen	3.26	3.82	6 th	3.63	13%
A member of the broader community (e.g., outreach)	3.29	3.74	6 th	3.55	20%

*Males found the expectations for performance as a scholar and departmental colleague to be significantly more reasonable than females.

One's Own Perceptions About Achieving Tenure

- My sense of whether or not I will achieve tenure is...



VT was ranked in the 9th percentile among all universities on the clarity of whether they will achieve tenure and 6th among peers.

My sense of whether or not I will achieve tenure is...

- Percent Very or Fairly UNCLEAR about own chances for tenure

	VT	Peers	All Universities
Overall*	21%	10%	14%
Males	16%	7%	12%
Females	27%	13%	17%
White Faculty	23%	11%	15%
Fac of Color	14%	6%	12%

*VT ranked in the 9th percentile of all universities on this question

Disciplinary Differences for Tenure Questions

■ Transparency of the tenure process

Clarity on a scale of 5 (very clear) – 1 (very unclear):	Overall	CALS	CAUS	COE	COS	VM	LAHS	NR
...tenure process	3.69	3.60	3.36	4.03	4.26	2.64	3.83	3.30
...tenure criteria	3.57	3.40	3.17	3.72	4.19	2.53	3.81	3.46
...tenure standards	3.20	3.12	2.94	3.32	3.85	1.87	3.46	2.77
...body of evidence	3.47	3.33	3.07	3.73	4.13	2.42	3.65	3.30
...own sense of achieving tenure	3.34	3.47	3.08	3.73	3.89	2.52	3.34	2.70

Green fill = 10% or more above VT mean; **Light Blue** fill = 10% or more below VT mean

Disciplinary Differences for Tenure Questions

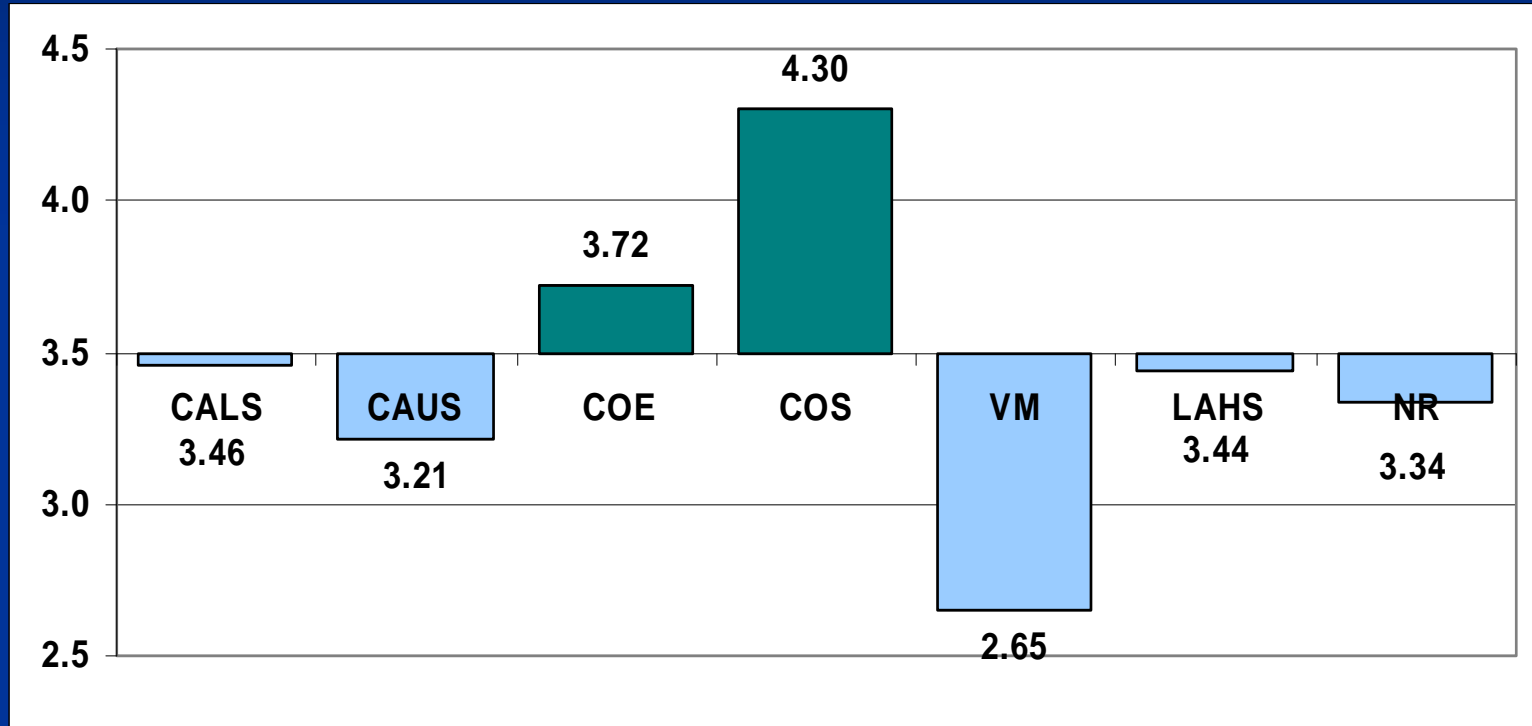
■ Clarity of Tenure Standards:

Clarity on a scale of 5 (very clear) – 1 (very unclear):	Overall	CALS	CAUS	COE	COS	VM	LAHS	NR
A scholar (e.g., research/creative work)	3.60	3.55	3.40	3.75	4.13	2.40	3.80	3.22
A teacher	3.48	3.35	3.01	3.45	3.99	3.28	3.61	3.66
An advisor to students*	3.15	3.33	2.28	3.51	3.46	2.40	2.94	3.43
A colleague in your department	2.99	2.83	3.01	3.07	3.74	2.13	3.08	2.55

Green fill = 10% or more above VT mean; **Light Blue** fill = 10% or more below VT mean

Reasonableness of the Expectations for Performance as a Scholar

College Mean Scores Compared to VT Overall Mean Score



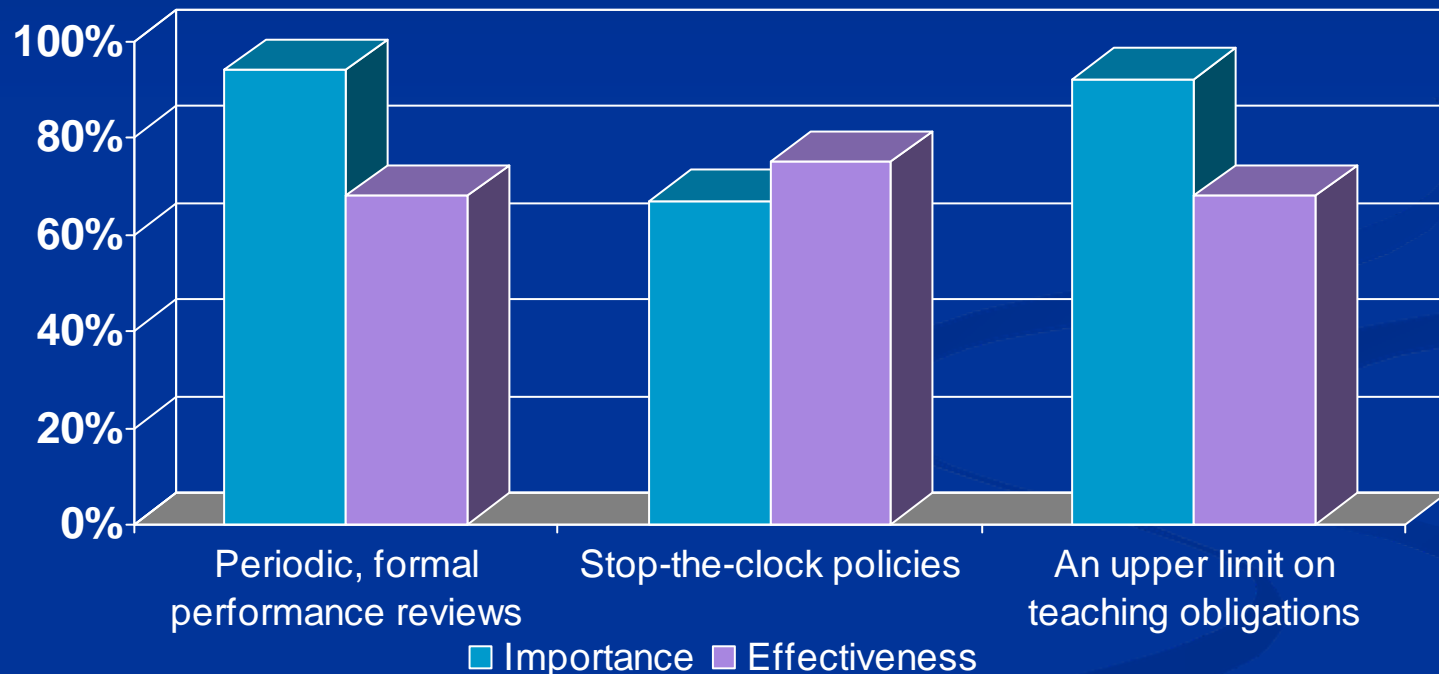
VT mean score = 3.5; 3.0 = neither reasonable nor unreasonable; 4.0 = fairly reasonable

Disciplinary Differences on Tenure Questions

- Those faculty in the biological sciences, social sciences, engineering/math/comp sci, and education had higher mean scores on clarity of what is expected for tenure.
- Those respondents in architecture/bldg cons, veterinary medicine, and humanities had especially low scores on tenure questions.
- Responses from humanities scholars ranked very low compared to disciplinary peers at all universities. (10 out of 17 tenure questions were ranked below the 20th percentile).
- Not enough respondents in business, phys sci, visual and perf arts to make internal or external comparisons.

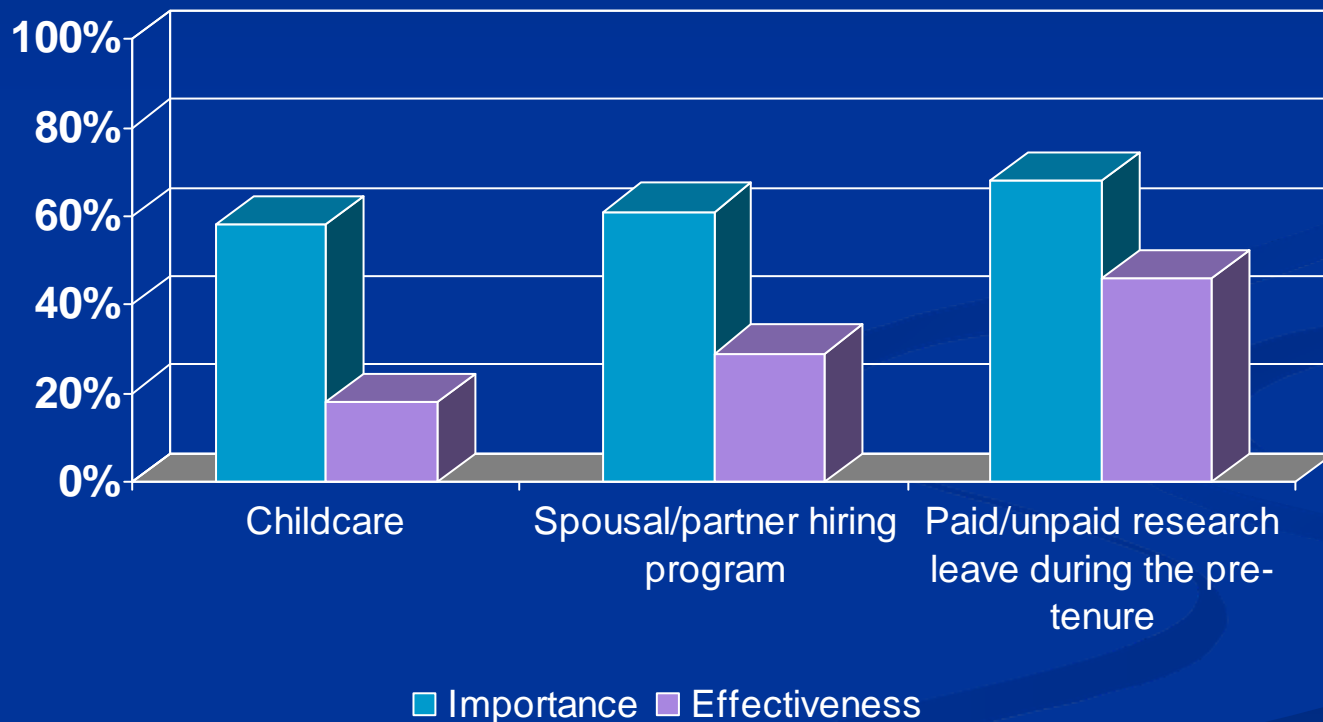
Policies and Practices Related to Tenure and Work-Life

- Several policies were viewed as *important and effective* among junior faculty.



Policies and Practices Related to Tenure and Work-Life

- Junior faculty also identified several policies as important but *not effective*.



Attitudes about Work-Life Responsibilities

- Males were more satisfied than females with the balance they are able to strike between professional and personal time.

	VT Mean Overall	VT Response by Gender		Peer Rank	VT %ile of All Univs
		M	F		
My departmental colleagues do what they can to make <i>having</i> children and the tenure track compatible.	3.35	3.44	3.23	4 th	37%
My departmental colleagues do what they can to make <i>raising</i> children and the tenure track compatible.	3.26	3.42	3.04	5 th	30%
How satisfied are you with the balance between professional time and personal or family time.*	2.65	2.92	2.30	6 th	24%

*Significant differences by gender

Global Satisfaction

- Majority of VT faculty are satisfied, but not as satisfied as those at other universities.

	% Satisfied	% Unsatisfied*	Peer Rank	VT %ile of All Univs
How satisfied are you with your department as a place to work	78	15	3 rd	46%
How satisfied are you with the institution as a place to work	59	23	6 th	22%
	Great/ Good	Bad/ Awful		
How do you rate your institution as a place for junior faculty to work	64	8	6 th	33%

*Percentage does not equal 100% due to respondents who selected neither satisfied nor unsatisfied; selected So-so for institution as a place for junior faculty to work

Next Steps

- Sharing with many audiences, including junior faculty, CFA, deans and heads by college
- Invitation to Cathy Trower to speak at January 8 *AdvanceVT* conference
- Working together to identify issues that can be addressed and improved – see some of suggestions at end of Executive Summary
- Talking to other institutions about what they are doing...