

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.”

Consequences for Family Life

“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

	Work-Life Survey Respondents		Total VT Population Sept. 2004	
	n	%	n	%
Male	599	73.4%	985	77.1
Female	217	26.6%	293	22.9
Caucasian	718	88.0%	1060	82.9
Non-Caucasian	98	12.0%	218	17.1

AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey Respondents

	Work-Life Survey Respondents		Total VT Population Sept. 2004	
	n	%	n	%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	143	17.5	205	16.0
Architecture and Urban Studies	51	6.3	95	7.4
Business	56	6.9	95	7.4
Engineering	154	18.9	283	22.1
Liberal Arts and Human Sciences	199	24.4	276	21.6
Natural Resources	42	5.1	55	4.3
Science	119	14.6	187	14.6
Veterinary Medicine	46	5.6	72	5.6
Administrative/Other	6	.7	-	-

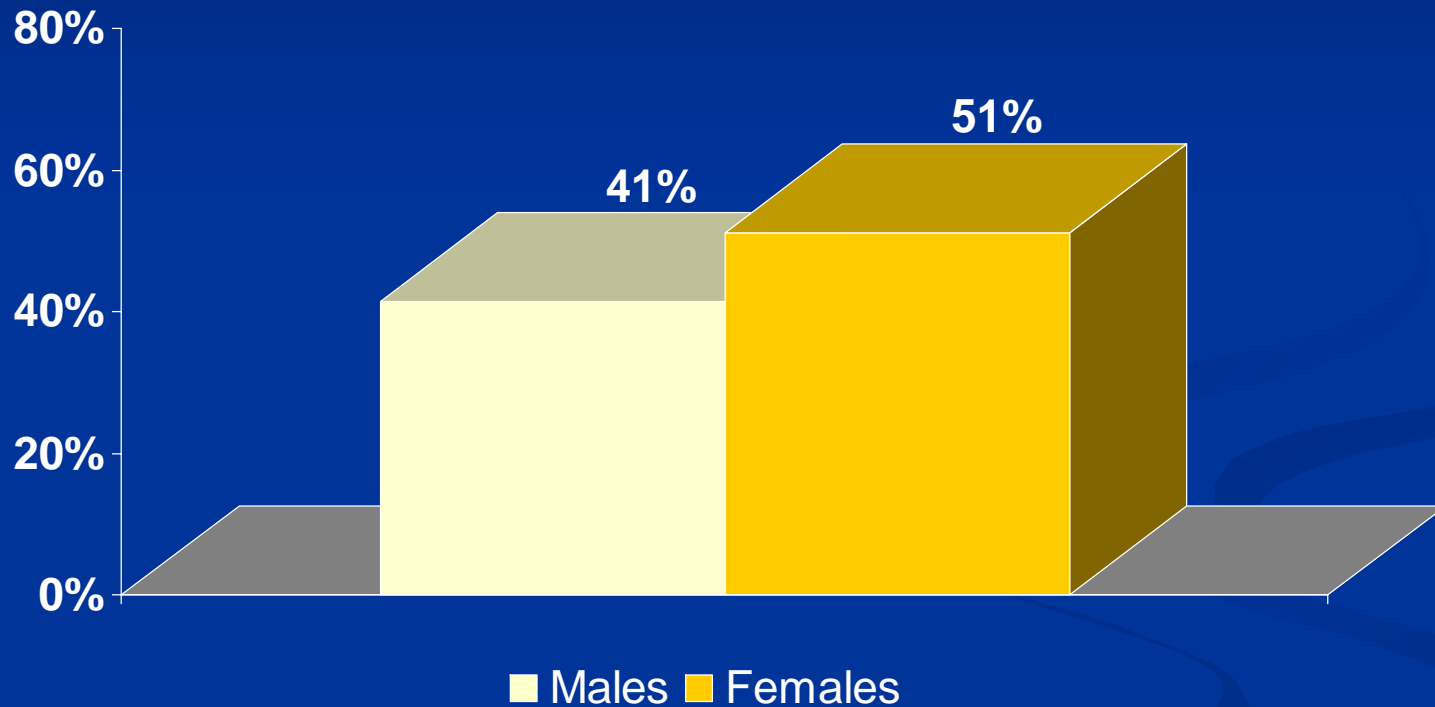
Work-Life Balance Issues

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

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

*Items significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$

Seriously Considered Leaving Current Job to Achieve Better Balance Between Personal and Professional Life*

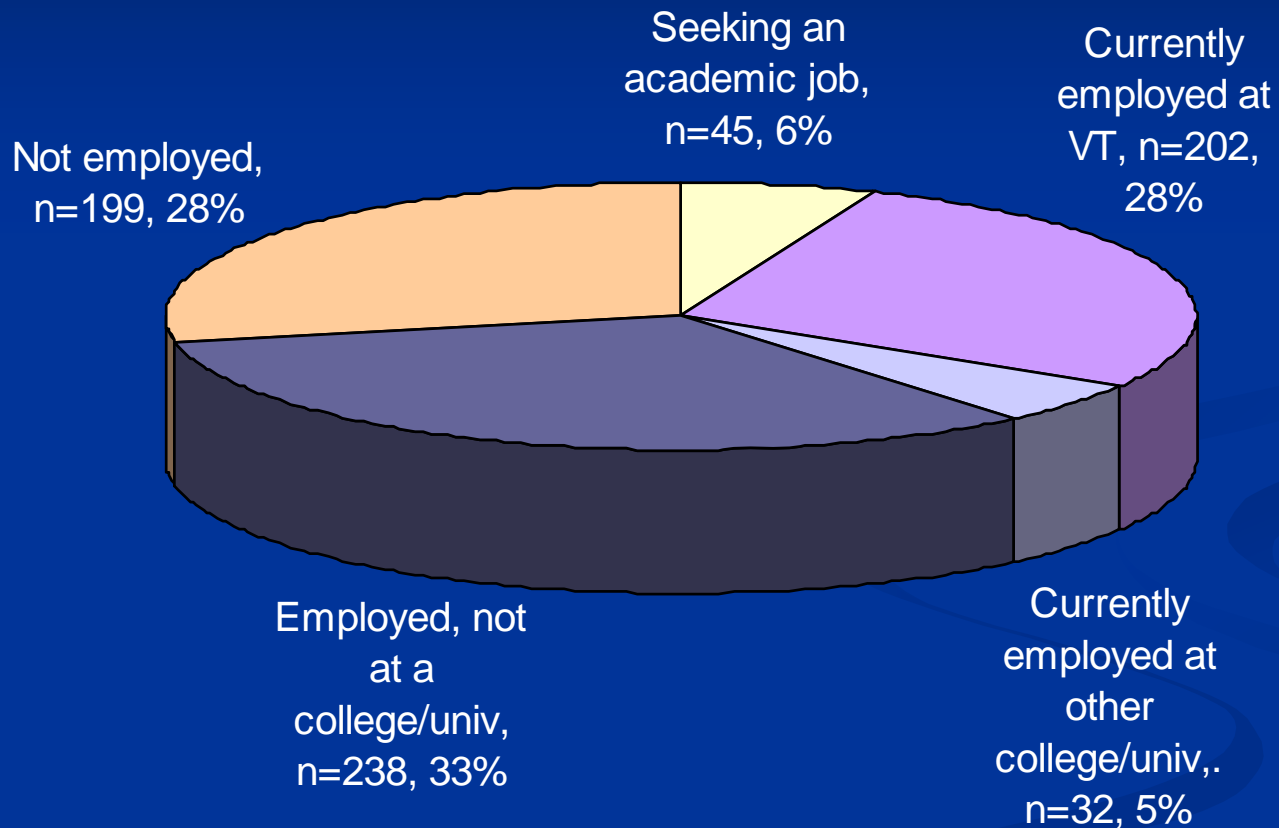


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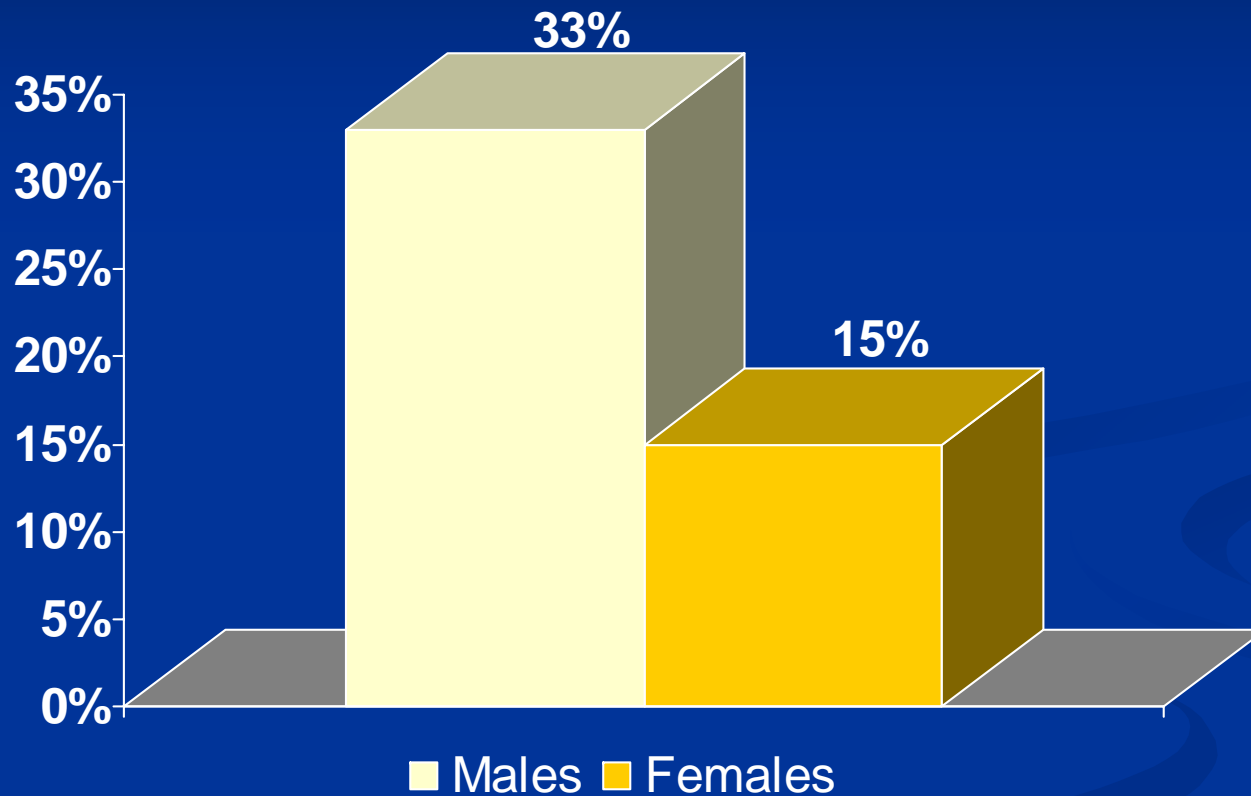
Dual Career Issues:

Employment Status of Spouse/Partner



Dual Career Issues

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

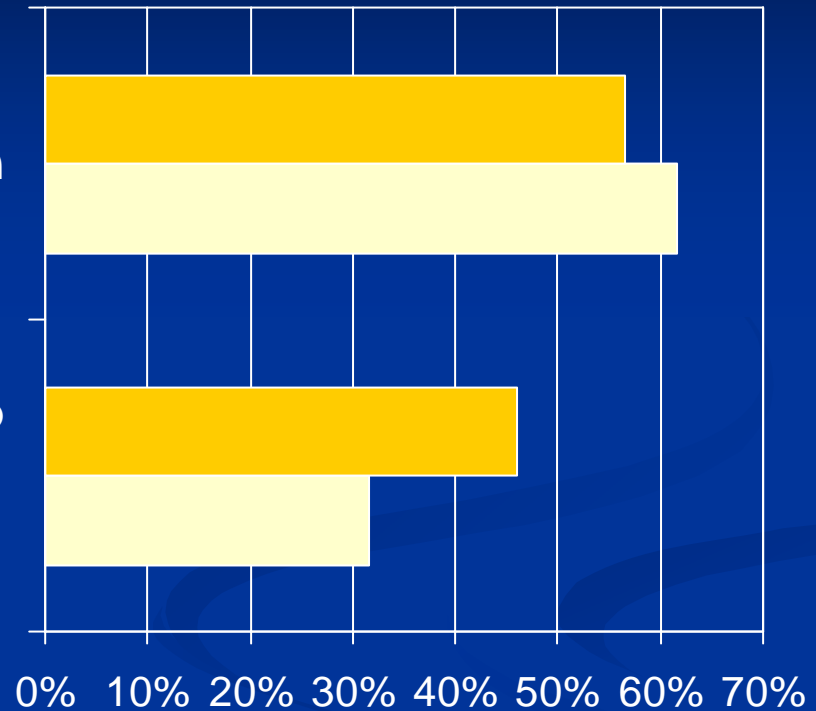


*Item significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$

Dual Career Issues

***Satisfied with partner's employment opportunities in region**

***Seriously considered leaving to improve partner's employment opportunities**



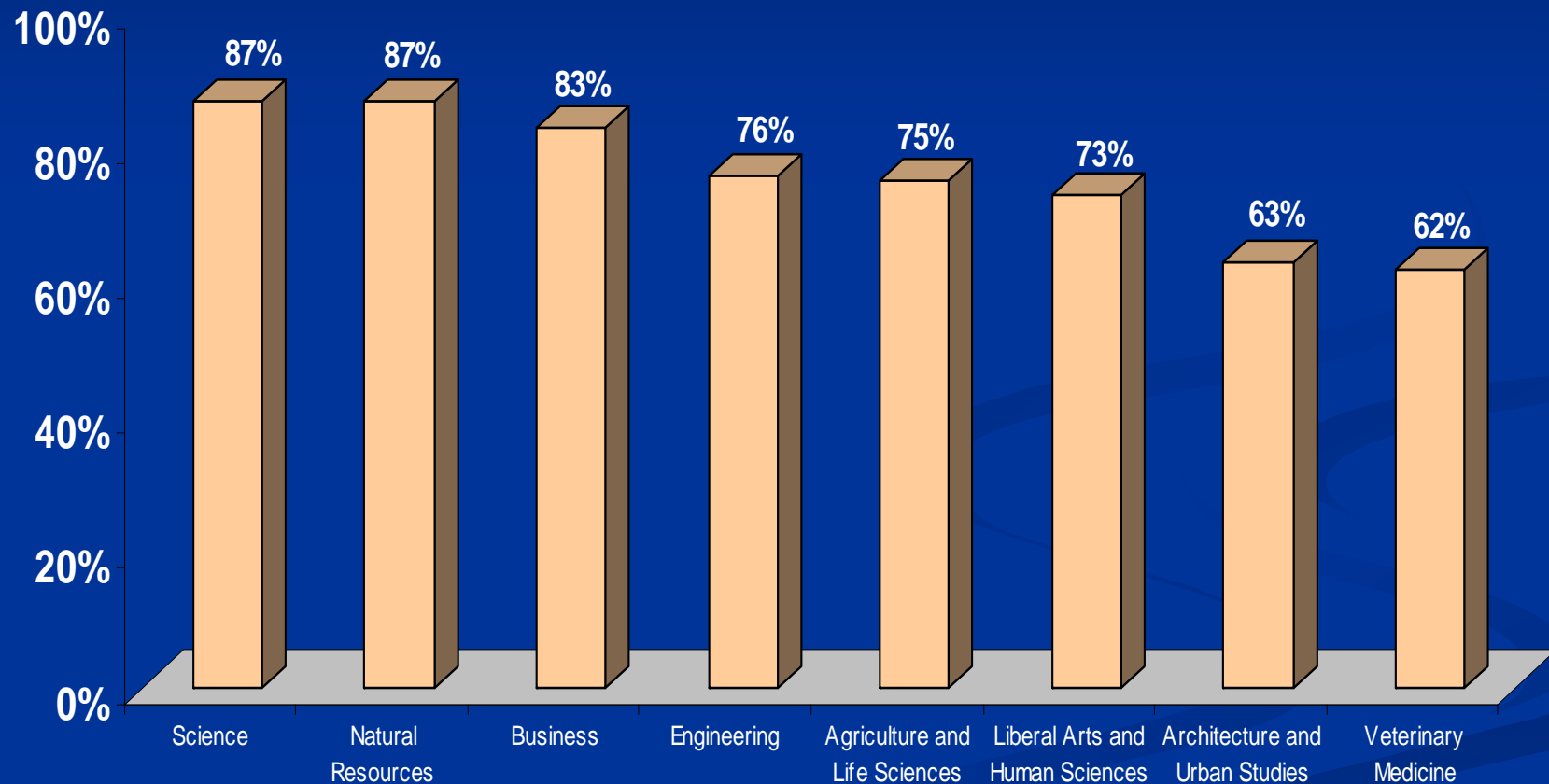
■ Males ■ Females

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

*Items significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$

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:



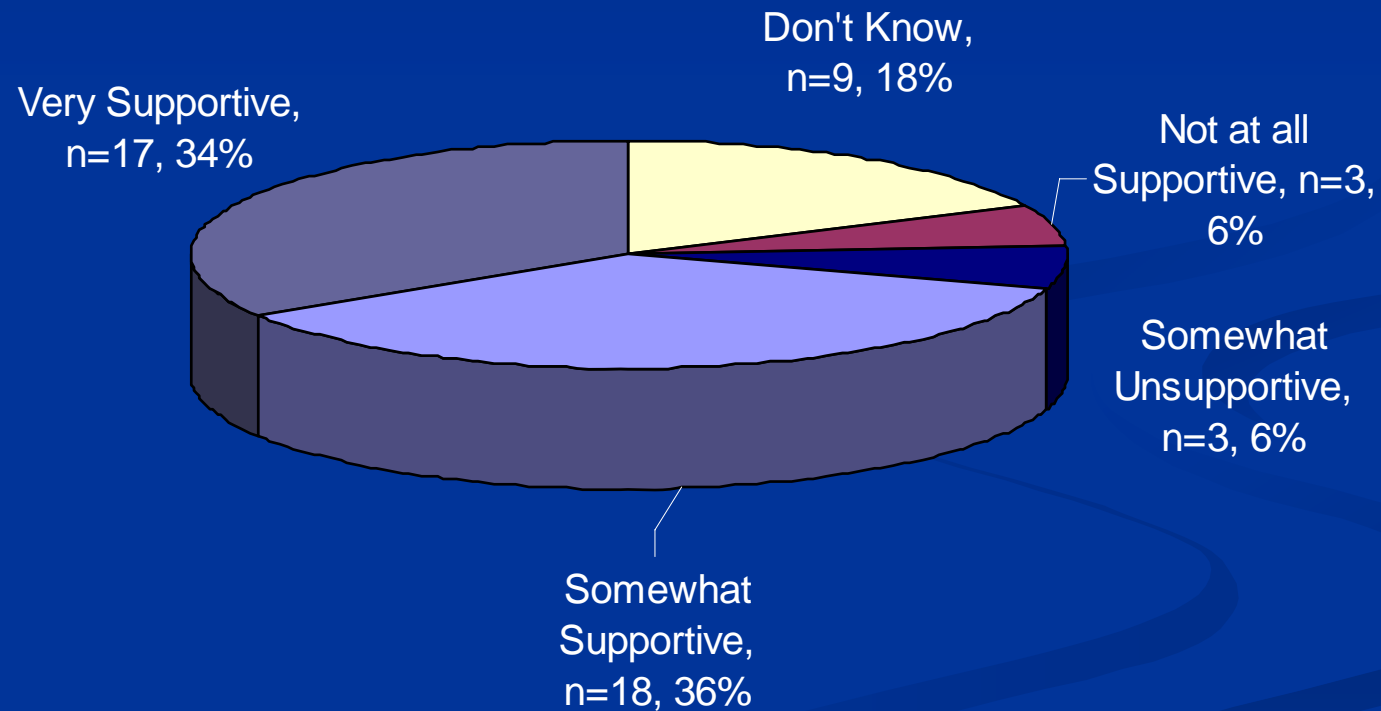
Stopping the Tenure Clock at VT

1996- July 2005

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

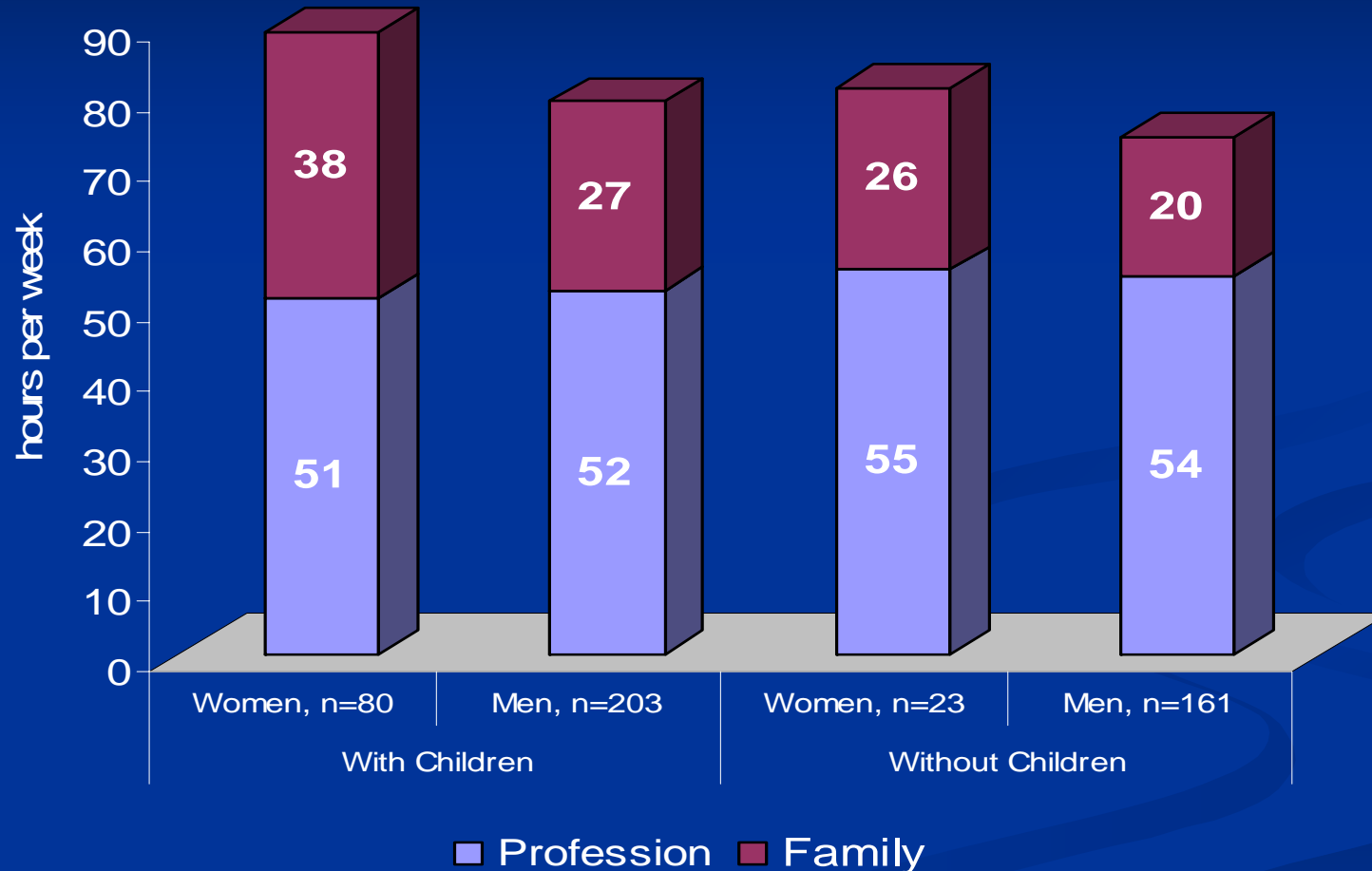
Stopping the Tenure Clock

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



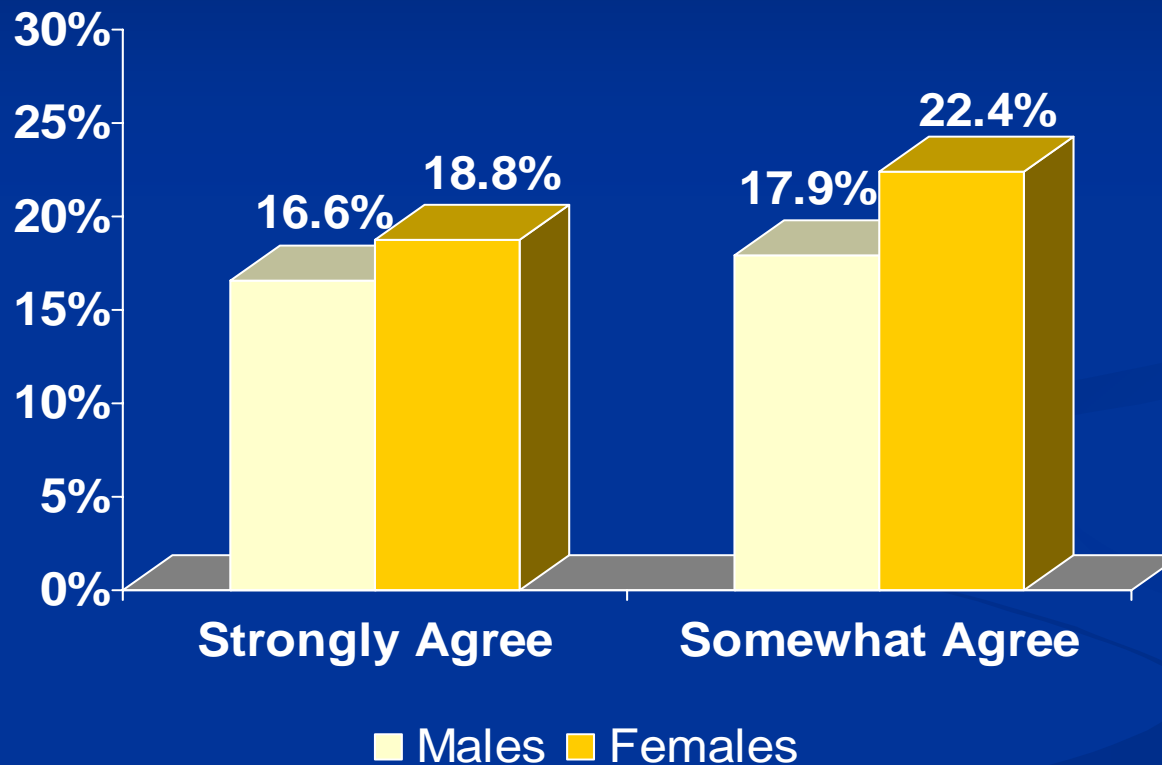
Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

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



Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

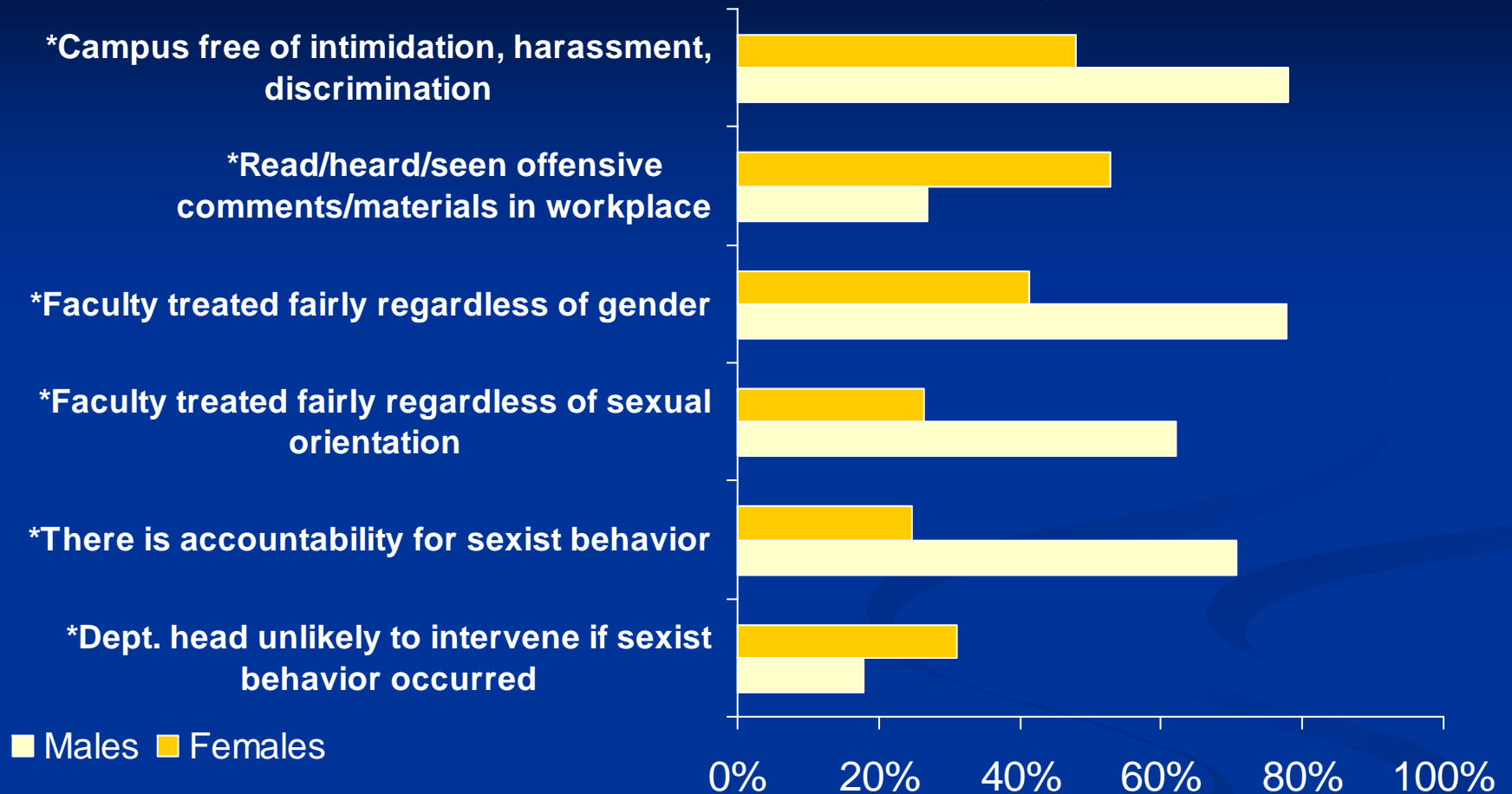
Interested in working part-time if benefits like health care were available:



Climate Issues

2005 *AdvanceVT* Faculty Work-Life Survey and Faculty Exit Survey

Climate Issues: Perceptions by Gender



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

*Items significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$

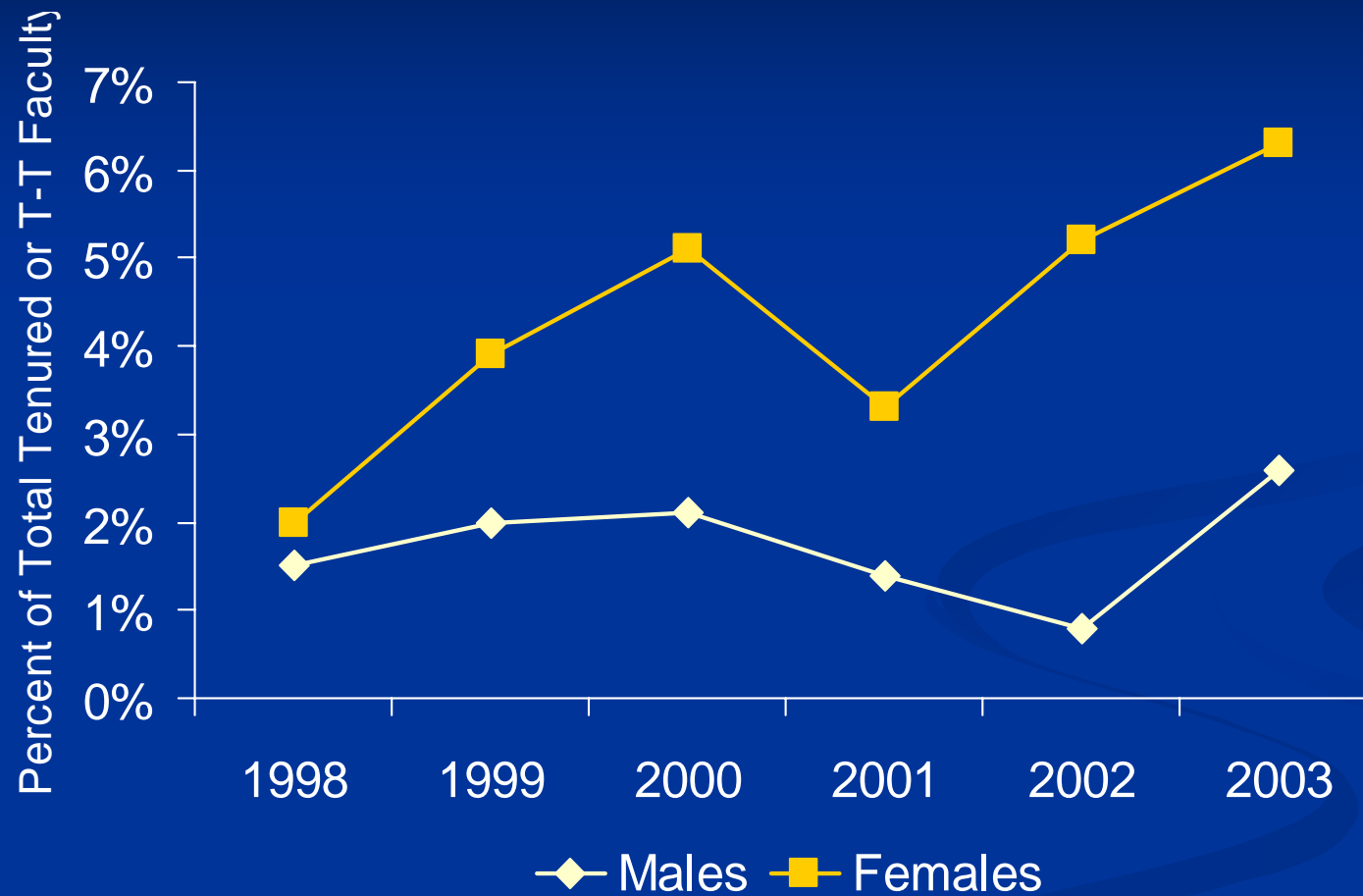
Departmental Climate Issues

Includes combined responses of strong or somewhat agree *Items significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$	AdvanceVT Survey n=816		Exit Survey n=49	
	% M Agree	% F Agree	% M Agree	% F Agree
Treated with respect by faculty members in dept.	88.0	74.7*	91.3	76.9*
Others in my dept. seem to know about policies/opportunities of which I am unaware	27.6	41.0*		
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			21.7	46.1
I am (was) recognized for the contributions I make to the department	79.3	72.8	82.6	61.6*

Likely to leave position at VT at some point in next two years:

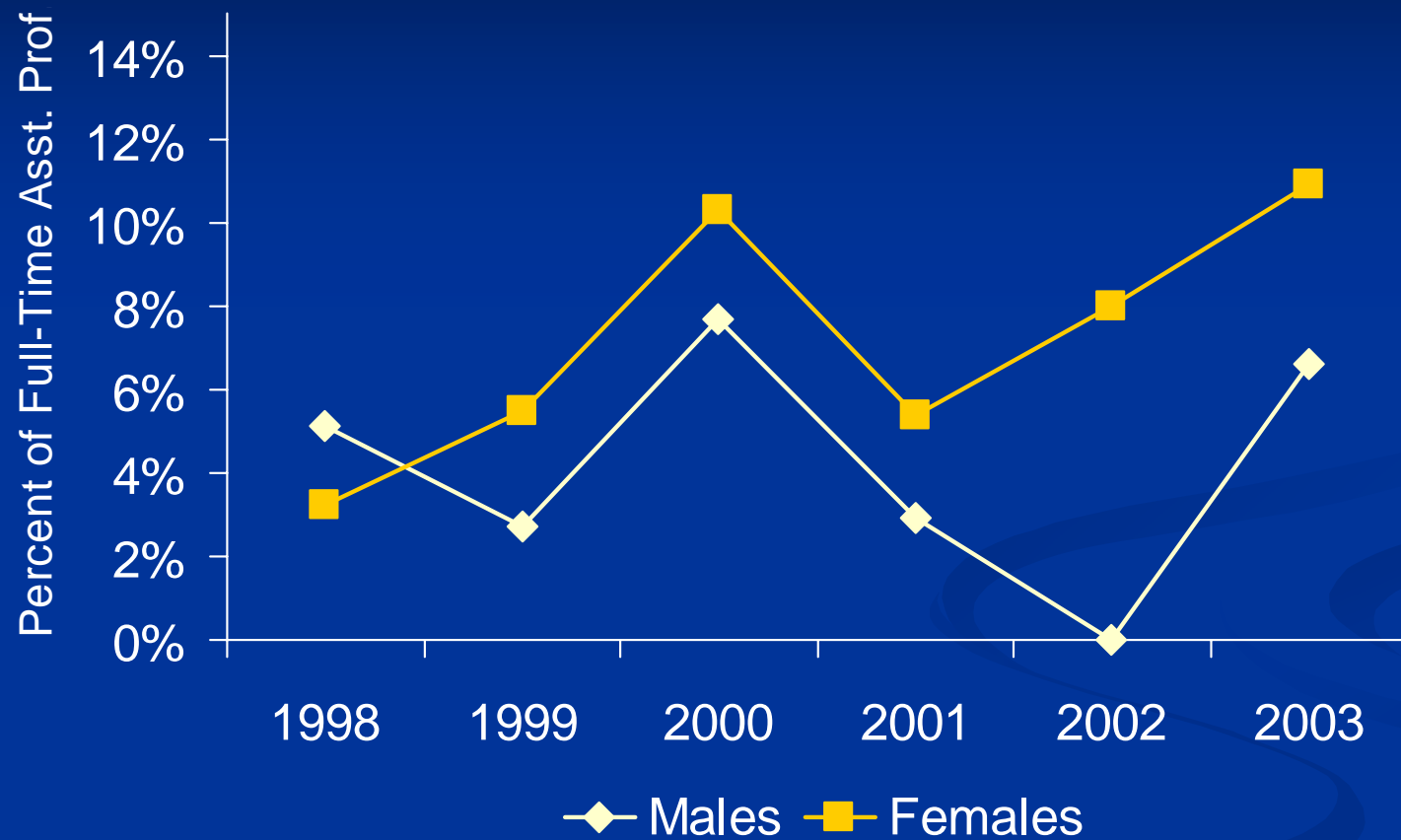
- About one-third of both women and men respondents say they are very or somewhat likely to leave their position within two years
- Gender differences are not significant on this item

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 $\geq 50\%$
 - Full health care $\geq 80\%$
- 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