Getting to Family-Friendly in Your Department

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Institutional Policies Support a Sustainable Work-Life Balance

- family and medical leave
- parental leave
- stopping or extending tenure clocks
- modified duty policies
- breast feeding policies and lactation rooms
- partner hiring programs
- childcare programs
- eldercare programs
- emergency and sick child care programs
- dependent care travel funds
Institutional policies are a good start, but...

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- parental leave
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How does a department achieve a supportive work-life culture?
Dispelling the Myths: Arguments opposing family-friendly policies:

- Benefit mainly women
- Make management more difficult
- Lead to unfairness
- Limit careers
- Are too costly
- Benefit all
- Management is easier with better morale & less stress
- Greater flexibility
- Increase opportunity
- Improve retention
Changing department culture is hard...
But not not impossible!

- Be inclusive in the definition of family
- Make families visible
- Make good practices visible
- Get help
Definition of Family

Everyone has a life

- Kids
- Parents & other relatives
- Domestic partner or spouse
- Close friends
- Pets
- Leaky roof...

Respect everyone’s life needs
Make Families Visible

- Department family bulletin board
- Recognize family life milestones
  - New grandchild?
  - Kindergarten graduation?
  - Partner’s promotion?
- Include families in department events (Picnic? Department hike?)
- Bring kids to the office now and then
- Offer to help others in need
Make Good Practices Visible

- Share copies of STATUS and SPECTRUM with your department
- Invite campus administrators to discuss institutional policies with department (and especially how those policies benefit the institution!)
- Hold a departmental round-table on ways to be more family-friendly
- Help your colleagues to develop awareness and the vocabulary to think family-friendly
Get Help

- Enlist your department chair
- Talk to colleagues in departments on your campus that are already family-friendly
  - Find out how they did it
  - Find out what "norms" they have adopted to become family-friendly
  - Share the information with your department
- Attend relevant campus workshops organized by human resources, the women's center, dean of faculty, etc. SHARE.
- Invite colloquium speakers who can also reinforce family-friendly ideas from their own departments
Support Others

- Be aware of work-life issues your colleagues are facing
- Suggest changes to benefit others in your department, so they don’t have to
  - “Jose mentioned his parents are visiting. Should we move the meeting earlier so he can meet them at the airport?”
  - “The colloquium times seem to be a problem for people who have to pick up kids. Can we reschedule it?”
- Enlist others to challenge non-FF comments
- Avoid too many requests for yourself
Start Small But Think BIG

- Be aware of where you want the department to go
- Enlist others as you can
- Incremental change will be most successful
- It takes time to build awareness and enough knowledge to be able to discuss work-life balance in an effective way
The Tenure Thing

- Times have changed
- Tenure expectations are changing more slowly
- Review departmental tenure policies to assure they place reasonable, 21st century expectations on pre-tenure faculty
- Be sure tenure review practices appropriately consider institutional policies (leaves, clock stops...)

(For senior folks...)
Don’t Lose Heart...

- Be realistic in your own expectations
- Celebrate successes
- Find a support group on your campus
- Keep working. Change will come...