

Introduction

In 2003, Virginia Tech received an NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant to address gender equity in academic science and engineering careers. The university has since implemented a number of work/life balance policies, including support for dual career hiring.

Virginia Tech implemented the dual career support program in 2006 to assist spouses and partners of faculty members to obtain suitable employment at the university or in the local community.

Located in the town of Blacksburg in the scenic New River Valley of southwest Virginia, the university is by far the largest employer in this relatively rural area, with over 4000 instructional, research, and professional faculty members and 3500 professional, technical, clerical, and other support staff. In order to attract and retain outstanding faculty members, it is critical for the spouses and partners of faculty members to be able to pursue their careers as well.

About the Dual Career Program

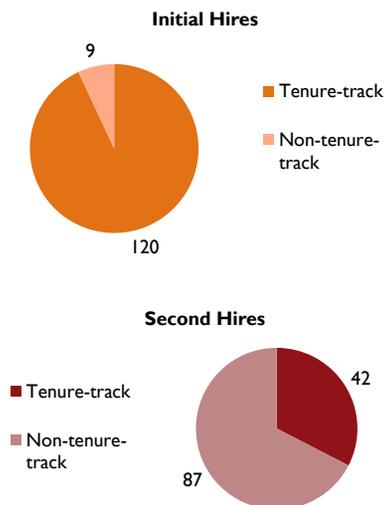
Virginia Tech's dual career program includes a full-time employee dedicated to working with faculty families to connect them with potential employers and provide support for their job search. The dual career program manager maintains a network of contacts across the university and in the local community to facilitate placements. The vice provost for faculty affairs works with spouses and partners who are seeking tenure track appointments, and can provide bridge funding if appropriate. Search exemptions are available for dual career hires.

Use of the Dual Career Program

Virginia Tech hired between 60 and 100 new tenure-track faculty members each year from 2006 to 2014, with the exception of two years of reduced hiring (20 and 35 new hires) due to financial constraints. The number of dual career couples hired each year ranged from 6 to 29.

Information about the dual career program is shared with faculty candidates during their on-campus interviews. Deans and department heads receive regular updates on the program.

Between 2006 and 2014, 129 spouses or partners of Virginia Tech faculty members were hired by the university using the dual career search exemption and/or bridge funding. The provost provided partial funding for 87 of these dual career hires, and 88 individuals received search exemptions.

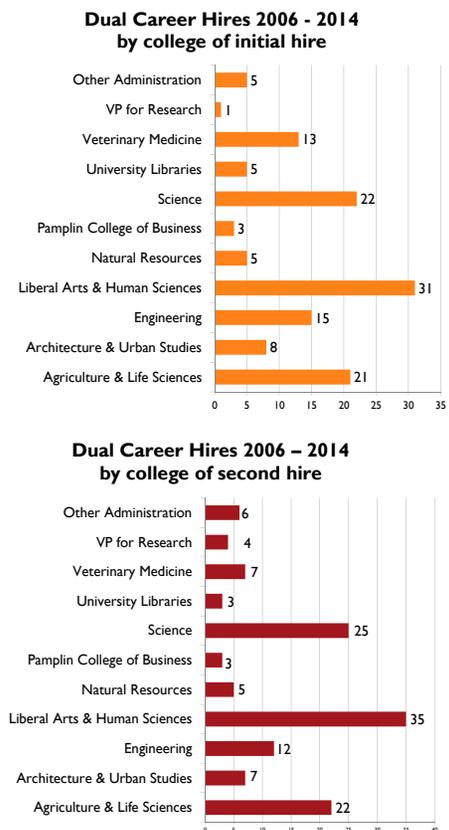


Among these couples, 93% of the initial hires were in tenured or tenure eligible positions, while 67% of the second hires were in non-tenure-eligible positions. These non-tenure-eligible positions include lecturer, instructor, visiting professor, research scientist, and post-doctoral associate. Eleven of the second hires have since moved into tenure eligible positions.

Sixty percent of the initial hires were male, and 40% female.

College Distribution

Virginia Tech has eight academic colleges with faculty sizes ranging from 67 (Natural Resources and Environment) to 326 (Engineering). All eight of Virginia Tech's academic colleges and several administrative units participated in the dual career hiring program, with most units employing comparable numbers of initial and second hires.

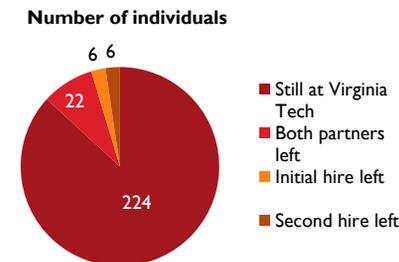


"The Dual Career Program set our minds at ease and gave us confidence that we would be able to pursue our chosen academic professions together - in a wonderful place and at a wonderful school." - Spouse placed in a research faculty position

Outcomes and Future Plans

Retention

Of the 129 couples that received support from Virginia Tech's dual career program from 2006 through 2014, 224 individuals (87%) are still employed by the university.



Job Search Support

In addition to spouses and partners employed by Virginia Tech, 609 individuals received support for job searches outside the university through the dual career program from 2006 through 2014. Of these, 14% were retention cases and 86% were recruitment cases.

Future Plans

The provost's office continues to track use and impact of the dual career program. In addition to monitoring retention and career progress, future plans include interviewing dual career faculty members and department heads to obtain their perceptions of the program.

"Without [the dual career assistance program] we would not have come. I think it's critical because lots of people have spouses that are also in research or in the same area, so they will only come if you hire both. So, if you have a program like that, it's really important to get people here." - New faculty member

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