

Supplemental Materials: Focusing on Work/Life Balance

I. Online Resources for Department Heads

1. University Online Resources

- Adult Day Services, www.humandevlopment.vt.edu/ads.html
- AdvanceVT, www.advance.vt.edu
- Child Development Center for Learning and Research, www.humandevlopment.vt.edu/cdclr.html
- Diversity, www.vt.edu/diversity/
- Dual Career Assistance Program, www.hr.vt.edu/employment/dualcareer/
- Dual Career Guidelines for Department Heads, www.provost.vt.edu/Guidelines.php
- Lactation Facilities, www.worklife.vt.edu/pages/lactfac/index.html
- Leave policies, www.hr.vt.edu/leave/
- Resources for Prospective Faculty, www.provost.vt.edu/resources_prospective_faculty.php
- Virginia Tech's Principles of Community, www.vt.edu/principles.php
- Work-Life Resources Center, www.worklife.vt.edu

2. External Online Resources

- American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work, www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/workfam-stmt.htm
- American Council on Education (ACE) Department Chair Online Resource Center, www.acenet.edu/resources/chairs (This is an extremely rich and comprehensive resource.)
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/

2. Forms

Faculty forms are available on the Provost's Web site at www.provost.vt.edu/forms.php.

- Stopping the tenure clock
- Modified duties request

3. University Policies that Promote Work/Life Balance

I. Stopping the Tenure Clock

- A one-year probationary period extension shall be *automatically* granted to either parent (or both, if both parents are tenure-track faculty members) in recognition of the demands of caring for a newborn child or a child under five newly placed for adoption or foster care.
- The request should be made within a year of the child's arrival in the family.
- An extension of the probationary period may also be approved on a discretionary basis for other extenuating non-professional circumstances that have had a significant impact on the faculty member's productivity, such as a serious personal illness or major illness of a member of the immediate family.
- Probationary period extensions are granted in one-year increments. A cumulative total of two years is normally the maximum probationary period extension for any combination of reasons.

2. Modified Duties

- Special family circumstances or issues of personal health (not addressed by sick leave) can cause substantial alterations to one's daily routine, thus creating a need to construct a modified workload and flexible schedule for a period of time.
- This policy is *not* intended to provide release time from teaching for the purpose of allowing additional time for research.
- The period of modified duties will be one semester.
- Modification of duties should not result in additional duties during the subsequent semester.
- The faculty member cannot be employed by another institution during the period of modified duties, nor can the release time be used for extensive professional travel or other increased professional activities.
- A semester of modified duties should be considered *in addition to*, not as a substitute for, sick leave and family leave.
- The faculty member should submit a request for modified duties as early as possible so the department can plan appropriately.
- The plan of proposed activities is developed in consultation with the department head and the dean.
- Subject to available funding, the provost will provide an allotment up to \$10,000 to the faculty member's unit to replace teaching that is lost through the granting of a term of modified duties.
- Requests must be approved by the department head, dean, and provost.

University Policies that Promote Work/Life Balance

3. Part-Time Tenure-Track and Tenured Appointments

- While tenure-track and tenure appointments are normally full time, Virginia Tech recognizes the importance of allowing flexibility in the percent employment so that faculty members can better manage the balance between their professional work and family or personal obligations over a defined period of time, or perhaps permanently.
- Part-time appointments will be either *term* or *permanent* for any fraction from 50% to 100% of a full appointment.
- **Term** part-time appointments may be made in increments from one semester up to two years. A term agreement must specify the date on which the faculty member is expected to return to full-time status.
- For term part-time appointments, departments would be able to use the salary savings to replace the work of the faculty member on part-time appointment.
- For **permanent** part-time appointments with no end date, a return to a full-time appointment is not guaranteed. The department and the college determine the best way to cover the costs of the academic work in the case of conversion to a permanent part-time appointment.
- **Tenure-track** faculty members may make a request for a part-time appointment only for reasons of balancing work and family for the arrival or care of a child, the care of a family member, or for personal circumstances related to the health of the faculty member. They may request a term part-time appointment only, allowing the issue to be revisited on a defined cycle. A permanent part-time appointment will not be granted until tenure is awarded.
- Tenured faculty members may request either term or permanent part-time appointments for reasons stated above, or to balance work at Virginia Tech with professional practice or significant community or public service.

Part-time appointments are not an entitlement, and requests may be turned down when the faculty member and the department cannot agree to a workable plan.

4. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- The Family Medical Leave Act (a federal law) guarantees employees a minimum period of 12 workweeks of leave during a year for family care if they have been employed at Virginia Tech for at least 12 months and if they have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months.
- Accrued sick and annual leave may be used, as appropriate; the use of paid leave should be concurrent with the approved FMLA period (i.e., run concurrently). The remainder of the 12-workweek leave shall be leave without pay.
- The added benefit of FMLA for Virginia Tech faculty members (who have access to substantial paid sick leave for their own illnesses) is the guarantee of employer-paid health care premiums during any leave without pay covered by FMLA. This would be important if the faculty member were caring for a family member and needed to be on leave without pay for that purpose.

University Policies that Promote Work/Life Balance

- Eligible faculty will be granted unpaid family or medical leave for the birth of a child, placement of a child with the faculty member for adoption or foster care, the care of an immediate family member who has a serious health condition, or a serious health condition that makes the faculty member unable to perform the function of his or her position.
- Eligibility for family leave for the purpose of birth or adoption expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of birth or placement.
- On return from leave, the faculty member will return to the same position or an equivalent position with the same benefits and salary at the time leave was taken.
- University policy allows faculty members to request a longer period of leave without pay, beyond that provided through federal law (FMLA). This requires the approvals of the department head, dean, and provost.
- Leaves are typically complex and have important consequences for continuation of benefits. Please seek advice from the Benefits Office in exploring these options.

5. Family Leave

- The university has a very generous sick leave policy for full-time salaried faculty members on regular appointments—an immediate six months of paid sick leave, with rapid reaccrual. Six weeks of paid leave are typical for a normal birth. Additional paid leave is available as needed.
- Leave provided by the Family Medical Leave Act runs concurrent with paid leave.
- Two additional weeks of paid leave are available to either or both parents at the time of birth or adoption.
- Paid family leave may also be used for family illnesses or deaths.
- Part-time employment or unpaid leave are also available for faculty members managing extraordinary family responsibilities.

6. Sick Leave

- Faculty in regular salaried positions have immediate protection of 26 weeks of sick leave.
- Isolated minor illnesses extending over a maximum of 10 days may be handled at the department level with the cooperation of faculty colleagues for the covering of necessary duties.

7. Additional Faculty Leave Benefits for Faculty on Regular Salaried Appointments

- In addition to any paid sick leave used for pregnancy, childbirth, and recovery, up to 10 days of paid family leave may be used by either parent at the birth of a child or at the time of adoption.
- Faculty members on regular salaried appointments who wish or require an extended period of time for child or family care may be granted leave without pay for up to one year, thereby guaranteeing their job during the period of leave.
- A second year of leave without pay may be requested and approved in unusual cases.

University Policies that Promote Work/Life Balance

- Regular faculty members who find that they cannot carry on their normal university duties in the usual manner and fulfill their family obligations at the same time may request consideration for part-time employment at proportional pay.

8. Dual Career Assistance Program (www.hr.vt.edu/employment/dualcareer/)

- Prospective candidates for faculty positions at Virginia Tech may have spouses or partners who are also seeking employment. The ability of a spouse/partner to find suitable employment is a crucial element in the recruiting process, and can be a determining factor in the couple's decision.
- The spouse/partner of a faculty candidate or administrator who is being recruited to Virginia Tech is eligible for DCAP services. The spouse/partner of a current faculty member who has been recently hired (within the last two years) or is negotiating a retention package is also eligible for DCAP services.
- The department head contacts the DCAP coordinator to make a referral and provide basic information about the status of the search or appointment. The DCAP coordinator consults with the spouse/partner to determine employment interests and needs.
- DCAP offers job search assistance for up to one year; advice regarding résumé, *curriculum vitae*, and cover letter; assistance with interview preparation; and networking assistance.
- Dual career assistance does not mean entitlement to employment or a guarantee of job placement.
- DCAP services are especially helpful for staff or administrative appointments at Virginia Tech, or job leads in the community. For academic partners, an exemption to search may be granted for appointment of dual career hires to faculty positions when recommended by the receiving department. Transition funding to accommodate such hires is negotiated among the receiving department, the department or college of the primary hire, and the Provost's Office. Please see the dual career guidelines for department heads, available on the provost's Web site at www.provost.vt.edu/Guidelines.php and in section 7.3.14 of the *Faculty Handbook*. Contact person is Pat Hyer, Associate Provost.

"We're much less likely to look for other jobs based on the fact that Virginia Tech gave us two positions. I think if you hire two people and they're both happy, they're less likely to leave."

Dual Career Hire Interview

Fall 2004

9. Faculty Retirement Transition Program (Policy 4410)

- Tenured faculty members with at least 10 years full-time service at Virginia Tech are eligible for continuation of the employer share of health care benefits through age 65 if they retire prior to that age.
- Following a break in service of at least 30 days, retired faculty members may work part-time on research, teaching, or other projects as negotiated with their departments.

University Policies that Promote Work/Life Balance

10. General Services and Support

- **Child Development Center for Learning and Research:** CDCLR provides quality programs for young children and their families based on child development theory, research, and developmentally appropriate practice. The center provides year-round, full-day care for toddlers through preschool-aged children.
www.humandevlopment.vt.edu/cdclr.html
- **Lactation Facilities:** Dedicated lactation facilities are currently available in university buildings dispersed throughout campus.
www.worklife.vt.edu/lactation/lactation.html
- **Elder Care:** Adult Day Services (ADS) offers a friendly and stimulating environment for adults unable to be alone during the day. ADS provides the opportunity to maintain the highest level of functioning possible by promoting physical and mental health. ADS also gives caregivers the opportunity for time off while knowing their family member is in a safe and comfortable environment.
www.humandevlopment.vt.edu/ads.html
- **Work-Life Resources Center:** Virginia Tech's Work-Life Resources Center provides a variety of information and programs to assist in the healthy integration of work and personal life. Referrals and links to regional child care, elder care, schools, health, community resources, and recreation activities are available at their Web site
www.worklife.vt.edu.