

# Providing Dependent Care and Work-Life Resources: Rebalancing the Work-Life Norm

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# Why this topic?

- The times they are a-changing.
- Graduate students, post-docs and faculty under the age of 50 grew up in a world in which everyone assumed that both men and women would work.
- The old norm of male faculty beavering away in their offices and labs while their wives were at home raising the children and doing volunteer work has given way to a new norm in which both men and women work, and work hard.

# Some Relevant Data

- In the 2000 U.S. census
  - Only 7% of U.S. households consisted of a working parent, a non-working parent, and children under the age of 18
  - Of those households that included children under the age of 18, only 23% consisted of one working parent and one non-working parent
- In a survey last spring of Princeton faculty, among faculty who were married or in a domestic partnership
  - Tenured faculty: 98% of women and 75% of men reported working spouses/domestic partners
  - Tenure-track faculty: 96% of women and 81% of men reported working spouses/domestic partners

# The Old Work-Life Norm Also Required Resources

- Supporting both work and family life is not a new issue for colleges and universities.
- When men worked and women took care of family life, the supports that universities provided reflected that reality.
- (Male) faculty members were provided with the working conditions and resources that they needed in order to do their research and teaching.
- (Male) faculty members were also provided with support for their family lives, but the old work-life configuration required only very specific sorts of support (e.g., health and life insurance, pension contributions, mortgage programs, college tuition programs).

# Rebalancing the Work-Life Norm

- In today's most prevalent work-life configuration, men and women have equal claim to careers and (to some extent) to family life.
- This has implications for the kinds of resources that faculty need from universities if they are going to be as productive as universities want them to be.

# Resource Implications of the New Work-Life Norm

- Faculty will continue to need the resources that universities have traditionally provided to support their teaching and scholarship.
- But faculty will also need new kinds of supports for the family life side of the equation.
- Universities that understand this will have two important advantages:
  - They will be more attractive to the best faculty.
  - Their faculty will be able to do better work because the full range of support that they need is available.

# The Gender Question

- Both male and female faculty are living in a world with a rebalanced work-life norm.
- But it would be foolish to think that the lives of most men and women are identical in this regard.
- The kinds of additional supports that universities need to – and have begun to – provide will matter to both men and women, but they will make more of a difference in the lives of female faculty than in the lives of male faculty.

# Overall Framework

- Academic careers begin in graduate school and continue through postdoctoral training (in some fields) and then into faculty positions.
- Family life, and the desire to achieve some kind of work-life balance, begins in graduate school (or shortly thereafter) as well.
- Universities have not traditionally recognized this or included it in their planning.
- The early years of an academic career are full of uncertainty, and usually require several physical household moves.
- Thus, the supports that universities provide at the early career stages, beginning with graduate school, are especially important

# Overall Framework continued

- Even as universities provide more resources to help graduate students, postdocs, and assistant professors in the early stages of family formation, we should be careful not to lose sight of the needs of faculty in later stages of their careers and their family life.
- We are now beginning to think about the resources needed by faculty who have responsibility for elderly parents and other family members and by faculty nearing and entering retirement.

# Overall Framework continued

- We should provide a panoply of different kinds of resources, support services, and programs because one size definitely does NOT fit all!
- Individual faculty will have individual problems and issues, so variety and flexibility are crucial.

# Princeton Family-Focused Policies and Programs for Faculty

- Maternity leave
- Automatic one-year extension of the tenure clock for each child
- Work-load relief for the primary caretaker
- Backup care program
- Dependent care travel fund
- Employee Child Care Assistance Program
- Expanding on-campus childcare
- Employee Assistance Provider Work/Life Program
- Partner placement assistance

[http://www.princeton.edu/dof/policies\\_procedures/family\\_friendly/](http://www.princeton.edu/dof/policies_procedures/family_friendly/)

# Princeton Family-Focused Policies and Programs for Graduate Students and Postdocs

- Maternity leave (GS and P)
- One additional term of financial support for the primary caretaker of each child (GS)
- Backup care program (GS and P)
- Dependent care travel fund (GS and P)
- Spousal Travel Program (P)
- Employee Child Care Assistance Program (P) and Student Child Care Assistance Program (GS)
- Expanding on-campus childcare (GS and P)
- Employee Assistance Provider Work/Life Program (GS and P)

<http://gradschool.princeton.edu/studentlife/childcare/>

# Conclusions

- Universities have a long history of providing the resources that faculty need in order to do their best work: these resources have always included life supports as well as work supports.
- The changing lives and increasing diversity of those who work and study at universities require universities to increase the amount and types of life support that they provide.
- While this will require additional resources in order to create and support a new work-life norm, it will expand dramatically the diversity of the professoriate who will be able to engage fully in teaching and research and the quality of the teaching and scholarship that will result.