

**The Devil is in the Details: Creating Family-Friendly Departments for Faculty at the
University of California**

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By Karie Frasch, Angelica Stacy, Mary Ann Mason, Sharon Page-Medrich, and Marc Goulden

“All the rules and policies in the world cannot help faculty and their families if administrators are not kind and supportive people. One administrator (who was my chair, and then associate dean when my child was little) was truly supportive to me, and facilitated my life as a mother and a scholar. I am extremely grateful to her. She is someone who has made a huge difference to my life and to that of my family. She established and helped maintain my commitment to the University of California.” – Female faculty member (Mason, Stacy, & Goulden, 2003, *UC Work and Family Survey*. Unless noted, all quotes are drawn from this source.)

The University of California’s ability to attract and retain the best faculty over the next decade will depend largely on having a culture that values and supports both the work and family life needs of all faculty over the course of their careers. Because the tenure clock generally overlaps with the biological clock, women faculty often face particular challenges in achieving balance and success. Moving beyond the establishment of university-wide family accommodation policies, this chapter focuses on the devil-in-the-details nature of creating cultural change within individual departments, because this is the level at which most faculty experience daily work life (Frasch, Mason, Stacy, Goulden, & Hoffman, 2007). Within this context, department chairs and deans have a central responsibility in understanding the importance of a family-friendly department, and in implementing overall university policies,

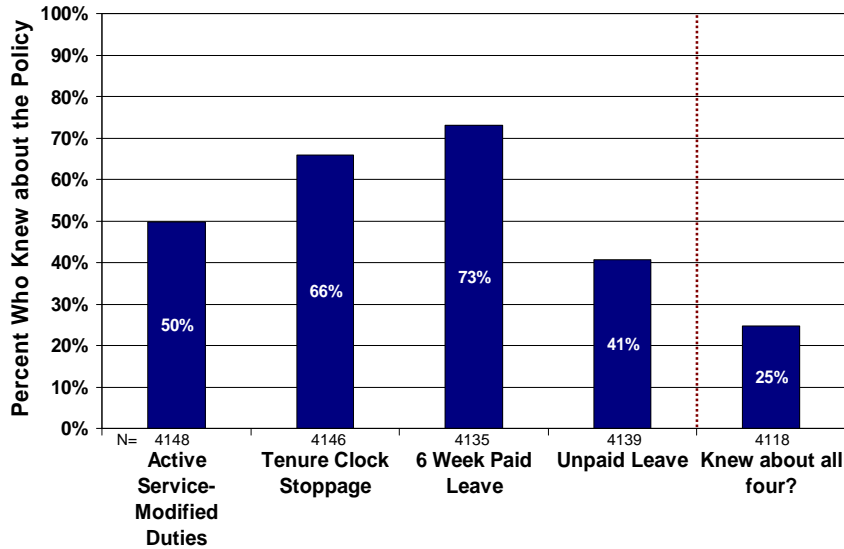
sharing resources, and reinforcing cultural practices to assist all faculty (Quinn, 2007; Riskin, Yen, & Quinn, 2006).

The evolution of family accommodation policies at the University of California

In 2006, the University of California (UC) made significant improvements to a comprehensive package of flexible family-friendly policies for ladder-rank faculty with caregiving responsibilities. This historic effort was the result of a three-year period of internal examination, including discussions by administrators and faculty throughout the UC system. Prior to these enhancements, in 1988, the University of California was one of the first academic institutions to put in place formal family accommodations, and was considered a leader in its commitment to the success of its faculty. However, following the release of findings from our 2003 *UC Work and Family Survey* of more than 4,400 tenure-track and tenured faculty respondents across the UC system, it became clear that the existing policies could be improved, and that creating policies alone does not change the culture toward acceptance of career flexibility (Mason, Stacy, Goulden, Hoffman, & Frasch, 2005).

Although UC's initial family-friendly accommodation policies had been in place for more than 15 years, many faculty were unaware of their existence. Only about a quarter of respondents knew about all four major policies—active service-modified duties (ASMD), tenure clock extension, paid maternity leave, and unpaid parental leave (see figure 1). A male faculty member commented, “Departments are the principal unit for most faculty here, but on the whole departments are inadequately staffed to update and educate faculty. As it is, much of the information is passed on by way of an ‘oral tradition.’ It works if you are in the loop, and tends to benefit those faculty (especially those with tenure) who have been around longer.”

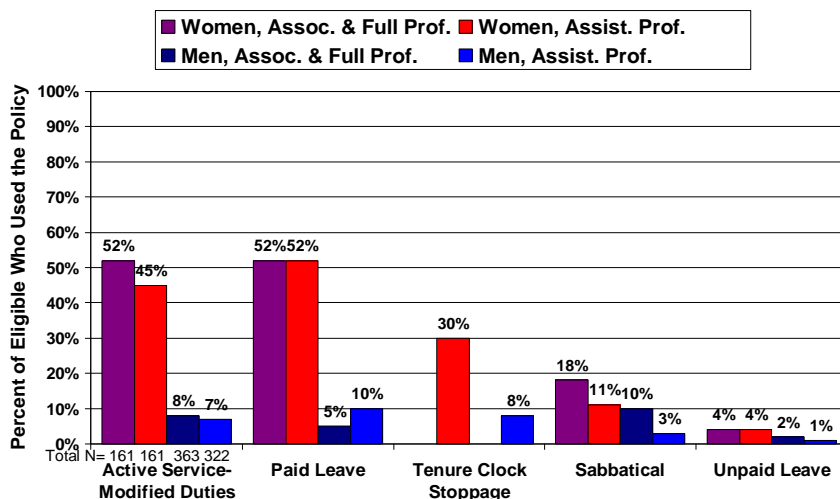
**Figure 1:
UC Faculty Members' Awareness of Policies**



Source: Mason, Mary Ann, Angelica Stacy, and Marc Goulden. 2003. "The UC Faculty Work and Family Survey." (<http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu>).

Of those faculty who were eligible to use the policies at one point in their career, many chose not to do so (see figure 2), often because they feared negative career repercussions; over half of eligible women who chose not to take ASMD said that they did not use the policy because they feared it would hurt their chances for tenure or promotion. A female faculty member said, "All of the maternity benefits were lumped under the same heading by the chair as 'unfair advantage.' I saw the two other women with young children get punished on reviews for not getting enough published even though they 'had time off and had more time to write.' I wasn't going to risk it." This fear-based response is observable not only in the low use rates of existing family-friendly policies by eligible faculty, but also in the conscious efforts of faculty women to delay or forgo fertility. Delaying child rearing is often not the desire of women faculty – 40% of our faculty women (compared to just 20% of men) past the age of likely fertility (ages 40-60) indicated that they had fewer children than they wanted.

Figure 2: Use of Family Friendly Policies and Sabbaticals by UC Faculty Parents, by Gender and Rank*



*At the time of first child's entry into household at a pre-tenure or post-tenure faculty rank, post policy implementation (August 1, 1988 to present). The faculty member needed to be employed at UC at time of child's arrival into the household and the policy had to be in place.

Following from these findings, the University of California made significant changes to its family accommodation policies. Among the most fundamental is the now unambiguous message that faculty men and women with substantial caregiving responsibilities, or those who give birth to a child, are *entitled* to the use of the appropriate family accommodation policies (rather than *may request* them); the cost of replacement teachers is centralized at the university-level to eliminate hardship for individual departments. Also explicitly stated in the Academic Personnel Manual is a directive that peer reviewers may not act with prejudice in their evaluation of the promotions or advancement of faculty who use the policies (University of California, Academic Personnel Manual, 2006).

The UC family accommodations package is designed to support faculty over their life course. Birth mothers receive fully-paid childbearing leave. New parents, birth or adoptive, with substantial caregiving responsibilities (50% or more of care) are entitled to a full term of active service-modified duties (ASMD), typically teaching relief; biological mothers receive a second

term. Assistant professors who are new parents with substantial caregiving responsibilities can extend the tenure clock for one year per birth/adoption event (for a maximum of two years during the probationary period). All parents may at any time request up to a year of unpaid parental leave. The Chancellor has the authority to approve sick leave for faculty to care for themselves or their family members for an unspecified period of time. Faculty with family needs can be granted a permanent change or temporary reduction in the percentage of time of a full-time appointment. This comprehensive package of policies, one of the most progressive in the country, goes a long way toward creating an environment where caregivers can succeed in their academic careers while also having a satisfying family life. The experiences of individual faculty, however, are dependent to a great extent on the culture of the department they work in, including the attitudes of department chairs and other faculty (Drago et al., 2005).

Creating a family-friendly department

Findings from the *UC Work and Family Survey* clearly indicate that changing the culture of the university requires not only robust policies but also practical solutions for women and men balancing work and family. Improvements to family accommodation policies on the books can help to alleviate some of the challenges, but appropriate assessment and implementation is central to making the policies meaningful. As the front-line administrators for each department, chairs and deans have a unique obligation to be leaders in the effort to promote family friendliness (Riskin et al., 2006).

Based on our experiences at the University of California as well as empirical findings from many sources, this section offers guidance for department chairs, or others advocating for change, to follow. Change includes three major phases: Assessment, Implementation, and Devil-is-in-the-Details. Although this process could be undertaken at any time, it is most likely to

succeed if a baseline of family accommodation policies are already in place at the institution (please refer to other chapters in this book for advice and strategies for creating or improving family-friendly policies).

Phase 1: Assessment

The first phase of cultural transformation involves four steps (not necessarily in this order), including knowing the importance of making family friendliness a priority, evaluating the department's current practices and climate, understanding cultural and unconscious bias issues, and knowing the potential legal ramifications if policies are not supported.

Step 1. Make understanding the importance of family-friendliness a major priority and goal for your department.

Failure to understand the importance of family-friendliness, particularly in the sciences, results in fewer women and a less diverse faculty overall (Mason, Goulden, & Frasch, 2008). All department chairs and deans, as well as faculty, should be familiar with the overwhelming data on the negative effects of the academic structure on the academic pipeline for women. (See published reports and papers, such as: American Council on Education, 2005, and Committee on Maximizing the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering, 2006). At Berkeley we've observed that, compared to the pool of qualified PhD candidates, women under-apply to faculty positions relative to their national rates of academic achievement (Mason et al., 2005). Detailed analyses from the Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR) – a biennial weighted, longitudinal study following more than 160,000 PhD recipients across all disciplines until they reach age 76 – help to explain these issues, which can be accounted for in part by differential dynamics of family formation. For each year after the PhD, married men with children under age six are 50% more likely to enter a tenure-track position than are married women with children

under age six. Single women without children (or those who have them more than five years after the PhD) do as well as married men with young children. Overall, for each year after securing a tenure-track position, men are 20% more likely to achieve tenure than women (Mason & Goulden, 2002; Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2008).

Faculty careers often have a negative effect on women's family lives. Using the SDR, analyses of the life courses of PhD recipients show that only one in three women without children who take a fast-track university job ever become mothers; women who achieve tenure are more than twice as likely as men who achieve tenure to be single 12 years out from the PhD; and if married, faculty women are significantly more likely than faculty men to experience divorce or separation (Mason & Goulden, 2004). One of the reasons why women leave the academy and have such different family formation patterns from men faculty is the tension between work and family responsibilities – a tension experienced more strongly by women (Mason et al., 2005). Knowing this information is valuable for making the links between family friendliness, faculty composition, and faculty satisfaction.

Step 2. Review and assess your department's current practices and climate.

Women with family caregiving needs sometimes contend with a sense of hostility from colleagues and an unwelcoming or alienating campus climate. This atmosphere is often invisible to many men, who tend to describe a better climate for women than women themselves report, as indicated by faculty surveys at UC Berkeley, MIT, Princeton, the University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin (Handelsman et al., 2005; UC Berkeley Office for Faculty Equity, 2004). In departments with a skewed gender distribution, typically with many more men than women, it is common for women to have this experience (University of Michigan ADVANCE

program, 2007). In this case, it is unlikely that women, especially more junior faculty, will readily express their opinions.

Departments can begin to assess their climate and equity issues by reviewing any available data from campus-wide surveys, and then examining objective information in areas such as salary, merit raises, space and equipment or other resources, administrative support, promotions, and teaching and committee assignments. To learn about the experiences of individual faculty members, department chairs can create a diverse committee to conduct interviews and meetings with all faculty, and set clear ground rules for interactions. If the goal of creating a positive departmental climate is clearly communicated by the dean and department chair, it is more likely that women faculty will feel safe to express unpopular or negative views. Careful listening and expressed empathy alone can go a long way toward improving the climate.

Step 3. Become conscious about unconscious bias issues concerning caregiving and gender.

Numerous studies on the role of unconscious and implicit assumptions reveal the fact that even the most careful people (both men and women) have biases related to caregiving and gender (Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2008; Williams, 2001; Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, WISELI, 2005). People are often unaware of their implicit biases, even when their behavior reflects them. For example, in a study of job seekers (Correll & Benard, 2005), male and female evaluators were asked to rate a candidate randomly assigned a male or female name and parental status. When asked if they would hire the applicant, 84% of participants said they would hire the woman without children, compared to only 47% of the mothers. In assigning a pay range, non-mothers were offered \$11,000 more than mothers. In contrast, fathers were offered \$6,000 more in salary than non-fathers. In another study, 238 male

and female academic psychologists were asked to evaluate an identical curriculum vitae randomly assigned with a male or a female name. Both men and women participants were more likely to hire the male applicant, and also gave the male applicant better evaluations for teaching, research, and service experience (Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke, 1999).

Department chairs, and all faculty, can learn about their unconscious biases through reading summaries of the wealth of research in this area. They can also initiate discussions on the topic through brown bag lunches or workshops. *Project Implicit* (www.projectimplicit.net), an online tool and associated collection of research, provides an easy way to become conscious about these issues through self-assessments. Research indicates that evaluators who are busy, distracted by other tasks, or experiencing stress are more likely to engage in evaluations that are based on assumptions (WISELI, 2005), so providing sufficient time and resources is critical. When hiring and promotion committees are aware of implicit biases they can work to minimize their influence on evaluations. Similarly, chairs and others can consider the ways in which their assumptions may or may not contribute to a less positive climate for women and all caregivers.

Step 4. Be aware of and understand the variety of legal issues related to the role of department chair, including the fact that failure to support policies and laws can, in extreme cases, result in litigation.

Unfortunately, in some instances before 2006, UC faculty who requested the use of family accommodations encountered resistance from their department chair; memories of these types of experiences percolate through the culture of the university and undermine a collective sense of family-friendliness. Examples of negative responses to past requests for family accommodations at UC include: “I want to emphasize that the greatest source of work-related stress in relation to having a child has been the hostility and recalcitrance of my chair who

announced that he thought of ASMD as a 'special privilege' and who fought it all the way" (female faculty member); "I received a sneering denial by my chair, who said that, while another male colleague at [UC] may have enjoyed that 'vacation' our department couldn't spare my teaching services" (male faculty member referring to denial of ASMD by chair); "I was told by my department chair, as untenured faculty, actually using the stopped tenure clock or leave would be held against me. I was back teaching a day after getting out of the hospital" (female faculty member); and "My chairman initially tried to pressure me to not take ASMD 'for the good of the department' because he did not want to set a precedent and because he said that the university would not reimburse the department for the expense of hiring a replacement teacher" (male faculty member).

Most department chairs do not receive training on legal issues related to family accommodations. Having a working knowledge of the main policies that affect faculty is necessary because if conflicts arise, the principles of the university will be used as the basis of judgment (Connel, Franke, & Lee, 2001; Hecht, Higginson, Gmelch, & Tucker, 1999). Comments made by administrators have been offered as evidence in litigation over the denial of tenure from various institutions (Euben, 2004; Franke & White, 2000; Williams, 2004), and women have won recent court cases. For example, a 2005 ruling by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) found "reasonable cause" that a female assistant professor was a victim of sex discrimination when she was turned down for tenure. The professor's complaint, supported by the EEOC, stated that her department gave her work rave reviews until she took two leaves, one each for the birth of her two daughters. After that time, other faculty members raised doubts about how productive she would be and ultimately denied

her tenure despite an impressive teaching and publication record and positive assessment from experts in her field. She was subsequently granted retroactive tenure (Jaschik, 2005).

Choosing to do a thorough assessment of the department culture and to prioritize becoming family-friendly is a major commitment; results will not occur overnight. Evaluating the current environment may turn up issues and concerns that do not have easy answers as well as resistance from some faculty, particularly senior faculty who may be more invested in maintaining the status quo. However, the long-term payoff for making the culture of every department welcoming and supportive of those with caregiving needs will far exceed the up-front investment.

Phase 2: Implementation

The second phase, implementation, includes learning what the family accommodation policies and applicable laws are that apply to different faculty constituents, actively highlighting them, being proactive about recruiting faculty with diverse experiences and backgrounds, and advocating for faculty during the promotion and tenure process.

Step 1. Know the family accommodation policies and laws that apply to your faculty.

Department chairs are charged with an enormous range of tasks and responsibilities. Most serve in the role for only a few years, and many receive little training. Family accommodation policies and laws are just a few of the hundreds of policies they are expected to know about. Unfortunately, most faculty turn to their department chair to learn about the applicable policies and expect them to be knowledgeable. When department chairs give incorrect information it is usually faculty members who suffer. Universities can help department chairs by creating toolkits with summarized information on a variety of topics as well as web links to complete information. Department chair leadership workshops are also invaluable. At the

University of California we have a toolkit specifically on family-friendly issues called *Creating a Family Friendly Department: Chairs and Deans Toolkit* (Frasch et al., 2007). Whether or not a toolkit exists, it is the responsibility of department chairs to know what the policies are and how they are applied to individual situations.

Step 2. Actively highlight, advertise and support your department's family accommodation policies and procedures, benefits, and resources for all faculty (including recruits).

Taking this step involves having and sharing a vision of what the department should be like, and helps assure faculty that they will not be arbitrarily disadvantaged in promotion, advancement or compensation. Communicating this information regularly and consistently through email, written correspondence, departmental meetings, and newsletters helps everyone to know that the department is committed to being family-friendly. Solicit, gather, and disseminate family-friendly materials and brochures for this purpose.

Junior faculty, particularly women, can also benefit greatly from mentoring by department chairs or senior faculty about combining work and family. To counter feelings that work/family balance is a unique situation to be figured out alone, junior faculty need to hear from and see others who are able successfully to balance their professional and personal lives without negative repercussions. For example, UC Davis' Faculty Advisors for Work Life program (<http://academicpersonnel.ucdavis.edu/worklife/default.cfm>) has a group of trained senior faculty from a variety of departments who are available to consult and share wisdom and experiences of balancing work and family in academia. Faculty can seek them out and speak confidentially about concerns or issues. The advisors also serve to publicize and provide information to the campus on family-friendly policies and programs.

Step 3. Be proactive about recruiting and hiring diverse faculty for your department, including those who have temporarily slowed down their career for family caregiving reasons.

Communicate that your department is a place where faculty with current or potential caregiving responsibilities will thrive (University of Michigan, ADVANCE program, 2007; University of Washington, ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, 2006). For scholars who delay their academic careers to start families or provide care to others, it is extremely difficult to return to academia by securing tenure-track or postdoctoral positions. Faculty hiring committees often view these applicants as suspect because of gaps in their vitae and the time that has elapsed since they received their PhDs. Departments can set a positive example for others and help to combat the loss of potentially excellent scholars by encouraging faculty hiring committees to discount caregiving-related resume gaps.

When recruiting finalists, department chairs or hiring committees should provide or make use of dual career assistance, relocation assistance, and childcare support. In a 2006-2007 UC Berkeley survey of departmental hiring practices (Stacy & Goulden, 2006), department chairs rated the impact of 18 recruitment factors in their effect on the successful recruitment of first-choice candidates. The three factors with the most negative reported impact on recruitment were all related to relocation: the availability of housing, good schools, and high quality childcare. These are issues that are more likely to affect women candidates.

Lack of support for dual-career issues may result in losing some of the best talent. Approximately 80% of academics have partners who are employed professionally (Didion, 1996); women academics are more likely to be affected by dual career concerns because of their higher rate of marriage to other academics (approximately 40%); and women employed in the sciences are particularly likely to be partnered with other scientists (Astin & Milem, 1997;

McNeil & Sher, 1998). Overall, women are more likely to defer to a male partner's career – either by leaving the academic pipeline or by not considering moving because of partner or family concerns.

Step 4. Establish and maintain transparency in the promotion and tenure process.

Department chairs need to be advocates for faculty who have used family accommodation policies through the promotion and tenure process. The more information faculty who have used the policies are given about their progress toward advancement or tenure, the more likely it is that they will view the environment as open and the chair as someone they can trust (University of Washington, ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, 2007). One faculty member said, “When I was chair of the campus Committee on Appointments and Promotions, I had to ‘remind’ male colleagues on the committee regularly that ‘stop the clock’ time does not count in the calculation of years at UC!” Deans, budget committees, and outside reviewers should be directed to focus on quality and total quantity of scholarly productivity, rather than time since degree or job hire, so that faculty who slow down due to family obligations are not unduly penalized in the peer review process. This information can be conveyed through standardized forms or sample letters at the level of central administration or directly from the department.

These steps, implemented together, link the knowledge acquired through assessing the state of the department with respect to these issues with actions to support current and future faculty through all phases of their academic career. However, additional steps are needed to ensure that the culture becomes one that enables all faculty to have both a successful work and family life.

Devil-is-in-the-Details

The overall success of cultural transformation depends on considering and including the details, the seemingly more minor practices or programs that contribute to the larger goal. Not doing so can derail any amount of good intention.

Step 1. Make the use of family accommodations the standard for conducting business in your department rather than viewing them as exceptions or “special privileges.”

When departments can access centralized funding to cover the replacement costs of teachers for faculty who take leave, it is much easier to make the use of family accommodation policies standard practice because the burden on the department is much less. However, even when this is not the case, department chairs need to adopt and convey the attitude that most faculty, both men and women, will want to use the family accommodation policies for which they are eligible. Supporting faculty in using the policies is an investment in the future success of individuals as well as the health of the department. One faculty member aptly said, “Department chairs should encourage, not discourage, faculty from using them. Their use should become a regular part of the personnel system, not the exception. Information about how many faculty use the policies should be published to encourage their use.”

Step 2. Maintain ‘zero tolerance’ for discriminatory and disparaging comments and behaviors.

Make clear to all faculty that hostile comments and behaviors are unacceptable and violate the rules governing professional conduct (for example, see the University of California Academic Personnel Manual - APM – 015, The Faculty Code of Conduct <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/apm/apm-015.pdf>). Be a model for the department by treating all faculty with dignity and respect, both in public settings and in face-to-face situations. If a faculty member indicates that negative comments have been made, take immediate action to

learn more about the situation and resolve whatever issues come to the fore. Conversely, regularly and publicly acknowledge efforts made by faculty or administrators to improve the departmental climate.

Step 3. Implement small changes that can have a significant impact on the culture of your department.

When approached by faculty members needing to use family accommodation policies, encourage them to make use of the policies in whatever way works best for them and their family, rather than what may be most convenient for the department. During pregnancy, some women may benefit from or need modifications to their position, for example, transferring to a less strenuous or hazardous position if it is medically necessary and can be reasonably accommodated. Also, work closely with faculty members to determine course and committee assignments that may be more manageable during the semester of their return from a leave.

The scheduling of faculty meetings, classes, seminars, and receptions should take into account the competing and often simultaneous demands of work and caregiving for faculty trying to excel in both realms (“Meetings and events very often conflict with the end of the childcare day. Guilt and failure on all fronts is a given” – female faculty member). Whenever possible, departmental events should be scheduled between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. (during regular childcare provider hours). A small change of this type can have a large impact on departmental culture, feelings of inclusion among faculty, and faculty success in the academic arena.

Dispelling myths about lack of seriousness among faculty who extend the clock to meet family needs, or nursing mothers who bring babies to conferences or presentations, for example, will go far in fostering a family-friendly culture. The provision of a travel fund for faculty (particularly breastfeeding mothers) who must bring a young child with them for research or

conferences, or who must hire additional help when they are away, should exist at the department or campus level.

Step 4. Periodically assess the effectiveness of your efforts toward family-friendliness.

After an initial assessment of department climate, set clearly defined goals and expectations for improvement. These may be a combination of objective measures (e.g., has the number of faculty in the department who have used family accommodation policies increased, are salaries equitable between men and women, etc.) and more subjective measures (how do different faculty constituents feel about the climate, are there more open and direct conversations about the importance of balancing work and personal life, etc.). When initially assessing the climate of the department, communicate clearly to faculty that there will be continual evaluation of the goals that are set. Re-assess the effectiveness of the efforts at regular intervals (e.g., yearly), and publicly announce the results to the department.

Conclusion

Through our experience on the *UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge* projects, we have learned that putting in place policy changes are much more straightforward processes than enacting cultural transformation. But the investment in the culture of the institution is critical. No amount of well-crafted policy on the books can take the place of support and good will, the necessary ingredients of a family-friendly culture. This generation of upcoming young scholars is different in many ways from those of just thirty or forty years ago - men and women fill the ranks in nearly equal numbers, and they value and expect flexibility and balance between their career and other life goals. Becoming truly family-friendly is an indispensable component of success for those institutions that want to attract and keep the best faculty throughout their careers.

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