



**STUDY OF UTILIZATION OF ACADEMIC FAMILY
POLICIES 1990-2008:
A CASE STUDY FROM ONE UNIVERSITY**

For more information about this study, contact:
Carol Hoffman, Associate Provost
Columbia University
(212) 854-9033
choffman@columbia.edu

June 2012
© 2012 Columbia University. All rights reserved.
No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form without express written
permission from Columbia University, Office of Work/Life.

Introduction

In the last 20 - 30 years, universities have joined the ranks of other organizations that are addressing the challenges that professionals face when they are starting families while simultaneously pursuing upward mobility in their careers. Too often, trying to pursue an academic career and fully participate in family life becomes a calculus of tradeoffs, rather than a practice of integration. For women, according to an annual enrollment [report](#) from the Council of Graduate Schools (2011)¹, who comprise slightly more than half of all doctoral degree recipients (50.4%), these tensions are frequently exacerbated by the conflicting imperatives of tenure clocks that coincide with biological clocks.

As a result, many universities, such as Columbia University, Princeton University, and UC Berkeley, have instituted family policies for faculty that are intended to ease these stresses. While implementing such policies is a major step forward, the impact of the policies—whether they are, in fact, facilitating positive outcomes for those that use them—is even more important.

Currently, Columbia has three parental leave policies and one statutory policy for full-time tenure-track and tenured officers of instruction at its Morningside campus. These policies, which include child care leave, part-time career appointment, parental workload relief, and statutory tenure clock stoppage, are intended to help faculty balance teaching, research, and parental obligations. The goal of these policies is to provide individuals with the flexibility and time necessary to care for their children while still pursuing academic careers. Significantly, these family leave policies also benefit the University by increasing the recruitment pool and retention of talented faculty who do not want to choose between academic careers and family.

To measure whether these policies are having their intended effect, the Provost's Office of Work/Life and Office of Planning and Institutional Research conducted a study at Columbia's Morningside campus using data from 1990-2008.² The overall goal of this study was to discover and

¹ Bell, N. (2011). *Graduate Enrollment and Degrees: 2000 to 2010*. Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

² The data used for this report is as accurate as the information that was entered into Columbia University's employee record systems. However, we cannot confirm that the information on the incidence of policies utilization and which policies

elucidate any utilization patterns of the policies, including demographic factors, as well as to discern any impact that the policies may have had on the career trajectories of those who have used them. As far as we know, Columbia's self-study is the first of its kind. We conclude with some policy recommendations informed by both the analysis of the data presented here and the anecdotal experiences of faculty. These recommendations are offered to ensure that the policies will prove successful in meeting the needs of faculty with family responsibilities.

Why Leave Policies Were Developed

In universities, family leave policies were first developed in the late 1980's primarily in response to the changing composition of the professoriate. From the beginnings of the profession until quite recently, faculty at institutions of higher education were almost exclusively male. If they chose to have families, they traditionally had stay-at-home wives who could take responsibility for their children and home life.

While some faculty still fit this mold, women have increased their pursuit of academic careers, altering the typical academic profile. One half of all doctorates are now being granted to women (Council of Graduate Schools, 2011), so ideally women would become half of the professoriate.

Moreover, today there are many more dual career couples, who want to have both successful careers and children. The challenge for women is still greater than that for men - research shows that eighty-nine percent of female faculty members have spouses who are employed full-time compared to only fifty-six percent of their male counterparts.³

For years, universities failed to accommodate faculty who sought to integrate parenthood with their professional lives. As a result, women began "falling out of the academic pipeline" because the expectations of their work conflicted with their duties in the home as primary caregivers.⁴ Less noticeable is the way women's ability to have children is impacted by the tenure clock, which is not

were used was coded and entered into the system correctly as anecdotally we have learned of faculty who used the policies but were not included in the sample.

³ Jacobs, J.A. (2004). "The Faculty Time Divide." *Sociological Forum*. 9, 3-27.

⁴ Mason, M.A., Goulden, M. (2002) Do babies matter? The effect of family formation on lifelong careers of academic of men and women. *Academe*, Nov-Dec. 1-24.

the case for men. In 2004, *University of California's Faculty Family Friendly Edge* surveyed the tenure-track and tenured faculty in the 12 campuses of the University of California system to assess how they used family policies. This survey showed that tenure-track and tenured women faculty had fewer children than their male peers, and compared to male faculty, women faculty more frequently desired more children.⁵

Another study, by O'Laughlin and Bischoff, supported *UC Family Edge's* findings and demonstrated that women in academia reported greater levels of stress in trying to balance their clashing familial and academic responsibilities.⁶ Tied to this was a feeling more common among women than men that there was not sufficient institutional support for their attempts at balancing work and family.

Accordingly, administrations came to see these policies as necessary for a productive, supportive, and equitable academic work environment. Once implemented, however, the question of their effectiveness in promoting family and career formation for both female and male faculty arose. Research on similar policies in corporations has shown that the simple existence of work-family policies is not sufficient, as administrators and employees must be encouraged to use them to meet the intended purpose.⁷

History of Leave Policies at Columbia

Columbia was one of the earliest university adopters of parental policies, starting in the 1970s with part-time career appointment. Maternity disability was added in the 1980s, followed by workload relief (on the Morningside campus only) and infant/child care leaves in the early 1990s.

Part-time Career Appointments

⁵ UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge (2005). An initiative for tenure-track faculty at the University of California: The report. Retrieved: <http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu/ucfamilyedge.pdf>.

⁶ O'Laughlin & Bischoff (2005). Balancing parenthood and academia: Work/family stress as influenced by gender and tenure status. *Journal of Family Issues*, 26(1), 79-106

⁷ Hochschild, A. (1997). *Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*. New York: Metropolitan Books.

As a first step in assisting full-time tenure-track faculty in raising a family, the University created part-time career appointments (PTCA) in the 1970s. This reduced appointment allows tenure-track faculty to retain their full-time status, benefits, privileges, and half of their salary, while performing half of their normal duties. Moreover, to provide additional time before an officer of instruction must be reviewed for tenure, each year of a PTCA is treated as half a year in determining the up-or-out date for tenure. To be eligible for this appointment, the officer must be the primary caregiver of a child under the age of nine and must plan to devote the time taken off to tend to this responsibility (as opposed to holding an additional position elsewhere).

Maternity Disability

Since the 1980s, New York State has had a state maternity disability plan in place. This policy provides women, whose physicians indicate they are unable to work during pregnancy and/or post delivery, with a reduced but uninterrupted salary. For a normal pregnancy and delivery, this period of time is usually six to eight weeks immediately before and after delivery. This right to paid maternity disability leave applies to most employees with benefits, though faculty receive full pay during their disability leave.

Infant/Child Care Leave

In 1990, Columbia University implemented infant care leave, which was recently renamed “child care leave.” A full-time tenure-track or tenured officer of instruction is eligible for child care leave if she has a baby; if the spouse or same-sex domestic partner has a baby; or if he or she adopts a child of less than school age, becomes a foster parent to a child, or if the child meets New York State’s definition of “hard to place” and is less than 18 years old. Faculty who meet this criteria are eligible to take leave from their positions without pay or teach a reduced course load with partial salary for up to a year. Women who give birth to a child may use this leave after taking a paid maternity disability leave (see above). Importantly, fathers and adoptive parents are also eligible to use child care leave. The right to the first twelve weeks of any child care leave is covered under the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which was implemented in 1993.

Parental Workload Relief

In the mid-1990s, the University Senate issued a resolution that the deans adopted entitled parental workload relief (PWLR). The deans on the Morningside campus implemented this resolution in the spring of 1994; it is not available at the Columbia University Medical Center. Tenured and tenure-track faculty taking PWLR are excused from teaching and serving on administrative committees, though they must still make themselves available for consultation with students and continue with their research. To be eligible for PWLR, the full-time officer of instruction must hold an appointment title of professor, associate or assistant professor, instructor, senior lecturer, lecturer, or associate. Additionally, the officer of instruction must be the primary caregiver to either a newborn child, a newly adopted child either of less than school age or under the age of 18 if meeting New York State's legal definition of "hard-to-place," or a child that is disabled.

Officers of instruction who decide to utilize the PWLR policy, must do so within the first year of the birth or adoption of the child. When on PWLR, officers of instruction may either receive workload relief for one term at full salary, one year at half salary, or one year at full salary while teaching half of their normal course load. The officers must continue to make themselves available for a comparable portion of their administrative assignments, and continue to meet with students and conduct research. Additionally, if the faculty is tenure-track, the tenure clock is stopped for one year.

Because this study included those who took leave from 1990-2008, it should be noted that during the period of time reviewed, faculty members were only allowed two PWLR leaves regardless of the number of children newly brought into the home. The policy changed in 2008 to allow a PWLR leave each time a faculty member has a new child, rather than being limited to two children. What remains the same is that the tenure clock is still only stopped twice per tenure-track faculty member regardless of the number of children born/adopted.

Tenure-Clock Stoppage for Primary Caregivers

The tenure-clock is automatically stopped when tenure-track faculty request a PWLR, unless they request that it not be stopped. For the purpose of this study, we are assuming that all tenure-track officers who took PWLR during the study's timeframe stopped their tenure clocks.

Alternately, tenure-track faculty may request that the provost stop the tenure-clock even if they do not choose to take a leave of absence or partake in the University's workload relief option. To be eligible for tenure-clock stoppage, the faculty member must be the primary caregiver of a child less than a year old for a minimum of three continuous months. For the purpose of this policy, officers are the primary parent if they are a single parent or, when there are two parents, the other is working full-time or enrolled as a full-time student. As with PWLR, a tenure clock may be stopped only twice, for up to one year each time it is invoked.

In 2008, the university modified the procedure for requesting tenure clock stoppage. Previously faculty members could only request the stoppage from their department chair or dean, but now the faculty member can choose to request it directly from the senior vice provost of academic administration instead. Having a choice is helpful to those faculty who may not feel they will receive support for their request from the chair/dean.

Analysis

For the purposes of this study, the Office of Work/Life and the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (OPIR) analyzed human resource faculty records from 1990 – 2008 to identify tenured and tenure-track faculty who had taken child care leaves, part-time career appointments, and/or parental workload relief at the Morningside campus. Columbia University Medical Center faculty were not included because that campus does not have the workload relief policy. Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory faculty were not included because the few tenure-track and tenured professors there are members of other Morningside campus departments and therefore were already included in this review. Professors of practice or professors in discipline were not included in this study since these individuals are not subject to a tenure-clock.

For this period, 167 individuals were identified as either tenure-track or tenured faculty who used at least one of the parental policies identified above. The human resources records for each employee included gender, date of birth, department, hire date, start and end dates for each leave, date of tenure (if tenured), and if applicable, the date that either the individual left Columbia University or left the tenure-track for other employment at Columbia.

To understand the utilization of these parental policies, the following factors were examined: who used a policy and when, how many times the policies were used, whether or not more than one type of policy was used, and the tenure-status at first use. As a result, a clearer picture of the utilization rates is presented, as well as evidence of the effectiveness of the policies in supporting the careers of the policy users.

Tables 1A and 1B provide detailed breakdowns of the study sample by gender, tenure status at first use and the policy which was utilized. The data gathered from this sample of 167 faculty who used those policies suggests that the vast majority (125 or approximately 75%) used their first parental policy while on tenure-track, while only 25% of policy use was by tenured faculty.

Parental Workload Relief (PWL) became the most widely used parental leave policy after its implementation in 1994. The data revealed that 89% of policy users—109 tenure-track and 40 tenured faculty took the PWL option. For the most part, individuals who used either infant/child care leave or part-time career appointment did so only before PWL became available. PWL probably became the most widely used policy due to financial reasons – child care leave is unpaid and part-time career appointment is half pay. In addition, faculty prefer not to leave their academic roles altogether and would most likely continue some research, working with doctoral students, etc., regardless of pay status, with an obvious preference for paid, reduced work vs. unpaid.

Table 1a: Type of Parental Policy by Gender and Tenure Status: Tenure-track

Type of first policy	Tenure Status at first use		
	TENURE-TRACK		
	Female	Male	Total
Parent Workload Relief (PWL)	51 (47%)	58 (53%)	109
	81%	94%	
Infant/Child Care	8 (73%)	3 (27%)	11
	13%	5%	
Part-time Career Appt (PTCA)	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5
	6%	1%	
Grand Total	63	62	125
% of Total	100%	100%	

Table 1b: Type of Parental Policy by Gender and Tenure Status: Tenured

	Tenure Status at first use		
	TENURED		
Type of first policy	Female	Male	Total
Parent Workload Relief (PWLRL)	9 (23%)	31 (77%)	40
	90%	97%	
Infant/Child Care	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
	10%	3%	
Part-time Career Appt (PTCA)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grand Total	10	32	42
% of Total	100%	100%	

Not reflected in the tables is that most of these 167 faculty members used a parental policy once, but 32 individuals (about 20% of the sample) used it two or more times. Though not a significant difference, the majority of the “two or more users” were men (18 men compared to 14 women). For those who used PWLRL twice (12 men and 8 women) pre-tenure, there does not appear to be a negative impact on obtaining tenure or remaining on tenure-track. If the increased use by men indicates that they had more children than women while on tenure-track, it is consistent with research findings that male faculty have more children than female faculty.⁸

GENDER:

Though there are a fairly equal number of men (58) and women (51) using PWLRL, the male and female subpopulations of tenure-track and tenured faculty at Columbia University are not equivalent. In fall 2008, for example, despite the concerted focus on additional hiring of women faculty since 1990, 73% of the tenure-track and tenured professors at Columbia were male and 27% were women. Proportionally, more females than males have taken advantage of parental policies. Perhaps more women than men identify as primary caregivers.

⁸ UC Faculty Family Friendly Edge (2005). An initiative for tenure-track faculty at the University of California: The report. <http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu/ucfamilyedge.pdf>.

Post-tenure, as shown in Table 1b, 77% of the policy use was by men; men used PWLR for the first time (31) much more frequently than women (9) post-tenure. The majority of these PWLR users have remained employed at Columbia, with only 10% leaving Columbia after utilizing PWLR while tenured.

There is much speculation as to why men use PWLR post-tenure more than women. Some possible explanations follow. Men who choose to parent, unlike women, are not hindered by age as it relates to ability to conceive. A growing number of fields are requiring lengthy postdoc appointments and given the increasing number of years before attaining the first tenure-track position, many women are not able to conceive and give birth to children by the time they achieve tenure due to age. Another explanation is that some tenured women who then have children are not the primary caregivers but have spouses/partners who are. For others, by the time they have achieved tenure, these women do not envision starting a family. Because of their focus on career they might not have had the opportunity to form relationships in which to raise a family and choose not to single parent. As is true also for men, regardless of other circumstances, some women do not choose to raise children.

Why do men use PWLR post-tenure so frequently, compared to those who use it pre-tenure? One theory is that tenured men are older than their wives/partners who are at an earlier stage of their careers and don't have the same latitude in taking the time off to be primary caregivers. Another assumption is that these are men who have second families, and because of their tenure status are in a better position to be primary caregivers than with their first family while they were in graduate school or on tenure-track.

Women (and men) are often advised by senior faculty to wait until tenure to have children, but as Table 1b shows and Table 2a and 2b support, women's use of parental policies demonstrates that women are not waiting to have children post-tenure. In fact, the age of women who use PWLR for first-time pregnancies is quite old, even with the trend of increasingly fewer years between hire and policy use.

AGE:

Table 2a.
Tenure-Track and Age

Tenure-track at first use, only PWLR		
	Gender	
	Female	Male
Total average age at 1st PWLR	36.6	36
Total average age at hire	33.1	32.3
Total number of faculty	51	58

The differences between men and women faculty on tenure track in terms of years from date of hire to first PWLR is negligible, 3.5 for women vs

3.7 for men.

The age range of woman taking first PWLR on tenure track was 29.4 – 47.4 years old with a mean of 36.6 years. For women, the ability to conceive and birth a child, especially when it is a first child, in the mid 30's - late 40's is difficult.

Table 2b.
Tenured and Age

Tenured at first use, only PWLR		
	Gender	
	Female	Male
Total average age at 1st PWLR	41.8	45.5
Total average age at hire	34	35
Total number of faculty	9	31

The mean ages of women's and men's first use of PWLR post-tenure is quite high (41.8 women and 45.5 for men). Clearly women cannot assume fertility over the age of 40 and that is probably one significant reason why we don't see more women using parental policies post-tenure.

CAREER PROGRESSION

Of the 109 people who took PWLR, 49 individuals (45%) were still on tenure-track in January, 2009. Of those faculty, most (42) remained on tenure-track at Columbia. Only seven (five men and two women) left to be on tenure-track at another university or college.

Table 3.
Faculty Career Progression for Tenure-Track Professors who used PWLR

		Tenure status at first leave					
		Tenure-track					
Outcome	Location	Female	Male	Total by Location	%	Total by Outcome	%
Obtained Tenure	At CU	12 48%	13 52%	25	23%	47	43%
	Left CU	10 45%	12 55%	22	20%		
On Tenure-Track	At CU	19 45%	23 55%	42	39%	49	45%
	Left CU	2 29%	5 71%	7	6%		
Off-Track	At CU	2 40%	3 60%	5	5%	13	12%
	Left CU	6 75%	2 25%	8	7%		
Total	At CU	33 46%	39 54%	72	66%	109	100%
	Left CU	18 49%	19 51%	37	34%		
Grand Total		51	58	109	100%		
%		47%	53%	100%			

Out of the same 109 tenure-track individuals that took PWLR, 47 of them (43%) obtained tenure after using parental policies. Of those who obtained tenure, 25 faculty were at Columbia and 22 at other universities/colleges as of January 2009. The numbers for men and women were almost equal in those two groups. For those not remaining at Columbia, we contacted their former department and/or searched the web to learn where they went and if they had achieved tenure.

There were 13 faculty members who did not remain in tenured or tenure-track roles. Of these 13, five people are still at Columbia but in non-tenure track positions as researchers, lecturers, and administrative positions. Only eight have left Columbia, six of those women. Without knowing the reasons for the 13 people who went off-track it is difficult to comment.

To summarize, 51 women and 58 men utilized PWLR while on tenure-track, and men's and women's career trajectories appear statistically similar.

Use of policies in 2008 as a snapshot current view

In 2008, there were 295 tenure-track and tenured women at the Morningside campus. Of these women, 149 of them were of childbearing age, which is defined here as ages 45 and below. There are 784 tenure-track and tenured males at the Morningside campus. In 2008, nine women and 19 males, totaling 28 people, utilized the parenting policies. Nine female PWLR users out of 295 women faculty is approximately a 3% utilization rate. Nineteen male PWLR users out of 784 male faculty is approximately a 2.5% utilization rate, showing negligible percentage differential by gender in PWLR use.

While the percentage of people who used the policies is a small number, there is some reason to believe there is a trend of increasing utilization of parental policies by faculty over time. As there was only a total of 167 people who used the policies since inception, and 109 who used only PWLR (which started in 1994), 28 people represents a significant number for one year. If evenly distributed over the 14 years of PWLR 1994-2008, the average use would be less than eight faculty per year.

The nine women who used the parental policies in calendar year 2008 were all on tenure-track. Their average age was 36 with the youngest policy user being 33 and the oldest, 40. Among the nineteen men who used parental policies, nine were tenured faculty members while ten were tenure-track. The average age of tenured male policy users was 42 years old. The average age of men who utilized the parental policies while on tenure-track was 35.

This snapshot shows that women and men generally do not use the parenting policies until they are in their thirties and forties. Women, however, might experience increased complications resulting from having a child past the age of 35.

Another way to understand parental policy utilization is by looking at a year of Columbia University health benefits data. These data show that approximately 69 faculty had new children enter their homes in 2007 and 2008. Because these data were extracted from health benefits information, the number may not equal the total of children born 2007-2008 (not all faculty add their children to their Columbia health plans). Of the tenured faculty, two women and 26 men had children born in 2007-2008. Of the tenure-track faculty, 13 women and 28 men had children born in 2007-2008.

We do not know if the tenure-track and tenured faculty were primary caregivers, as they are ineligible for the parental policies if they are not primary caregivers. Assuming that all or most of these children could make parents eligible for using parental policies, the fact that 19 men and nine women, 28 total, used the policies in one year, out of 69 new parents in two years, indicates general use of the policies in 2008.

It appears that women are increasingly, over the time period of this study, using parental policies. This may be attributable to one or more of the following trends: increasing numbers of female tenure-track faculty having children, and/or an increased comfort with using parental policies.

Schools/Departments

Looking specifically at the different departments and schools, the faculty from the Social Sciences utilized parental policies most frequently with 64 out of the 167 individuals (38% belonging to that division). Thirty six of the faculty users (21%) belonged to the Humanities and School of the Arts.

Those faculty at the professional schools such as Architecture, Business, Journalism, Law, School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), and Social Work utilized the policies less frequently, with 38 (23%) faculty members using the policies in an 18 year period.

The division of Natural Sciences and SEAS had the fewest number of faculty members utilizing the policies with only six individuals (4%) from SEAS and 23 individuals (14%) from the Natural Sciences doing so between 1990 and 2008. Furthermore, the only departments that did not have anyone using parental policies were in Natural Sciences and SEAS. Specifically, in the division of Natural Sciences, there were two departments that did not have any faculty use the parental policies; and except for Electrical Engineering, there were no other departments in SEAS that had faculty who utilized any of the parental policies.

Major Challenge in Conducting the Study

The most significant challenge of this study was the collection of data and the confirmation of the accuracy of the different sources of data. There were obstacles in accessing the information that needed to be studied and establishing the accuracy of the records that were obtained.

Conclusion

While this study has provided much descriptive data on policy utilization, there is not sufficient data to draw statistically significant conclusions. Nonetheless, this study does not suggest that there is a correlation between the use of Columbia University's family policies and the ability of tenure-track faculty to achieve tenure status, leading us to the conclusion that the policies are effective in meeting their stated goals for both men and women.

What appears to be increasing use of the policies by faculty indicates the increased comfort with use due to diminished fears of negative career consequences. As with the introduction of any new policy, more time is required to learn if policy utilization will become even more commonplace.

Recommendations

The continuing excellence of Columbia University is highly contingent on recruiting and retaining the best and brightest faculty that embody the diversity of the NYC metropolitan area, as well as the nation. The recommendations outlined below address some areas of needed improvement with the current policies that were brought to our attention. Overall, these recommendations seek to improve the policies and their utilization rates so Columbia can continue supporting the work/life needs of its faculty.

A challenge was deciphering the wording and explanations of the current policies. There are terms in the Faculty Handbook, where all faculty personnel policies are written, that are not completely defined, such as *disability* and *infant*, leaving room for ambiguity. In addition, there are policy eligibility requirements that are inconsistent from policy to policy, and the rationale behind this is unclear. This study does not explore what impact, if any, that the eligibility requirements or definitions had on policy utilization but the recommendations include clarifying the language of the policies.

1) The language and wording of the following policies needs to be clarified:

- **The child age requirements in parental policies** – The child age requirements stated in each parental policy are ambiguous. The definition “school-age” in the Child Care Leave policy is not clearly defined.

Additionally, the eligibility requirement under the Part-Time Career Appointment policy states that a child has to be under the age of nine. There is no apparent significance to this age. The age requirements should be changed to better reflect the developmental stages of children and their care needs, perhaps to age 14, 16 or 18.

One alternative to capping the child’s age would be to limit the number of years the Part-Time Career Appointment can be used so that coming up for tenure happens within the requisite number of years. Yet another alternative would be to remove any length of time limitations of use of the Part-Time Career Appointment but limit the number of years to come up for tenure.

Another option would be to make the Part-Time Career Appointment also available to tenured

faculty with a cap on the number of years until coming up for tenure for tenure-track faculty who use it.

- **Define the term “disabled” in the Parental Work Load Relief policy** – One method of qualifying for Parental Workload Relief (PWLRL) is to have a child that is disabled. But there are multiple meanings of that term, each with its own care implications. A clearer definition of what is meant by having a child who is “disabled” would be helpful to parents so they can be fully aware of and clear about their options. General Counsel may need to be involved with the definition of disabled for policy purposes.
- **Clarify and update tenure-clock stoppage rules** – The tenure-clock automatically stops when an officer requests PWLRL. And current PWLRL policy has no limit on how many times faculty may request PWLRL. But the Faculty Handbook still states that a faculty member may request tenure-clock stoppage for up to one year of appointment for each of two children. The Faculty Handbook needs to be updated to reflect current PWLRL policy, and to clarify how tenure clock stoppage for PWLRL relates, or not, to other policy limits regarding stopping the tenure clock.
- **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as it applies to faculty needs to be clarified** – Currently the Faculty Handbook refers to the definition and implementation of the FMLA as found on the Human Resources website. As faculty policies in general differ from administrator/staff policies, the description and nuances for faculty need to be spelled out further.
- **In Faculty Handbook, add a link to the federal and state laws requiring the employer to provide time and space for mothers to express milk while at work** – As most tenure track and tenured faculty have private offices and flexible schedules, these laws are not that applicable to faculty mothers, though many do opt to use the lactation rooms on the campuses.. However, these laws do help faculty mothers know their rights.

2) The Parental Work Load Relief (PWLRL) policy needs to be improved

- **Change the time limitations of the policy to allow for special circumstances** – In order to take PWLRL, one must utilize the policy within the first year of a child’s birth or adoption.

There are circumstances that do not always allow this to happen, which can exclude a number of officers who would benefit from using the policy.

The timeline for when a parent is able to take PWLR should be extended for situations in which academic reasons do not permit a primary caregiver to take a leave within the first year of their child's life, or for situations in which the parent may not be the primary caregiver during the child's first year, but is the primary care giver during the second or subsequent years.

Additionally, if a child is born with disabilities, or if there are multiple births at one occurrence, or if complications arise after the first year of a child's life, the PWLR policy is no longer possible, despite its clear benefit to the parent. The financial implications of extending this policy still need to be analyzed.

- **Ensure funds are available for teaching replacement costs for faculty on PWLR who have a reduced teaching load** – Covering the costs of replacing instructional faculty should not be a deterrent to making this leave available and at Columbia, typically is not. However, the Provost's Office should support the various schools and Arts & Sciences to apply for funding if they are unable to cover replacement costs. Such a change in policy would issue the clear message that these leaves should be given without prejudice.
- **Explicitly describe tenure-clock stoppage and how it is distinct from PWLR** –There is some confusion about tenure-clock stoppage rules and how they relate, or not, to PWLR. In order for faculty being recruited to Columbia to compare family policies against those of other universities, the Faculty Handbook needs to be much clearer about tenure-clock stoppage for family reasons. Currently, the explanations are embedded in the description of "Limits on Non-tenured Service" and in the description of "PWLR." In addition, any impact of tenure-clock stoppage on sabbaticals and other academic leaves should be spelled out with regard to tenure-clock stoppage.

- **Clarify what PWLR covers in terms of activities other than teaching relief** - There are discrepancies in interpretation of administrative, student, and research responsibilities when on PWLR.

3) Additional family policies are needed

- **Grant extra time for some parental leaves** – Women who bear children have greater time needs than those who do not when it comes to healing from delivery, convalescence if there were complications, and breastfeeding. Policies should be re-examined to assure equity for mothers who birth their children. For example, under PWLR the time granted to adoptive parents, non-biological mothers, and fathers is the same as that granted for mothers who birth their child. The data in this study does not demonstrate that this policy is a major problem, because women who have used the policy appeared to be successful in achieving tenure. Yet birth mothers actually need more time for nursing and healing, and have less time for research and students. Furthermore, at Columbia University (most employees are covered by NYS disability law), women who birth are entitled to maternity disability, typically 6-8 weeks for normal pregnancy and delivery (the actual length of time is physician determined) and should not be expected to work during this time nor have to perform extra duties before or after to compensate for the period of disability. PWLR is not actually a leave but a time of reduced workload so should not be used during the maternity disability timeframe but instead the semester after the birth, which is typically when fathers use it.
- **Clarify and eliminate the impact of PWLR on timing of future research leaves and sabbaticals** - It is not easy to find nor clearly stated in the Faculty Handbook that using PWLR will have an impact on the timing of future research leaves and sabbaticals, as the wording is in the section on leaves. Timing of future research leaves and sabbaticals is based on the number of courses/semesters the faculty member teaches. We recommend that use of PWLR should not affect when the faculty has future leaves because PWLR is not itself a leave, despite no teaching responsibilities. The intent of the PWLR policy is for the faculty member to not be disadvantaged academically due to a new child (or other family caregiving responsibilities if the policy is expanded). . By putting off future research leave opportunities, in fact new

primary parents/caregivers are disadvantaged in relation to their peers who have little or no caregiving responsibilities. Regardless of improvements to the policy, the implications of PWLR use on future leaves should be clearly available to faculty in their decision-making about use of parental policies.

- **Policies should reflect all familial complications** – There are many family-related reasons why officers of instruction need to stop their tenure-clock or reduce their work load. These reasons are not acknowledged within any of the previously mentioned policies, except for the unpaid leaves of absence policy. For instance, faculty may have their own parents to care for. Elder care issues are not recognized in any of the policies, yet they are a mounting problem for the children of the elderly. Very few elder caregivers can plan for these responsibilities, and thus few would be able to utilize workload relief. Nevertheless, stopping the tenure clock could be very helpful in some circumstances.

We highly recommend that all policies reflect the needs of officers relating to familial concerns beyond just parenting, such as caring for an elder or a disabled or ill adult or child. Perhaps the Family Medical Leave Act definitions/eligibility could be the criteria used to apply PWLR use. If this is not possible, additional wording which addresses adult and elder care specifically, as well as information about stopping the tenure-clock for compelling family reasons, should be added to the Faculty Handbook.

4) Policies need to be better communicated and explained within the University

- **Chairs and deans should be better informed**– Although the University may have family-friendly policies on the books, it really is up to department chairs and deans to understand the importance of having family-friendly departments, to be familiar with the policies, and to know how to implement those policies. The university should develop online and print manuals for department chairs and deans that describe the different policies, how to implement them, and how to create a family-friendly atmosphere.
- **Promote family-friendly policies to the faculty** – All parental policies at the University should be made more visible to faculty. Not only does this help recruit the best faculty, it also helps retain officers. This can be achieved through outreach, such as widely publicizing the

University's Office of Work/Life website and resources through departmental presentations, as well as online and print communications. In addition, a mechanism to collect input from faculty about how well the policies are working and suggestions for improvements should be developed.

- **Create guidelines for tenure review process and reviewers** – Currently, no guidelines exist for departmental committees evaluating tenure and promotion cases with regard to faculty family policy utilization. Generally, family issues are not addressed as this topic raises legal issues. As a result, there may be some confusion as to how and how not to address or consider the use of family policies during faculty reviews—something that might also come up for external reviewers. Tenure-clock stoppage or part-time career appointments due to parental obligations should not negatively affect tenure and promotion. Therefore, guidelines could be developed for internal and external reviewers—in particular for international reviewers, so they can understand the University's support for faculty's use of family friendly policies. As most assistant professors receive research leaves and at least one year off of tenure clock already, there may be fewer issues here than at other universities that don't routinely allow time off from the tenure clock.
- **Eliminate the hardcopy of the Faculty Handbook to avoid confusion** – The Faculty Handbook is updated online between printings every few years. When faculty and administrators use the hard copy version, they may be receiving inaccurate information as policies may have changed since the most recent print edition.

5) Improve data collection

- **Centralize data access** – Information and data within the Office of the Provost could be centralized so that Provost Office administrators could have improved access to relevant documentation. This will reduce the time it takes to collect and crosscheck data for any future studies of leave policy usage and career outcomes. In addition, the number of codes for input into the Human Resources systems should be substantially reduced to be able to limit the risk of error in order to collect more accurate data on the use of family policies.

6) Initiate next steps

- **Further studies should be commissioned to better understand the use of some policies.**

First, considering that this study was based on secondary data (HR records), the University should develop a survey directed to all faculty members in order to verify utilization of family policies. Second, to better understand the obstacles to policy use, the University should examine the population of faculty parents who have not utilized family policies and their reasons. Interviews would be effective at eliciting this information. Third, a study should compare the tenure rate of faculty who did not use family policies to those who did. Finally, to determine the impact of policy use timing on career progression, the University should determine when during the tenure-clock process the PWLR policy is most commonly used (whether in the first through third year, third to fifth year, or fifth to eighth year), as there are reviews in the third and fifth years with final review in the eighth year.

- **Benchmark with peer institutions** to ensure the University has continued to maintain its leadership position and competitive edge when it comes to faculty recruitment. Also refer to the Faculty Career Flexibility awards sponsored jointly by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the American Council on Education for innovative programs to meet faculty needs.
- **Convene a working group** to collaborate with appropriate offices to implement the approved recommendations and conduct further analysis, if necessary, for those recommendations that require it.
- **Continue this effort** by examining the faculty policies at the Medical Center, as well as policies for officers of research and postdocs, lecturers and doctoral students, for efficacy and improvement.