



Executive Summary

The University of Florida (UF) is committed to improving faculty quality of life. Our President, Chief Academic Officer and Faculty Senate have invested substantial financial and human resources to ascertain faculty needs and identify best practices for meeting this commitment. Insights gleaned from surveys, task forces, public forums, committees and advisory councils encourage a central belief that to meet faculty members' right to a quality work life and environment, UF must offer significant opportunities for career flexibility. This means providing faculty with multiple points of career entry, exit and re-entry free from fear of penalty, cultural backlash or undue professional compromise and personal loss.

The commitment to achieving this goal is demonstrable and calls upon the active participation of both faculty and administrators. Therefore, contributors to this accelerator plan include members associated with Central Administration, as well as various Colleges, Departments and the Faculty Senate (see Attachment I for a list of committee members and Attachment III for a letter of support from Provost and Senior VP, Janie Fouke). It is often difficult to get a majority of faculty members at a university of our size to participate in surveys and questionnaires. Yet, the Faculty Climate Surveys conducted by International Survey Research consultants (ISR) in 2004 and 2005 at President J. Bernard Machen's request achieved a 43% and 45% faculty return rate, respectively. Within a much shorter period of time, UF was able to get nearly as many faculty responses to the Sloan Award Faculty Questionnaire. With such support and expressed faculty interest, it is imperative that our accelerator plan provide avenues to overcome institutional weakness identified in each of these surveys. This application to the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Faculty Career Flexibility is submitted, therefore, in hopes of obtaining funding for projects and plans that assist UF in transforming identified weaknesses into extraordinary strengths. It proposes a two year plan for assessment, implementation and award sponsorship that:

- achieves clear and consistent execution of current policies;
- advances high impact accountability strategies and culture change at all levels (university-wide);
- creates user-friendly tools and opportunities for communicating policies and identifying needs;
- promotes multi-leveled acceptance and confident use of career flexibility provisions;
- builds collaborative support for new career flexibility guidelines and institutional policies;
- attracts and retains the very best faculty.

As the Flagship University for the state of Florida, UF plans to share the work accomplished on behalf of faculty career flexibility with other Florida (and national) universities through Florida Consortium for Faculty Development meetings, national conferences, and other public opportunities for modeling accomplishments the Sloan Award for Career Flexibility makes possible.

Why Here? Why Now?

UF is unique among U.S. research universities in its complexity, breadth of academic offerings, and its history. It is a land grant university in the 4th largest state in the country. It ranks 4th among research universities in number of doctorates granted and 6th among public research universities generally in terms of total overall research, endowment, and faculty accomplishments (*Top American Research Universities*). UF offers degrees in more disciplines than almost any other university and its faculty members run the gamut from agricultural extension agents to nanoparticle pioneers.

Until 2001, UF was directly governed by the state legislature. Statutes prohibited the university from expanding the class of persons protected by its nondiscrimination policy, which prevented some faculty from applying for grants to do research in their principal academic areas. It also prevented UF from offering benefits packages that deviated from those offered to other state employees. UF could not set its tuition, modify its leave policies, or structure its pay scales without state approval. Statutes even dictated the size of faculty and staff offices, without concern for research and scholarship needs. But in 2001 the legislature restructured the Florida State University System to allow each university an independent Board of Trustees (BOT) that has the authority to make policies and regulations for university governance.

Since the BOT took control in January, 2002, it has examined many of the rules, policies, and procedures, and found many instances in which outdated or inefficient rules prohibited UF from attracting, retaining, and supporting its faculty. The BOT instructed the President and the Faculty Senate to systematically examine the policies of the institution and address, in order of most critical need, those areas that required immediate change. As a result, an exhaustive quality of life analysis was completed with recommendations that are being implemented; Tenure and Promotion (T&P) policies were revamped to allow for an extension of the probationary period for childbirth, adoption, and other family responsibilities; faculty shared governance policies have been implemented and are being further refined to bring UF into conformity with AAUP shared governance guidelines; UF's nondiscrimination policy has

been significantly enlarged and domestic partner health benefits have been introduced; and we have seen significant involvement of the faculty in making policies around climate, culture, and benefits.

UF is at a crossroad. Major policies have been implemented to address the kinds of career flexibility issues targeted by the Alfred P. Sloan Award, but full-scale implementation and acceptance are still on the horizon. Much needs to be done in the area of communicating policy changes to faculty, changing the culture to accommodate the diverse needs of faculty at all stages of their careers, and financially supporting those policies so that they have lasting impact on the careers of dedicated faculty. UF's BOT and senior administration are committed to taking advantage of the freedom offered by the reorganization of the State University System to match our status in research and academics with a reputation for workplace satisfaction.

Overview of Current Policies

Professional Development

UF has a number of current policies dealing specifically with professional development broadly defined:

- Tenure Clock Stopping Policies for contingencies associated with research and scholarship
- Professional leaves with and without pay for pursuing professional/academic improvement including professional renewal, travel, or other experiences of professional value
- Military leaves
- Personnel Exchange Programs by which full-time employees may be exchanged with persons employed in like capacities in government, private industry, or institutions of higher learning
- Broad non-discrimination policy that includes classes not mandated by state statutes such as sexual orientation and marital status
- Mentoring Policy for untenured faculty to assist them in demonstrating academic excellence
- Phased Retirement that allows retirement age faculty to remain involved on a part-time basis
- Flexible part-time faculty appointments (provided at the discretion of the Provost)
- Associate Provost for Faculty Development charged in March 2006 with faculty professional enhancement, recognition and awards programs, recruitment and retention, campus work / environments and quality of faculty life
- Provision for interdisciplinary tenure and endorsement of joint appointments to allow faculty to transcend the rigid boundaries set by traditional disciplines

Family and Medical Policies:

Current policies and practices concerning family-care and disability leave in general conform to federal law, but are not widely understood. New policies are just now becoming part of the culture.

- Up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act
- Up to 6 months of paid parental leave
- New Tenure Extension policies for childbirth, adoption, fostering, and care of immediate family member
- Medical Leaves not related to childbirth
- College and Unit-level policies that allow for partial relief from faculty duties for family care and personal disability without loss of pay
- New Health Insurance benefits for unmarried domestic partners
- Alternative retirement plan (referred to as a FICA Alternative Plan) for those individuals not eligible to participate in the standard retirement plans offered through the University

Proposed Achievements for Career Flexibility Accelerator Plan

1. Creating new career flexibility policies and programs

a. Family-friendly policies addressing workloads and leave expectations

Justification: There are currently no written policies for determining workload for faculty on modified duties and phased retirement, evaluating productivity for faculty on modified duties or providing parental leave for unmarried domestic partners.

Goal: Develop written policies or guidelines specifying expectations and options.

Benefit: Promotes and provides opportunities for a robust career life-cycle.

Timeline: Task Force assigned and charged—spring '07; Consult Senate, General Council, et al. for collaboration and support, lobbying and policy approval—summer '07 through summer '08; Implementation of agreements—fall '08.

b. Guidelines for evaluating faculty T&P packets effected by career flexibility choices

Justification: There are currently no written guidelines regarding how to evaluate faculty who stop the tenure clock or mandating treatment of T&P packets for faculty who exceed a seven year timeline towards tenure consideration or who have documented, dependent care, career gaps.

Goal: Develop written policies and /or training guidelines for T&P committees, reviewers, and search committees that address career flexibility issues.

Benefit: T&P evaluations managed without prejudice and penalty for using career flexibility options.

Timeline: Senate Welfare Council collaboration with Associate Provost for guideline development—fall '06; Roll-out—spring '07

- c. A centralized “administrator’s academy” to train new and established deans, associate deans, department chairs, directors, recruitment committees, T&P committees and interested faculty.

Justification: 28% of UF’s faculty members responding to the 2005 FCS agree the university is doing a good job providing resources for professional development while 40% answered poor and 30% perceive offerings as average. Additionally, inconsistent on-campus administration training and access to information leaves key players struggling to answer questions or implement policies and regulations with confidence. This adversely affects recruitment, retention, and climate.

Goal: Require mid-level administrator attendance at designated training sessions so that 40% have attended by fall '08. Increase opportunities for gaining administrative experience through the Academy so that an additional 20% of faculty members agree UF meets professional development needs in this area.

Benefit: Provides a nurturing environment for professional growth, builds uniform information distribution concerning established and new policies, guidelines and regulations, and communicates the value of career flexibility.

Timeline: Academy development and planning during fall '06 with Phase I (mid-administration training programs) implemented in spring '07; Full project implementation—fall '07.

- d. Dean, department chair and unit director accountability for encouraging and managing flexibility work arrangements effectively.

Justification: There are currently no venues or guidelines for measuring accountability.

Goal: Measure accountability during job performance and college budget reviews.

Develop an awards program for department and unit administrators that make notable strides to encourage an atmosphere of acceptance for career flexibility accommodations.

Benefit: Increased implementation and acceptance of flexibility policies and actions.

Timeline: Faculty Senate and Associate Provost for Faculty Development Plan coordination / Provost approval—fall '06; Plan implementation—spring '07.

e. Presidential Council on Diversity and the Status of Women.

Justification: There are currently no active committees studying and addressing career development and climate for women faculty at UF. Neither is there a university-wide council (or committee) focused on the concerns of institutional diversity. To remain competitive among peer institutions and to provide true institutional climate change, a council must exist to advise the President and Provost on policy, develop initiatives and monitor practices that develop an environment rich in diversity and abundant in faculty quality of life and career life-course flexibility.

Goal: Work with the President, Provost and VP of Human Resource Services to finalize, organize and implement a Diversity Council.

Benefit: Increased demographic, intellectual, structural, and global diversity program development, accountability and climate enhancement.

Timeline: Achieve final approvals through Provost and President—fall '06; Council appointments—spring '07; Inaugural project identified—spring '07; Project completed and measurable goals set—fall '07.

2. Expanding and improving current policies and programs

a. Institutional commitment to faculty member's childcare and parental benefit needs.

Justification: 19% of the 2005 FCS respondents say parental leave benefits are good, 17% say adequate, 14% say poor (the remaining responded "not applicable" or "don't know"). Perception of UF's child care benefits is worse with only 10% saying they are good, 11% adequate, and 23 % poor. Also, while child care centers currently do exist on campus, there is insufficient access to the available spaces.

Goal: Create a task force to: a) reconsider the current use of the leave pool for medical emergencies with an eye toward expanding it to include family emergencies, b) explore our current leave policy for possible improvement and c) explore models for child care coordination on and off campus, making suggestions for delivery of high quality services.

Benefit: Provide family-friendly policies that attract the best faculty and assure the advancement of academic excellence and reduced stress due to family / career balancing challenges.

Timeline: Task force charge given—spring '07; Consult Senate, General Counsel, et al. for collaboration, support and policy approvals—summer '07 through summer '08; Implementation of agreements—fall '08.

- b. A formal dual-career recruitment program to help coordinate hiring of spouses and domestic partners either within or outside UF.

Justification: We live in a world of dual careers. Faculty career choices are often made in relation to how universities “treat” and accommodate requests for dual career consideration. In order to be competitive for the very best higher education professionals and to raise quality of life for faculty members facing dual career challenges, UF must offer clear guidelines and centralized funding support for dual career hiring opportunities.

Goal: Promote interdepartmental collaborations that advance university-wide awareness and strategic use of the Provost funded Dual Career Accommodation Plan.

Benefit: Increase the University’s ability to attract and keep the best faculty while providing faculty with the ability to solve dual career challenges.

Timeline: Budget and protocol roll-out—fall '06.

3. Increasing the number of faculty using these policies and programs

- a. A budgeted pool of recurring funds at the central administrative level to assist departments on a case by case basis in hiring temporary replacement faculty in case of family emergency, maternity, other medical or disability leaves.

Justification: While there is support for "modified duties" due to maternity or medical needs, there is concern that without a "compensation pool" of resources, the burden would be unfairly shifted to remaining faculty and administrators, who must find ways of

shifting responsibilities to others. Additionally, current policies do not have a separate parental leave benefit; time off is embedded within UF's general leave policy and pay for this time is made available in the context of sick and annual leave benefits.

Goal: Develop a central fund to help support temporary replacement faculty.

Benefit: Avoiding the potential for reluctance or prejudice on the part of departments towards accommodating modified duties and emergency leaves.

Timeline: Phase I: initial budget's final approval and protocol roll-out—fall '06; Phase II: new policy support development, promotion and administrative lobbying—spring-fall '07.

4. Widening acceptance of career flexibility within the university community, including by faculty

- a. A university-wide campaign, including workshops, senate forums and discussion networks for sharing experiences, offering advice and providing support for career flexibility decision-making and policy use.

Justification: Effective university-wide discussions about career flexibility can greatly transform the climate of an institution where, according to the '05 FCE, only 50% of the faculty feels challenges to tradition are acceptable. It will also help with fear of retribution and difficulties surrounding life/career balance. 2005 FCS data suggest 45% of faculty find it difficult to balance work and personal responsibilities (49% are doing well). The vote for how successfully UF assists faculty members achieve balance between work and family is split evenly with 32% agreeing that the University does as good a job as peer institutions, 36% disagreeing and 32% don't know.

Goal: Increase satisfaction in this area so that over half UF faculty members agree there exists a climate of support, networking and problem solving for career flexibility issues and at least 40% experience enhanced opportunities either first hand or as a result of an effective university-wide discussion network and policy promotion program.

Benefit: Reduced fear of retribution for using career flexibility policies as well as increased acceptance of new models for career development.

Timeline: Web-based discussion network roll-out—fall '06; Full project implementation (via "Faculty Development Conversations Series")—spring '07.

- b. Creative, innovative, “user-focused” and widely advertised means of clarifying flexibility options and areas of negotiation for modified duties, leaves and benefits available to faculty.

Justification: The 2004 Provost and Faculty Senate Quality of Life Task Force (TF) expressed “surprise at the jumbled and spotty knowledge faculty had about programs that already are in place.” The 2005 Faculty Climate Survey (FCS) supports this opinion. It reports 61% of faculty respondents claim the policies and procedures established by UF are generally overly bureaucratic. Although responses to this issue have improved by 4% from 2004 to 2005, there is much room for further improvement.

Goal: Reduce the perception and experience of bureaucracy and confusion by half.

Benefit: Faculty will gain clarity about career flexibility options and assistance.

Timeline: Task force assessment, plan and dissemination development and cross-campus collaboration—fall '06; Improved advertising, education and information access venues operational—spring '07.

Communications, Promotions and Evaluation:

Perhaps the most difficult hurdle for an institution of our size is to insure adequate channels of communication exist for promulgating information about the professional and family-related policies and programs identified and proposed above. Moreover, many faculty members report they have been discouraged from taking advantage of certain benefits offered by the university. Thus, informing faculty of their options and creating a climate in which faculty feel comfortable requesting these benefits requires special attention. This plan offers a two-pronged approach to communications—1) keep administrators, faculty and staff informed and 2) encourage them to support and use these policies.

Keep Administrators and Staff Informed through:

- Deans, Directors, and Dept. Chair (DDD) memoranda, guideline notices and policy updates
- Provost breakfasts with deans and unit heads
- Public hearings, mandated under the Florida Sunshine Law, for regulation and policy changes
- Faculty Senate communications to ex-officio, Dean membership regarding policy changes
- Human Resource Services forums, which insure Human Resource satellite providers are aware of information they need to serve faculty as information sources

Get the Message to Faculty through:

- A dedicated website and tutorial for faculty review of benefit programs and offerings
- Human Resource Services monthly, electronic newsletter distributed to all faculty, covering benefits and other work related issues
- Faculty Development Conversations Series (monthly, topical chats—some with the Provost)
- New Faculty Orientation (fall and spring series) and Faculty Handbooks
- A communications campaign that highlights new initiatives through campus-wide media events
- Associate Provost for Faculty Development and Faculty Senate Welfare Council collaborations to develop, communicate and promote the goals and objectives for faculty career flexibility
- Mandatory search committee and T&P committee training
- Faculty Senate Newsletter, *Academics*, detailing policy changes
- Upcoming (fall '06) Faculty Welfare Council survey monitoring recently-enacted T&P policies, including the new clock-stopping policies
- Brochures and pamphlets offering overviews of career flexibility policies and guidelines
- Required “Faculty Life and Career Life-Course Information Updates” as agenda items at department or unit meetings or assemblies once per semester

Evaluation

In addition to the measurable goals outlined previously we will use the following evaluation venues:

- Provost’s newly revised yearly administrator evaluation forms which ask how well administrators communicate with faculty members
- The President’s commitment to running and reporting publicly the results of future FCS (a midstream snapshot of progress)
- Sloan Foundation Faculty Career Flexibility survey at the end of the two year plan period

Proposed New Communication Venues to Monitor Career Flexibility Policy Use and Consequences

- External (or peer university) accelerator program evaluations
- Annual Executive Summaries of Dean/Director “Career Flexibility and Climate Assessment Interviews” conducted by the Associate Provost for Faculty Development and submitted to the Provost and President for review prior to online, public access posting
- Face-to-face and online faculty entrance and exit interviews, conducted by the Associate Provost for Faculty Development

Attachment I: University of Florida Faculty Career Flexibility Accelerator Plan Committee

Chair, Debra Walker King, Associate Provost, Faculty Development

Anthony B. Brennan, Professor, College of Engineering

Mary B. Brown, Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine

Bertha M. Cato, Associate Professor, College of Health and Human Performance

Kyle J. Cavanaugh, Vice President, Human Resource Services

Silvia Chan-Olmsted, Associate Dean, College of Journalism and Communications

Peter R. Giacobbi, Assistant Professor, College of Health and Human Performance

Maxine M. Hinze, Assistant Professor, College of Nursing

Michael J. Katovich, Professor, College of Pharmacy

Angel Kwolek-Folland, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Jean A. Larson, Professor, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Susan S. Percival, Professor, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Constance L. Shehan, Professor, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

R. Elaine Turner, Interim Associate Dean, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Danaya C. Wright, Professor and Faculty Senate Chair, Levin College of Law

Joseph Glover, Associate Provost, Academic Affairs (Committee Consultant)

Attachment II: Resource Inventory and References

University of Florida Resources

Policy and Guidelines

<http://regulations.ufl.edu/chapter7/7019.pdf>
<http://regulations.ufl.edu/chapter1>
<http://www.aa.ufl.edu/Handbook>
<http://www.hr.ufl.edu/>
<http://www.senate.ufl.edu>

Report of Provost and Faculty Senate Quality of Life Task Force

http://www.senate.ufl.edu/reports/quality_of_life/

Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Tenure

<http://www.senate.ufl.edu/reports/tenure/20041019tenureReport.pdf>

Presidential Faculty Surveys, 2004 and 2005

<http://www.president.ufl.edu/facultysurvey>

Informational Websites

<http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu/ucfamilyfriendlyedge.html>
<http://parents.berkeley.edu/ucfamilies/>
<http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu/sloangrant.html>

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