

# Parenting and Academia

## SUNY New Paltz 2005 Survey

New Paltz Women's Rights and Concerns Committee  
Respondents: 88 Academics; 73 Professionals

### Summary of Responses to Parenting & Academia Survey

- 60% of employees reported receiving conflicting information about leave possibilities.
- Respondents reported that accommodations received were largely dependent on the good will of chairs and co-workers.
- Respondents reported that tenure status influenced their ability to negotiate for leave.
- 50% of parents who responded reported some dissatisfaction with their leave arrangements. (Academics reported greater dissatisfaction than Professionals, possibly due to scheduling issues. Professionals tended to take longer leaves than academics.)
- Many breast-feeding mothers reported having difficulty making arrangements and insufficient support from chairs/supervisors, co-workers.
- Many women reported feeling that having children negatively affected their opportunities for career advancement and supervisors' or colleagues' impression of employee's dedication to career.

### General Findings:

- **Strong agreement from parents and non-parents that the following parenting-related policies should be implemented for mothers and fathers around the birth or adoption of a child: at least 6 weeks paid leave; the ability to delay the tenure clock; part-time options; available quality child care for faculty/staff; a web site and brochure containing information for potential parents regarding campus policies and supports available.**
- **Respondents want a variety of options to meet the diverse needs of mothers, fathers and infants.**

### Context for Interpretation of Survey Data

#### 1. Why a policy is needed:

- A uniform policy will promote fairness, not privilege, and ensure equal distribution of benefits, rather than separate deals that open the way for unequal benefits, discrimination, and the expectation to pay back favors with even more work.
- To equalize opportunity: national research shows that childbirth and child care are obstacles to women's career advancement. Lack of affordable, reliable, flexible child care leads women to decline certain job assignments.

#### 2. Kinds of leaves needed:

- Birth of a child
- Adoption or foster care
- Care of spouse, partner, child or parent suffering from serious medical condition
- A serious health condition of one's own
- Emergency leave
- Bereavement leave

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