

Guidelines for Faculty Maternity and Parental Leave

Effective July 1, 2006

Introduction

The years during which scholars are under the most pressure to produce work of extraordinarily high quality are often the same years those individuals are, or wish to be, starting families. A system where academic success is incompatible with family life is undesirable because it discourages talented scholars from pursuing academic careers, and particularly because it disadvantages women, who often bear a larger share of parenting responsibility than do their male colleagues. To the maximum extent possible, Harvard University seeks to support faculty parents as they welcome new children into their families, whether by birth or adoption, by providing them with paid time off and opportunities for relief from their teaching duties.

Differences in program and structure among the several Schools of the University make it impossible for one policy to work for all. For that reason, these guidelines provide a framework for maternity leave, parental leave, teaching relief and appointment extension policies. Individual Schools have the flexibility to tailor their own policies, based on this framework, the freedom to provide more generous benefits to members of their faculties where they believe it appropriate, and the responsibility to adopt procedures for implementing these policies so that they are meaningful and effective. It is the expectation of the University that no School shall provide maternity and parental leave benefits that are less generous than those described in these guidelines.

These guidelines are intended to apply to members of the faculty who need relief from their academic duties in order to assume substantial and sustained responsibility for the care of their young children, as described more fully in the guidelines below. The time off should not be used to advance a faculty member's professional, academic or research activities.

The University expects the Schools to fund these benefits. Members of the faculty on soft money must not be made responsible for finding additional funds to pay for their leave. In the situation where a grant expressly provides for paid maternity or parental leave together with an extension of time, the grant may be used to pay for the leave.

Finally, we recognize that the adoption of these policies is only one step toward protecting the careers of faculty parents. Our success will be determined by the individual interactions among deans, department chairs and members of the faculty, both senior and junior, ladder and non-ladder. The Office of the Senior Vice Provost for

Faculty Development and Diversity is committed to a long-term and sustained effort to change cultural norms so that parents of young children are supported, rather than discouraged, in their academic careers.

Guidelines

1. Eligibility

These benefits should be made available to all persons holding full-time faculty appointments with duration of greater than two years.

2. Teaching Relief

School policies should provide that an eligible faculty member who assumes substantial and sustained responsibility for the care of a newborn or newly adopted child is entitled automatically to paid relief from classroom duties for a full load during one semester/term. Where feasible, Schools may offer as an alternative paid teaching relief for a half load for two semesters/terms. Where this alternative is available, the choice of one full semester/term or two half semesters/terms of teaching relief is to be made by the faculty member. The teaching relief will normally begin during the semester/term of the birth or adoption, and should be completed within one year after the teaching relief begins. A faculty member on teaching relief would be expected to continue with research and advising students for whom the faculty member has a pre-existing obligation.

A faculty member using this policy would normally be the sole caregiver for at least twenty hours during the work week during the hours from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. This policy is not intended for parents whose newborn or newly adopted child is cared for more than half time by either a spouse/partner and/or a childcare provider.

3. Maternity/Parental/FMLA Leave

Under the Massachusetts Maternity Leave Act, a female faculty member who bears or adopts a child is entitled to 8 weeks of full maternity leave. The federal Family & Medical Leave Act provides for up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave (to be taken and completed during a 12-month period) to care for a child within 12 months of birth, adoption or the initiation of foster care. (The FMLA allows leave for other purposes as well, which are not covered in this document. Leave covered by the FMLA that is used for purposes of child care will be referred to in these guidelines as “parental leave.”) To the extent that the period of maternity or parental leave overlaps with a semester/term of teaching relief, it should generally run concurrently with the teaching relief, but would

afford the faculty member relief from non-teaching as well as teaching responsibilities for that part of the semester/term. To the extent that the period of maternity or parental leave does not overlap with an academic semester/term, it may be taken in addition to teaching relief. Maternity and parental leave will be paid if they are taken concurrent with teaching relief. If maternity/parental leave is taken during the summer, the faculty member on leave should be paid in accordance with his or her usual summer pay plan.

4. Tenure Clock/Contract Extension

A faculty member who takes teaching relief or maternity/parental leave under the circumstances outlined above is entitled to an automatic one-year extension of his or her current contract. Ordinarily, if an appointment is extended by a year due to the birth or adoption of a child, any promotion review (whether from assistant to associate professor or from associate to full professor) will be automatically postponed by a year as well. However, if a birth or adoption takes place after a review is already underway, the review would not ordinarily be postponed. A review would also not ordinarily be postponed if a postponement would move the review into the final year of an appointment.

5. Caps on Leaves and Extensions

School policies may, but are not required to, impose a cap on the number of semesters/terms of teaching relief and the number of clock/contract extensions that may be taken by an individual faculty member, provided that the cap is not less than two semesters/terms of full teaching relief (or four semesters/terms of half relief) and two clock/contract extensions.

6. Procedure

These guidelines will not attempt to outline procedures for implementation of the policies, except to note that these benefits are intended to be granted automatically to those who are eligible. We do not envision a process of request, discretion or negotiation.

7. Utilization Data

At the close of each academic year, each School will be asked to report the following information to the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Diversity:

- Total number of faculty, by appointment type and gender
- Number of faculty who added children to their family during the academic year, by appointment type and gender

- Number of faculty who took maternity leave, parental leave or teaching relief during the academic year, by appointment type and gender