

Brief report on August 2013 Survey of Tenure Track Assistant Professors Regarding Usage of Tenure Clock Extensions and Parental Leave.

As part of its efforts to make faculty life more compatible with family life, NC State changed the regulations on extending the tenure clock in June 2008 to provide automatic tenure clock extension in some circumstances and automatically approved extension of the tenure clock in all cases where the faculty member has a new child in the family (including the households of domestic partners).

Usage of tenure clock extensions to accommodate having a new child in the family increased substantially within two years after the new tenure clock regulation went into effect. In that time, roughly equal numbers of men and women have extended the tenure clock due to a new child in the family.

year	Number of Extensions Approved				
	New child		Other Family/Medical	Non-Family/Medical	All Reasons
	Number	Female/Male			
2003-04	0		1	6	7
2004-05	3	2 f/1 m	1	10	14
2005-06	1	1 f/0 m	2	6	9
2006-07	2	2 f/0 m	5	6	13
2007-08	3	0 f/3 m	3	14	20
2008-09	3	1 f/2 m	1	10	14
2009-10	11	5 f/6 m	4	12	27
2010-11	6	3 f/3 m	1	7	14
2011-12	11	6 f/5 m	0	4	15
2012-13	9	5 f/4 m	3	4	16
July – Oct 2013	9	3 f/6 m	1	1	11

To get an idea of how many pre-tenure assistant professors at NC State experienced family circumstances that would trigger automatically approved tenure clock extensions during the 2012-13 academic year and to understand the culture at NC State for faculty with families, we administered a small electronic survey in August 2013 to NCSU faculty who had been tenure track assistant professors on Sept 30, 2012. The survey asked “Did any of the following apply to you during the 2012-13 academic year? ‘A personal serious health condition, care for a child, spouse, domestic partner, or parent with a serious health condition, birth or care for a newborn, care for an adopted or foster child, and care for a family member injured while on active duty for the Armed Services?’” Those who answered yes were then asked whether they notified the university that they wanted to extend the tenure clock and how much leave they took. If they were eligible but did not obtain an extension or did not take any leave, they were asked why not.

Thirty two pre-tenure faculty responded that they had experienced a health or family situation that would qualify for tenure clock extension. A quarter of those eligible (8 faculty) received a tenure clock extension. Ten of those who did not extend the clock felt that their progress was on track and did not want to delay their tenure decision (and pay raise). Four assistant professors (all male) responded that they did not know that there was an option to obtain an extension or didn’t know enough details about it and four (half male, half female) expressed fear or a negative view of extending the tenure clock or had been advised against it. One male respondent said he hadn’t done it yet, but planned to request an extension that week.

Nine faculty who had a new child in the family or who had experienced a serious medical condition reported that they took less than two months (60 calendar days) of leave, four reported taking 60 calendar days or more, and 14 faculty reported taking no leave at all. Of those who took no leave, three reported that their wife or the grandmothers took care of the baby, three reported that they timed the birth to occur during the summer or during a semester when they didn’t have teaching duties, two reported that the timing was such that they did not have any leave to take, one “didn’t dare ask”, one didn’t feel a need to take leave, and one did not know that leave was an option.

We see signs of progress that more men and women faculty are making use of the tenure clock extension and parental leave policies at NC State than in the past. At the same time, the survey results indicate that there are still some lingering misconceptions and fears about usage of these policies.