

Reviewing Tenure Extension Policy

Written by PCSW Research Subcommittee (Andrea Radasanu, Jessica Reyman and Patty Wallace)
Presented to PCSW for comments December 12, 2018

January 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2017, the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women identified as one of its goals for AY17/18 the need to capture through data collection and analysis employees' perceptions and understanding of family leave practices at NIU. As such, the Research Subcommittee developed and administered a survey to faculty and staff to gather information on their experiences with and perceptions of family leaves. The results of the data analyses were presented in a report provided to the President and upper administration in August 2018. The report included several respondents' observations regarding their experiences with tenure clock extensions. Prompted by upper administration's interest in this aspect of the report, the PCSW Research Subcommittee looked more deeply into policies and practices related to tenure clock extensions at NIU and elsewhere.

Research Provides

- Summary of tenure extension benchmarking.
- Specific suggestions for changes to policy and practice to make NIU tenure extension policies accord with best research and practices.
- Suggestions (also based on benchmarking research) for other family-friendly policies, including a modified teaching duties policy.

Summary of Recommendations

1. The success of family-friendly policies and measures depends on an overall climate that recognizes and supports a work-life balance for employees as both humane and good for productivity. Many of the specific recommendations point to this overall approach.
2. Tenure Extension Policy updates suggested:
 - a. Adopt a more expansive view of caretaking, both by acknowledging family beyond children, parents, and partners and by recognizing that significant caretaking often affects more than one person.
 - b. Do not require probationary track faculty to apply for FMLA as part of the tenure extension qualification process.
 - c. Consider exceptional occurrences outside of FMLA-qualifying events (e.g., administrative error, catastrophic research-related issues).
 - d. Establish an automatic qualifying track for new children in the home.
 - e. Do not require an on-the-spot tenure review at the time of a tenure extension request. Use measures such as previous review and intent to renew contract as indicators of appropriate progress to tenure.
 - f. Allow resumption of original tenure timeline without increasing standards ("early" tenure standards). Conversely, under certain circumstances, allow for retroactive extension of clock when qualifying events have occurred.
 - g. Approval processes should align with academic (chair, dean, provost) side of institution rather than HR processes, though HR is also involved (e.g., certification of medical conditions).
3. Institute a Modified Teaching Duties policy, which acknowledges the need for new parents to bond with children.
4. Create website (on the model of U of I) that places all family-friendly policies under one roof, with clear explanations and messaging that highlights institutional values regarding work-life balance.

REPORT

1. Overview of Research on Stop the Clock Policies

Most universities have “stop the clock” or tenure extension programs. One study from 2013 states 90% of universities have them ([source](#)).

The overall purpose of these policies is to facilitate a work-life balance for productive probationary tenure-track faculty, and to ensure that circumstances beyond the control of faculty do not prevent them from achieving success for themselves and the institutions they represent. While there are many circumstances that do and should fit into this category, there is special attention to parental duties and bonding when a child first enters the home. Research focuses on this area in part because very often the probationary period coincides with new parenting responsibilities. Also, the manner in which to accommodate new parenting responsibilities continues to be the subject of some debate.

Studies suggest it is important to consider carefully the formulation and execution of tenure extension policies in order to avoid unintended consequences. One such consideration is the avoidance of stigma for those who use stop the clock contingencies. Studies show that these extensions may have the intended consequence of allowing faculty members to meet tenure requirements, but salaries may be negatively affected as a result of the stigma associated with stopping the clock ([source](#)). Men in particular may suffer the most from this adverse effect, according to the study consulted ([source](#)). In the execution of tenure extension policies, institutions should ensure that steps are taken to avoid such stigma by normalizing gender neutrality in the case of childcare and other areas where necessary. In general, a family-positive, supportive environment would be helpful to avoid negative externalities.

A more recent study suggests that men may benefit more than women from tenure extension to care for and bond with new children in the home ([source](#)). According to this study, men seem to boost their research profile with the additional year while women in general do not. The study and further commentary on the study ([source](#)) point out that while clock stoppage policies are meant for all parents, women in particular were the primary intended beneficiaries. Women traditionally do more of the domestic and parenting work; so, it seems somewhat paradoxical that women were helped only marginally to balance their professional and work responsibilities while men profited unduly from the extra time. Modifications to definitions of *caregiver* may be the key to reaping equitable benefits.

2. Scope of this Research

The purpose of this research is to benchmark NIU’s tenure extension policies against other relevant institutions to judge whether they conform to best practices and achieve the desired end of encouraging research productivity in a supportive work environment that values work-life balance. In addition to the issue of tenure extension, which is a policy NIU currently has, we also consider the value of modified teaching duties policies that many other institutions have in the service of encouraging work-life balance.

We will outline the various policy options and offer suggestions regarding best practices in line with the research in this area.

For tenure extension policies, we looked at (1) qualifying events, (2) the approval process, (3) the possibility of resetting the tenure clock to its original timeline after triggering stop the clock, and (4) affirming work-life balance as an institutional value.

3. Selection of Institutions to Benchmark

The list includes an institution from the MAC (Western Michigan University), Illinois public institutions (UIC, SIU, U of I Urbana-Champaign), one similar institution in another state (University of North Texas), and several top research institutions in the country, both public and private (Northwestern, Harvard, University of Iowa). Because tenure extension policies do not rely on university resources, there is no reason to exclude consideration of policies at top ranked research institutions.

Links to Institution Policies

- [Northern Illinois University](#)
- [Harvard University](#)
- [Northwestern University](#)
- Southern Illinois University
 - [Contract](#)
 - [Tenure](#)
- University of Illinois Urbana Champaign (U of I Urbana Champaign)
 - [Tenure code rollbacks](#)
 - [Work-life balance and family-friendly programs](#)
- University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)
 - [Modified duties for faculty members with a new child](#)
 - [Tenure holds and rollbacks](#)
- [University of Iowa](#)
- [University of North Texas](#)
- [Western Michigan University](#)

4. Qualifying Events

Qualifying events were identified and sorted into specific categories: caregiving responsibilities, other Family Medical Leave related events, and any additional qualifying events.

Institution	(a) Define caregiver (for new children)	(b) Relationship between extension & leave	(c) Additional qualifying events
Northern Illinois University	“Primary or co-equal caregiver”	“A faculty member requesting an extension of the probationary period for tenure in conjunction with an approved family or medical leave is required to apply for leave benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or NIU family illness leave policies.”	None.

Harvard University	“Primary caregiver”; 20+hours per week (for modified teaching duties)	Extension language independent of leave language. Mentions the need for certifications in cases of medical leave, but speaks to independence of various schools regarding specifics.	
Northwestern University	Automatic for any parent	Extension language independent of leave language. “Approval of extension of the probationary period will be made without regard to whether or not a faculty member takes a leave related to the same circumstances presented for the extension.”	“problems beyond the faculty member’s control relating to his/her research or scholarly activities.”
Southern Illinois University	“Assumption of parental duties...”	Extension and leave separate issues. Stresses review by chair, dean, provost and vice chancellor.	“other exceptional circumstances.”
U of I Urbana- Champaign	Except in extraordinary circumstances, a rollback will be granted in the event of the birth or adoption of a child under 6 years old.	HR and Legal to be consulted <i>after</i> Provost gives approval. Leave and extension language separate.	“...a rollback may be granted under circumstances beyond the control of the faculty member, such as grave administrative error or other unusual compelling circumstances beyond the control of the faculty member.”
UIC	Automatic one-year tenure hold when they become parents. (primary/co-equal language reserved for modified duties policy)	In cases where approval is needed (which isn’t all), HR consultation required.	“circumstances beyond the control of the faculty member, such as grave administrative error”
University of Iowa	Automatic one-year extension for faculty member who becomes a parent in first 5 years or (two years prior to appointment). Two automatic, and faculty may request further.	Provost is mentioned in process of approval. No mention at all of leaves or FMLA certification associated with this policy.	“Assumption of additional teaching, service or clinical responsibilities above the normal load and at the request of the department of college; Failure of the University to provide resources in a

			timely manner if the resources are promised in writing.”
University of North Texas	“Birth or adoption of a child”	No mention of leaves in context of tenure extension; process is administrative (chair, dean, provost), not HR.	“significant delays in fulfillment of UNT resources committed in the appointment letter.”
Western Michigan University	“parental responsibilities”	No mention of leaves in context of tenure extension; approvals process also doesn’t mention HR, but, rather, chair, dean, provost.	“unforeseen and significant disruption of projects critical to the work required for tenure”

(4a) How to identify caregiver

New Child Caregiving

Who is eligible for tenure extension in cases of welcoming a new child into the home, whether by birth or adoption? NIU’s policy ties eligibility to whomever is doing a substantial amount of the childcare work. The wording is as follows: “birth or adoption of a child or assuming responsibility for a foster child, if the faculty member is the primary or coequal caregiver for the child.” Other institutions provide related definitions of new child caregiving while connecting these responsibilities with tenure clock extension eligibility. Harvard makes it a condition of tenure clock extension that the parent be the “primary caregiver” and attaches a 20-hour minimum per week commitment to childcare as part of their modified teaching duties policy. Northwestern, on the other hand, automatically extends the clock for any new parent regardless of declared time commitment. Of the schools surveyed, more were in line with Northwestern: eligibility of extension of tenure clock is attached to being a new parent, not to how much caregiving is being done.

Based on the studies reported (especially this [source](#)), NIU’s designation of “primary or co-equal caregiver” is appropriately gender neutral and recognizes that more than one person can have significant childcare commitments in the same family. The study referenced conveys concerns that “primary caregiver” is code for mother, which places the childcare burden on her.

Most institutions surveyed do not report assigning a caregiving component to new parents in order to qualify for tenure extension; NIU is an outlier on that. When it concerns modified teaching duties, universities do tend to place such conditions as substantial childcare duties on the parent. Harvard’s stated 20 hours of childcare work per week is a prerequisite for their modified teaching duties benefit, not for tenure extension for new parents. The argument to maintain the expectation that a new parent seeking tenure extension must perform a significant amount of the childcare may be to avoid having a parent take advantage of the benefit without also doing the childcare. Of course, no school actually assesses or can assess the number of hours a new parent spends on childcare; this sort of benchmark simply establishes a norm rather than offering a check on the misuse of the benefit. The downside of not making the tenure extension accommodation automatic to all new parents is that this may give the appearance of an unsupportive work environment.

RECOMMENDATION: We find the current wording of “primary or co-equal caregiver” to be reasonable. It acknowledges that there can be more than one significant caretaker for new children, and signals the norm that the policy applies to those who are in fact contributing to child care in the home without being overly intrusive.

Caretaking not associated with a new child in the home

Although wording associated with “caretaker” usually relates to childbearing and childrearing (both in policies and in studies about policies), there is also the issue of caring for one’s family. The NIU policy states that

probationary faculty are eligible for tenure extensions if they bear “major responsibility” for the “care of a sick or disabled child, parent, spouse, or domestic partner.” Similarly, Northwestern identifies the following category of eligibility (of three possible): those who experience “personal or family emergencies, for example chronic illness of the faculty member or her/his immediate family.” Northwestern goes on to make clear that claims in this category will go through an approval process without stipulating “major responsibility” or anything comparable at the outset. SIU states that circumstances of an “exceptional nature” qualify a probationary faculty member to receive a tenure extension. They go on to use examples, including “serious health problems requiring in-patient care or treatment of the Faculty member or a member of the Faculty member’s immediate family living in the same household where the Faculty member’s presence is necessary...” UIC follows the model of Northwestern and states that events like a “serious health condition or the care of a family member with a serious condition” need to be approved.

In short, institutions that have extension of the clock policies (which includes all the ones surveyed, and a vast majority in general) all seem to include illness of the faculty member, emergencies, and illness of family members among possible reasons for extensions. And in all cases that we viewed, as we will mention in section 5 below, approval based on these reasons is never automatic but requires justification and institutional agreement. All policies strive to show that a seriousness of circumstances is necessary to justify an extension, but most also lean towards flexibility in interpretation allowing for a case-by-case assessment of a person’s request that will go through a series of approvals. NIU’s wording is preferable to the in-patient requirement that UIC lists; not all debilitating conditions require in-patient treatment.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that the “major responsibility” language be replaced with “significant responsibility.” While “major” and “significant” are very close in meaning, the former leans towards the sense of exclusivity or at least majority. In the case of a sick child, for example, both parents may have to dedicate considerable time toward care even if one does not amount to contributing a majority of their time. We also recommend more inclusive language regarding who counts as a family member (add a provision for “close” family rather than restrict “family” to children, parents, and partners).

(4b) Relationship between tenure extension and leaves

According to NIU’s policy, “A faculty member may request an extension of the tenure probationary period for a period of one year in conjunction with an approved application for benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or in accordance with NIU family illness leave policies” for various situations (personal medical emergencies, new child, major responsibility for loved ones). In order to be afforded a tenure extension, NIU requires the faculty member to apply for benefits under FMLA or NIU family illness leave policies in order for an assessment of the validity of the exceptional circumstances to occur (through HR). The faculty member is not required to take a leave following this assessment.

NIU’s policy notes that having HR determine whether an employee qualifies for FMLA or other leaves protects the employee’s privacy. NIU is in line with all the institutions surveyed in that it does not require an employee to take leave in order to obtain tenure extension consideration, but it is the only institution that goes through the process of HR approval as if the employee were in fact going to take leave. It is hard to know how the other institutions affirm the circumstances of a medical claim made by a probationary faculty member seeking tenure extension (e.g., UIC speaks to HR involvement once the Provost agrees and in cases where there is not automatic approval). The emphasis is on the academic hierarchy rather than human resources in all cases that were researched. In general, all the institutions consulted tended to disambiguate extension and leave more so than NIU.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that NIU rewrite the policy regarding eligibility in line with all institutions consulted: list the kinds of extraordinary circumstances that are considered (as examples rather than an exhaustive list), figure out if any circumstances should be afforded automatic approval (more on this below), and disambiguate leaves from tenure extension requests -working out if there are some circumstances outside the realm of family and medical leaves that ought to be considered. We also recommend that NIU not require

employees to go through the FMLA process, which many respondents to the FMLA survey found cumbersome and overly bureaucratic.

(4c) Administrative and Professional Qualifying Circumstances

NIU is an outlier in allowing **only** FMLA and medical leave circumstances to count as qualifying events. All other policies surveyed (save Harvard, where it was difficult to find wording outside of parental leave policies) take into account other mitigating circumstances. The wording of this policy in almost all cases emphasizes that only exceptional circumstances will result in an approved extension followed by a non-exhaustive list of examples. Most of the examples fall into categories already mentioned: parental responsibilities, one's own medical issues, and medical issues and death of loved ones. In addition, most of the schools surveyed mentioned professional and administrative problems that may come up. Schools mentioned administrative error (UIC, U of I), unfulfilled resource promises or ones not fulfilled in a timely manner (Iowa, UNT), and assigned teaching and service duties beyond the normal load (Iowa). Many schools mentioned "circumstances beyond the control of faculty" more broadly, and a couple referred to obstacles in the research process. Western Michigan, for example, names "unforeseen and significant disruption of projects critical to the work required for tenure" as a qualifying circumstance for stopping the clock.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that NIU join these schools in recognizing that there are relevant extraordinary circumstances in the professional realm that may make faculty eligible for tenure extension. We should consider adding wording to include issues of administrative error, unfair workload imposed on a faculty member, and undelivered resources promised to a faculty member. In addition, we would also suggest the more general issue of unforeseen circumstances that interrupt the faculty member's research. We appreciate that such circumstances should be truly exceptional, outside the scope of normal impediments and difficulties, and that the wording should reflect this. In a comparison of language across the different university policies, we have identified Western Michigan's wording as too lax (previous paragraph), while we appreciate U of I-Urbana-Champaign's formulation: "...a rollback may be granted under circumstances beyond the control of the faculty member, such as grave administrative error or other unusual compelling circumstances beyond the control of the faculty member."

5. Process and Approvals

All schools make some note about how late in the probationary period the tenure extension policy may be invoked (normally before the fifth year). All prefer that it be avoided in the final year of the probationary period, though some are open to exceptions. NIU's policy on this matter is similar to all the others. Furthermore, all the schools polled state a preference that no more than two years in total are added to the tenure clock (one year per circumstance). Several leave the door open for third year extensions under certain circumstances. All look to have this apply to full-time faculty with eligibility beginning with the tenure track appointment, with the exception of University of Iowa where tenure extension may be awarded to those who had new children in the home in the two years prior to appointment.

(5a) Automatic versus non-automatic approval processes

NIU puts all requests for extending the tenure clock through a tiered administrative process. SIU, Iowa and UNT also make no distinction between qualifying events: all requests go through the same process. In the rest of the cases, institutions differentiate between new parents and all other reasons for requesting tenure extension. UIC, Harvard, and Western Michigan offer automatic stopping of clock for new parents and a more involved approval process in all other cases. U of Illinois signals something similar by offering language that new parents will be granted extensions without further scrutiny: "Except in extraordinary circumstances, a rollback will be granted in the event of the birth or adoption of a child under 6 years old."

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that NIU consider making a distinction between tenure extension requests based on a new child in the home and all other reasons for tenure extension by making the former automatic upon request. This provides a way to avoid unnecessary paperwork and scrutiny in situations where

tenure extension eligibility is not in question. This change would also signal a family-friendly environment without risking having faculty take advantage of the policy unfairly. It may be worth reiterating here that none of the institutions polled attached the approval process to certification of FMLA or other medical and family leave benefits in the manner that NIU does.

(5b) Judging appropriate progress to tenure

Institution	Tying eligibility to progress to tenure
Northern Illinois University	“Evaluations of the faculty member's progress toward tenure are made by the department chair and appropriate personnel committee, and must be included as part of the department's recommendation.”
Harvard University	“Contract extensions are not available for faculty members serving in the terminal year of their appointment following a promotion review or otherwise.”
Northwestern University	No relevant language found.
Southern Illinois University	“The application must be made before the fifth year of the probationary period begins, and it must provide the reason for the request and evidence that the faculty member has to date made satisfactory progress toward tenure.”
U of I Urbana-Champaign	"The candidate's record before the event must be consistent with the preservation of institutional quality. The criterion on this aspect is that the candidate is making appropriate, demonstrable progress toward attaining indefinite tenure. In the case of childbirth or adoption, this criterion is deemed to be satisfied automatically if the unit intends to reappoint the candidate in the following academic year."
UIC	Adequate progress to tenure prior to requesting extension.
University of Iowa	No relevant language found.
University of North Texas	Points out that “not having met teaching, scholarship, and service expectations during a previous review period does not qualify as an extenuating circumstance for extension...”
Western Michigan University	No relevant language found.

The Illinois schools polled all have language regarding a requirement to be “making adequate progress to tenure” at the time of requesting an extension of the tenure clock. It is difficult to know in these cases how this is implemented. NIU’s description is the only one that speaks to doing an actual review at the time of the request: “Evaluations of the faculty member's progress toward tenure are made by the department chair and appropriate personnel committee, and must be included as part of the department's recommendation.” Other schools’ policies indicate that those faculty who were not going to be renewed were not eligible for the extension; this is another way of saying that adequate progress is a prerequisite of eligibility for tenure extension under the policy.

While it makes sense to require that the employee be in good standing, it does not necessarily follow that it is fair or necessary to submit the faculty member to a review at the time of the request. All probationary faculty are evaluated on a yearly basis with respect to their progress to tenure. The employee’s most recent review together with the intention to renew or not renew the probationary faculty’s contract makes another review at the time of the tenure extension request redundant. If there is a slower level of productivity in the months between the most recent review and the moment in which the faculty member is requesting the extension, this may be because the employee is experiencing extenuating circumstances that are making the extension request necessary in the first place. If U of I is willing to take renewal of contract as a proxy for a probationary faculty member being in good standing for new children in the home, then by what logic would this not apply to other qualifying events? In this case, it does not seem as if a new child should evoke a different rationale than other qualifying events.

RECOMMENDATION: Given these findings, we suggest the removal of a full progress to tenure review as a step in securing a tenure extension. Instead, let us use other measures to affirm good standing, such as intended

contract renewal and the most recent full evaluation of the probationary faculty member. A demand that the faculty member's record should "uphold institutional standards" might be included, which would afford NIU the flexibility to deny a faculty member an extension in unusual cases (such as, if facts or behaviors changed or were revealed in the interim between the evaluation and the extension request).

(5c) Modifications to Tenure Extensions

Currently, at NIU there is some confusion regarding whether and under what conditions a faculty member can revert back to the original tenure clock, having extended it due to an approved extenuating circumstance. Based on anecdotal information (a few survey responses and some emails provided to members of PCSW), it has become evident that although those who want to revert to the original clock can do so, some are forced to meet "early tenure standards" while some are not. This varies by college, and there is no stated policy, per se. The absence of policy and the application of different standards for the same circumstances can lead to poor morale and law suits.

It was difficult to discover how the polled institutions handle this question using Internet sleuthing. Northwestern is the exception: "Faculty requesting an extension for reasons related to childbirth or adoption have the right to request removal of the extension later." It is not explained why a new child is different than other qualifying events with respect to this question, and it is not clear whether those who extended for other reasons are not allowed to revert to the original clock.

A similar issue in reverse is whether someone who does not stop the clock but would have been eligible to do so can retroactively obtain a tenure extension. Every tenure extension policy states timelines, including language to the effect that faculty members need to apply for this benefit at the time that circumstances occur or within a year of a new child's arrival, and so forth. UIC, which has clear wording regarding time limits for applying for an extension (e.g., no later than 3 months following birth or adoption of child), still has language to consider instances when a faculty member wants consideration retroactively: "If a decision is made not to hold the tenure clock...and it is determined at a later date that progress toward promotion and tenure is not on track, the assistant professor must make a formal written request for a tenure rollback."

Two specific examples identified in the FMLA survey data speak to the need to consider these circumstances. In the one case, a faculty member ended up not needing the extension having conservatively extended the clock. In the second example, a faculty member chose not to request an extension (though meeting the qualifying circumstances for the extension) and misjudged the level of disruption of the extenuating circumstances.

RECOMMENDATION: We suggest as much flexibility as possible be built into the tenure extension policy, understanding that everyone must be treated fairly. It seems unnecessary and potentially punitive to demand early tenure standards of someone who wants to reverse the extension; if it is allowed, it ought to follow regular tenure standards. Demanding early tenure standards be met under those circumstances suggests that the faculty member had an unfair advantage. In fact, the faculty member dealt with circumstances that normally slow down progress but managed to balance difficult work-life circumstances within the original tenure timeframe. Given that NIU does allow reversals of tenure extensions, we suggest that the practice continues, and the original tenure schedule be reaffirmed without a change in standards. Additionally, we suggest that it be possible for a faculty member with a compelling rationale to be able to petition for a retroactive rollback of the tenure clock.

6. Modified Teaching Duties

This topic falls outside of the stop the clock policy, but it ought to be considered as part of a family friendly, work-life balance ethos that helps attract and keep productive employees. Modified Teaching Duties policies allow new parents (usually for children under 6), whether probationary or tenured faculty, to be excused from teaching duties for one semester (in Harvard's case, more) during the first year that a new child enters the home. Of the institutions surveyed, Harvard, U of I, and UIC all have these policies (see chart below). U of I articulates that this policy allows "a faculty member to recover fully from the effects of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions and/or to care for and bond with a new child in the first year following the birth or adoption of the child." UIC writes that the purpose of the policy is to provide a semester-long teaching reprieve when a new child enters the home to allow primary or co-equal caregivers to bond with the child. UIC touts its commitment to

“creating a family/life-friendly work environment.” Modified Teaching Duties is not a kind of leave: faculty are still responsible for doing the rest of their work, with the specifics worked out with the chair. Faculty members remain eligible for all leaves and paid and unpaid benefits.

While this policy would not solve the issue raised in the FMLA survey with respect to how to manage teaching duties in semesters when faculty take FMLA, it does offer a non-leave option to faculty attempting to balance work with a new child in the home.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend establishing a Modified Teaching Duties policy, whereby faculty (probationary and tenured) are excused from their teaching duties for one semester within one year of the arrival of a child in the home. If course coverage is required, chairs bear the responsibility for arranging this. Faculty would perform all other aspects of their work, including student advising, but specifics would be determined in consultation with chairs. Instituting a Modified Teaching Duties policy would acknowledge the importance of bonding with a new child in the home.

Institution	Modified Teaching Duties Policy
Harvard University	Eligible "ladder faculty member" who assumes "substantial and sustained" responsibility for care of newborn or newly-adopted child as the primary caregiver is entitled "automatically" to workload reduction either for up to one semester on full-time basis or part-time over the course of two semester or one year on part-time basis. Must be taken within first year of the birth/adoption.
U of I Urbana-Champaign	<p>Purpose is to "allow a faculty member to recover fully from the effects of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions and/or to care for and bond with a new child in the first year following the birth or adoption of the child."</p> <p>"Tenured and tenure-track faculty members may request a period of modified teaching duties, without a reduction in salary, during the first year following the birth or adoption of the child. Faculty members on modified teaching duties status will not be required to teach classes, but will be expected to fulfill their other professional responsibilities."</p> <p>"The department/unit shall be responsible for arranging for coverage of the faculty member's direct teaching responsibilities for the period of modified teaching duties status. The maximum period for modified teaching duties is one semester. Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, the department/unit head shall grant a request for modified teaching duties..."</p>
UIC	<p>"The purpose of this policy is to address the situation involved when a faculty member is responsible for semester-long teaching responsibilities after a new child enters the home. This policy enables the primary caregiver (or co-equal primary caregivers) of a new child to spend more time with the child in the first year the child is home. This policy reflects UIC commitment to creating a family/life-friendly work environment."</p> <p>"This program is not a leave. Faculty who choose a leave must do so under the FMLA. This policy is designed for faculty who do not take a leave under FMLA. Faculty members on modified duties status will be relieved of teaching but will be expected to fulfill their other professional responsibilities that can be scheduled around the bonding period such as presentation for research proposals, papers, and course materials; supervision of graduate student research; and in most cases, academic service..."</p>

7. Family-Friendly/Work-Life Balance Environment

We are encouraging policy changes that affirm a family-friendly environment. In addition, we suggest the creation of a more supportive, family-friendly, work-life balance-oriented attitude at NIU. We noticed a majority of the institutions we looked at offer general statements about embracing a supportive, humane, fair approach towards faculty by acknowledging the fact that productivity is a partnership between the institution and the faculty member, wherein the faculty member has personal priorities and pressures to balance against their professional ones.

Practically speaking, this more supportive attitude can be demonstrated easily in an online setting. When institutions include these policies under the Provost's page rather than only under HR or collective bargaining agreements, it tends to show a commitment rather than mere compliance with law or agreements. U of I's page under the Office of the Provost entitled "Work-Life Balance & Family-Friendly Programs" ([source](#)) is an excellent example of this approach. Not only does it collect all relevant programs and benefits under one page, it is also a clear statement of institutional support for these policies.

Affirming work-life balance as an institutional value also makes it more likely that policies, such as tenure extension, have the intended effects. It helps avoid stigma of applying for these policies, and encourages positive communication about the existing policies so that decision-makers as well as probationary and other faculty are more likely to be informed.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that NIU develop website pages under both HR and the Provost's office in order to provide a clear, consistent representation of NIU policies and practices regarding tenure clock extension and the larger issue of FMLA-based leaves. Greater awareness of inter-office agreement may serve to eliminate the stigma associated with extending the tenure clock and/or taking a leave when needed.

REFERENCES

["Equal but Inequitable: Who Benefits from Gender-Neutral Tenure Clock Stopping Policies?"](#)

Heather Antecol, Kelly Bedard, Jenna Stearns, *IZA DP* No. 9904, April 2016

["Is It Time to Stop Stopping the Clock? No, but it may be time to redraft our poorly designed policies"](#)

Joan C. Williams and Jessica Lee, *Chronicle for Higher Education*, August 9, 2016

["Is the Clock Still Ticking? An Evaluation of the Consequences of Stopping the Tenure Clock"](#)

Colleen Flaherty Manchester, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1, 2013.

["Stop the Clock Policies and Career Success in Academia"](#)

Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Lisa M. Leslie, Amit Kramer, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 100, No. 2, 2010.

["Unintended Help for Male Professors"](#)

Scott Jaschik, *Inside Higher Education*, June 27, 2016