

## **7 Retaining Faculty: Building Community in the Academic Workplace**

Once new faculty members have been hired, it is, of course, critical to retain them—ideally by offering them a good work environment, one that provides them with adequate resources to do their work and a sense of shared purpose and community. If we are more successful at retaining some groups of faculty than others, then we may undo our efforts at diversifying the faculty by failing to keep the very faculty we worked hard to hire. In this chapter we review the issues that arise in retaining faculty with different backgrounds and needs, in the hope that our academic workplaces can become truly inclusive communities.

### **Should Institutions Retain Every Faculty Member?**

We all talk to faculty who are thinking about leaving their positions at any given college or university, and we hear many different kinds of stories. When a colleague leaves one institution for another because the new position offers some gain in location, resources for the faculty member's research, teaching, or administrative aspirations, or her overall family well-being, colleagues often generally support the plan and view the individual's decision-making as rational.

In this chapter we want to consider such perfectly sensible ideas from the perspective of the institution. In every case, the individuals were recruited and hired as a result of great effort and with hope (on the part of at least some people) that a productive and satisfying connection would develop between the person and the institution. Many people (the hiring committee, faculty in the same or related fields, administrators) worked hard to make a wise choice and to provide the individual with the initial resources to make the relationship work. Nevertheless, at some point a faculty member

may decide that there is not enough value in the relationship to retain it. Moreover, a faculty member hired to add diversity to a department may experience that department as an unpleasant work environment. Let's consider some stories we have heard along these lines:

A White woman was hired into a science department right out of her PhD program; she was viewed as a rising star in a difficult field, was offered a substantial start-up, and was told about the department's—and university's—resources for supporting the success of all scientists, including women and minorities. Her first year was very successful in terms of her research, including several publications and the securing of major grant support. However, her teaching did not go well; she had never taught before and sought out help from the department and campus teaching support programs. She felt it could go better the next year. At the end of the year she had received a below-average raise and sought out reasons for this decision. She was very angry to learn that her difficulties with teaching completely outweighed her scholarly progress. Efforts to understand what happened led to conversations with senior colleagues in which she felt patronized and dismissed. She started looking around for other positions and eventually left, despite a matching counteroffer.

A male African American senior faculty member was achieving significant recognition in his field and was increasingly noticed by higher university officials as having a lot to contribute. He often talked with friends about the many occasions on which his colleagues had dismissed or belittled his opinions and values, over many years in the department. He worked hard to improve things for women and minorities in his field. Eventually he was appointed to a major leadership role on campus but found that this changed nothing in his department; he felt his departmental colleagues did not respect him, and he concluded they never would. He responded to an invitation to apply for a major leadership role at another institution, and he left.

A woman was hired by a department that prided itself on its high standards. She had a partner in a related field, and they hired him, too. Over many years she maintained the respect of many of her colleagues in the department, but she carried scars. Though generally quiet and reserved, she once held a large audience on campus spellbound while she recounted the story of the discouraging and offensive treatment she endured as a female junior faculty member from senior men who were ostensibly her "mentors." She rarely brought such stories up; however, when asked, she told of many painful interactions in the department. As she rose to prominence in her field, her partner longed for opportunities that would fit his talents better. When he found them, she left as well.

In all of these cases, work relationships that got off to a good start quickly soured and in all three cases ended badly at the original institution. The first story—of the new assistant professor—ended with the departure of the faculty member who had helped diversity, while contributing to the department's

excellence in research. The seeds of discontent were planted early, and as her successes accumulated, she chose to leave behind a department that made her feel unwelcome when she was just getting started. Alternatively, the environment's cool response to her first year could instead have set in motion a cascade of self-doubt, lower productivity, and unhappiness of the sort that leads to a failure to thrive professionally and an unsuccessful tenure case. As we have seen from the other stories, scars acquired early last a long time. Without even considering the costs to the individual, both of these outcomes are costly for institutions.

Happily, these kinds of stories can be avoided. Faculty are a precious resource for universities; universities invest time and money in recruiting them. Their teaching, scholarship, and citizenship over many years shape the nature and reputation of the institution. It stands to reason that institutions seek to protect this investment. This does not mean that every faculty member who is recruited will be happy and successful where they are hired, nor that those who are successful will never be interested in pursuing another position elsewhere. What it does mean, though, is that every newly hired assistant professor should be provided with conditions that offer a realistic chance of promotion and tenure, and that all faculty, whether newly hired or not, at all ranks, should operate within institutional conditions that permit them to be productive and satisfied with their work lives. In the best instances, newly hired faculty will feel that they belong to a larger and supportive community, and that the cultural practices of their department or the larger institution deserve their respect and loyalty. The interactions and relationships that occur in any institution collectively make up its culture, and that culture must support the satisfaction and productivity of all of its members. As we will see, as a department diversifies, it may need to pay particular attention to issues that have not previously come up.

The retention of assistant professors hinges on a combination of wise hiring decisions (already discussed in chapters 5 and 6), a productive probationary period, and a fair and judicious tenure review process (to be discussed in chapter 9). Creating the conditions for all of these is the institution's responsibility, though failures are often attributed to the individual junior faculty member rather than the institution. The retention of tenured faculty hinges on these same factors; if there is significant promotion and tenuring from within, the maintenance of a productive work environment as diverse individuals' needs change over the course of a long career deserves considerable institutional attention.

Most college and university administrators recognize that these truths are self-evident (though occasionally—and counterproductively—their rhetoric may imply that faculty are chronically demanding and dissatisfied whiners, or childish). Despite administrators' understanding that faculty productivity and retention are important to the institution and hinge on job satisfaction, many faculty at many institutions report impressions of the institutional commitment to them that range from intentional abandonment (“sink or swim!”) to a felt gap between apparently good intentions and painful or inadequate outcomes. Do some faculty have unrealistic expectations of institutional support? Of course. But it is our impression that most faculty do not. Instead, our observations suggest that institutions often fail to provide adequate conditions for faculty to develop and sustain satisfying and productive careers when in fact they could. Fortunately, we believe that success at this task is within the reach of most administrators—and here department chairs play a critical role (see, e.g., Campbell & O'Meara, 2014), but so do senior faculty generally and administrators higher in the hierarchy—at most institutions.

### **How Does Faculty Diversity Affect What Faculty Need?**

Before we turn to a consideration of what faculty need in order to be retained, it is important to ask whether all faculty need the same things. For example, do faculty who bring diversity to the campus (e.g., women and under-represented minorities) have “special needs” when it comes to retention? Not exactly. Most faculty need very similar things from an institution in order to thrive. At the same time, some of those things are easier for majority faculty (White men) to find than for those from other groups.

Consider, for example, ensuring a sense of inclusion, full participation, and community respect. That may be much easier for those groups that are numerically and traditionally dominant in university settings (Ackelsberg, Hart, Miller, Queeney, & Van Dyne, 2009; Gutiérrez y Muhs, Niemann, González, & Harris, 2012; Guzman, Trevino, Lubuguin, & Aryan, 2010; Harris, 2007; Thompson, 2008; Tokarczyk, 1993; Urry, 2008). Similarly, some processes—of mentoring, networking, and communication—work more easily and with less explicit or formal attention among community members who can rely on preexisting familiarity, comfort, and equality. For those who feel different, less comfortable, or less privileged, these processes may be obscure and alienating (see box 7.1 for examples). For these reasons

## Box 7.1

## What Do They Feel When Faculty Feel “Different”?

“...the landscape seems dotted with land mines that might blow up in our faces at any time.” (Annas, 1993, p. 171)

“Being inside the institution by virtue of having a role. Being outside the institution by not being invited in or not understanding the rules and norms and how things work.” (Hart, Grogan, Litt, & Worthington, 2009, p. 73)

“...the first thing that people who were trying to help me did was to take me to coffee or lunch and to tell me exactly how the department is divided. Some people think of it as a divided department in terms of conservative or forward thinking. The stereotype that was passed on to me was that half the department did not want anyone in my field because it is not a real field and it is identity politics.” (Ackelsberg, Hart, Miller, Queeney, & van Dyne, 2009, p. 89)

“The one pervasive metaphor...that comes to me is the metaphor of exile, homelessness. It is the sense of being uprooted, of being wrenched from the world of one’s parents and siblings, with only a tenuous possibility of ever putting down new roots.” (Tokarczyk, 1993, p. 312)

“I got pushed into doing this diversity group with...students, and it was one of the most painful experiences I’ve ever had with students. This student challenged me all the way down the line. In one meeting the student got so angry [that] she threw down her knapsack and stomped out of the room and slammed the door.... In fact, this student told me that African Americans didn’t know much about their own experience...” (Wilson, 2012, pp. 72–73)

“There was a faculty meeting, and I was making comments, and it would be pretty much ignored. A White male would then make the same comment, and then everybody heard it—oh isn’t that brilliant.” (Wilson, 2012, p. 74)

“I’m talking about my way of being. I have to adjust my way of being.... we have to adjust our way of being to fit into a structure; they don’t. They don’t have to adjust their way of being to me.... It’s like they don’t hear me if I’m the way I am.” (Moffitt, Harris, & Forbes Berthoud, 2012, p. 89)

“...you may be the only Native person they’ve ever met in their entire life, so they’re curious about you and what you do and your customs.... I try to be patient and answer them and let them know that we’re all different.... It’s always, always constantly educating people about what Indians are in this country.” (Jacob, 2012, p. 246)

(continued)

**Box 7.1 (continued)**

"To many of us, success never had anything to do with things like rich, famous, published, or funded. Success means helping our people, connecting to others, being real, and making things better for our families and communities." (Boyd, 2012, p. 281)

"Another issue that I face constantly is having my accomplishments minimized systematically, particularly by my department and the institutional administrators. If I get an award, it is never announced in public; I am never officially congratulated, interviewed for the university newspaper, or invited to lunch by the president or the provost, things that happen when other people ... receive similar honors." (de la Riva-Holly, 2012, p. 298)

"...the ghost of class identity can show up in a hallway conference conversation with new colleagues. You mispronounce an ordinary, but little-used word; it's a legacy of your underfunded, public school education. No one says anything, but in a split second, you have identified yourself as a member of the unwashed..." (Anthony, 2012, p. 305)

"I was inordinately visible as a minority female in a predominantly White, male department. I was also visible when it was in the department's best interest to have an ethnic scholar, so my name, teaching, and research were brought up during visits of the national program-accrediting association, international scholars, and elected officials of color.... I felt representative of all ethnic/racial minorities and believed the department cared only about the appearance of diversity without actually valuing it." (Flores Niemann, 2012, p. 342)

"...mainstream academics often label those who challenge the status quo—particularly those situated in oppressed groups—as 'not objective.' They question the validity of our scholarship by pointing out our status in outsider groups as indicators of our 'bias.' Yet the objectivity of men, White people, heterosexuals, and/or academics with middle- and upper-class backgrounds is much less likely to be questioned...." (Stockdill, 2012, p. 162)

"...we hit the glass ceiling already and cannot make changes and break out. Ageism hits just when sexism is coming down." (quoted in Rosser, 2012, p. 104)

"Over time, the accumulation of past inequities becomes a very difficult burden and affects relationships with others and sense of self." (quoted in Rosser, 2012, p. 104)

## Box 7.1 (continued)

Ackelsberg, M., Hart, J., Miller, N. J., Queeney, K., & van Dyne, S. (2009). Faculty microclimate change at Smith College. In W. Brown-Glaude (Ed.), *Doing diversity in higher education* (pp. 83–102). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Annas, P. (1993). Pass the cake: The politics of gender, class, and text in the academic workplace. In M. M. Tokarczyk & E. A. Fay (Eds.), *Working-class women in the academy* (pp. 165–178). Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Anthony, C. G. (2012). The Port Hueneme of my mind: The geography of working-class consciousness in one academic career. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 300–312). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Boyd, B. G. (2012). Sharing our gifts. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 277–282). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

de la Riva-Holly, F. (2012). Igualadas. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 287–311). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Flores Niemann, Y. (2012). The making of a token: A case study of stereotype threat, stigma, racism and tokenism in academe. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 336–500). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Hart, J., Grogan, M., Litt, J., & Worthington, R. (2009). Institutional diversity work as intellectual work at the University of Missouri–Columbia. In W. Brown-Glaude (Ed.), *Doing diversity in higher education* (pp. 61–80). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Jacob, M. M. (2012). Native women maintaining their culture in the White academy. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 242–265). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Moffitt, K. R., Harris, H. E., & Forbes Berthoud, D. A. (2012). Present and unequal: A third-wave approach to voice parallel experiences in managing oppression and bias in the academy. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 78–92). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Rosser, S. V. (2012). *Breaking into the lab: Engineering progress for women in science*. New York, NY: NYU Press.

Stockdill, B.C. (2012). Queering the ivory tower: Tales of a troublemaking homosexual. In B.C. Stockdill & M.Y. Danico (Eds.), *Transforming the ivory tower* (pp. 145–182). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Tokarczyk, M. M. (1993). By the rivers of Babylon. In M. M. Tokarczyk & E. A. Fay (Eds.), *Working-class women in the academy* (pp. 311–321). Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Wilson, S. (2012). They forgot mammy had a brain. In G. Gutiérrez y Muhs, Y. Flores Niemann, C. G. González, & A. P. Harris (Eds.), *Presumed incompetent: The intersections of race and class for women in academia* (pp. 65–77). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

institutions aiming at diversity and inclusion often make the tacit explicit (written), and the informal (unwritten) formal (see Matthew, 2016, about the importance of this). They do this despite resistance from those faculty who believe that the system has worked just fine—for those of us already here and successful—without all that effort. The good news is that experience shows that everyone—including the majority—benefits when policies and procedures are formalized and made explicit (COACHE, 2008, 2010; Trower, 2010). The system that appeared to work “fine” can work better—for everyone. Improving conditions for newcomers to academia improves conditions for everyone.

If faculty retention turns on faculty productivity and satisfaction, what are the critical features of a satisfactory working environment for faculty? These can be summarized under three broad rubrics: *resources* that support research, teaching, advancement, and career development; institutional structures that promote *fairness* in treatment; and *transparency* about those structures (Waltman & Hollenshead, 2007). We discuss each of these needs in turn, as well as the more “human” needs employees of all kinds have for *respectful interactions* at work as well as *support for their personal lives*. Our point here is that supplying each of those features is both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. We will conclude with a discussion of how institutions can maximize a positive work environment for a diverse faculty.

### The Role of Resources in Faculty Satisfaction

Resources that support research, teaching, advancement, and career development vary greatly by institutional types. Thus, for example, internal resources for research (including time not committed to classroom teaching or student advising; internal funding; competent support for grant management; available shared equipment and research space) are most substantial at research-intensive institutions and sometimes virtually unavailable at teaching-intensive institutions such as community colleges. In contrast, resources to support student learning may be varied and substantial at community colleges and other teaching-intensive institutions and less present at research-intensive institutions.

Stratification of available resources by institution type is reasonable, to the extent that it is reflected in faculty performance demands. That is,



demands for research productivity should not require accomplishments that outrun institutional support for that productivity. Equally, support to individual students can only be provided by faculty teaching small classes, or supported by other resources that enable them to assist individual students. Faculty can be very satisfied with careers in institutional settings with many or few resources for supporting any particular activity (research, teaching, etc.), if the demands on them (and the rewards to them) fit the overall structure of institutional resources. A broad mismatch—for example, between institutional demands to increase grant activity or average publication rate without an increase in institutional support for grant-getting or productivity, or between institutional demands for individualized student attention without appropriate institutional support for advising, learning assistance, or pedagogy—can produce serious morale problems among the faculty. Reasonable calibration of demands to resources is one key element in maintaining faculty satisfaction (see Johns, 2006, on work settings generally, and Hermanowicz, 2012, on academia).

### **Equitable Access to Resources**

What is more often a problem for institutions is ensuring that there is full and equitable access to resources for all faculty. Again, institutional intentions are usually good, and the goal is for all faculty to know about all resources. Nonetheless, the distribution of information is often so uneven that administrators are amazed. For example, even the all-important information about tenure criteria and procedures is far from universally known among junior faculty (COACHE, 2008, 2010; Trower, 2010). In fact, in their face-to-face interviews with pretenure faculty at research-intensive institutions, COACHE researchers reported that every single interviewee mentioned “the need for a clearly-defined, reasonable and equitable path to tenure when asked what would aid in their professional success” (COACHE, 2008, p. 8). Clearly those faculty did not feel that information was readily available or clear. Other information with less dire consequences is probably even less uniformly known.

The implications of lack of information about resources are not neutral. Lack of information often translates both into a sense of being “out of the loop” or of not fully “belonging” in the institution and into unequal access to resources—the latter an inevitable effect of differential awareness of them (Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., 2012; Harris, 2007; Ostrove, Stewart,

& Curtin, 2011; Pololi, 2010; Pololi, Civian, Brennan, Dottolo, & Krupat, 2012; Rosser, 2012; Thompson, 2008; Walton & Cohen, 2007).

Thus, even at an institution with the intention of uniform access and an effort at broad dissemination of information, some faculty may feel that they do not have access to the same resources as do some of their colleagues. And those faculty are likely to be disproportionately from underrepresented groups within their unit (like women in some fields, and racial-ethnic minorities in most). Why is that? Because networks of informal communication work most smoothly among people who are, or are perceived to be, most similar (Kanter, 1977; Rankin, Nielsen, & Stanley, 2007). There is a great deal of informal information flow among people who share characteristics. Information flows less easily and automatically to people who are in some way “different.” As we noted in chapter 1, homophily governs social interactions; it also controls the flow of information in social networks (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001).

To take one example, some universities have bridge funds to support faculty who have lost their grant funding. One woman told us of discovering that resource only after spending 20 years at her university. The availability was not written down anywhere, and none of her colleagues had told her about it. Only a chance encounter with a colleague alerted her. To avoid outcomes like that, institutions can rely on repeated, formal, and direct communication strategies, rather than one-shot, informal, or indirect communication approaches.

### **The Critical Role of Repeating Information**

Corporate management advisors emphasize the importance of repeated communication (e.g., Collins, 2001)—presumably because they have learned how important it is in ensuring broad awareness. In our experience, academic leaders assume everyone is listening, and worry more about irritating people by repetition, even though as teachers we know the value of providing alternate accounts and examples of the same points. Because any one message may be sent at a time that is inconvenient for a given recipient—who is distracted by the pressure of some other personal or professional matter—it is important that the same message, ideally in different formats and contexts, be sent repeatedly. How often it is sent depends on how important it is to the recipient and the institution, not how irritating it may be to some recipients to hear about it multiple times.

One way institutions signal that an issue is important is by articulating it often.

For the same reason, it is a mistake to rely on intermediaries to be the primary messengers. In many institutions, department chairs (and in smaller school or college units, deans) are presumed to be the optimal communicators of all messages. By definition, they cannot be. Being the intermediary for every message that anyone in the institutional hierarchy may send means these leaders are frequently passing on messages that promote actions or policies that they may not fully understand nor fully agree with. Inevitably, they will be ineffective transmitters of some of those messages. From the view at the top, there is the illusion that the message was “sent,” but the reality is that some deans or chairs may not have passed it on at all, others may have passed it on with inaccurate or misleading “information,” and yet others may have undermined the message intentionally or unintentionally.

It is no doubt important that deans and department chairs know about all of the institutional resource messages their faculty are receiving (they should never be “out of the loop”), and that they have opportunities to gain needed information about important policies and resources affecting their faculty, but it is equally important that they not be expected to convey every message anyone in the institution needs to send. One alternative is for any given administrator to send a regular (but not too frequent—perhaps monthly) message to all faculty with important information outlined very briefly along with links to more detail.

The same logic applies, even more strongly, to relying on senior faculty “mentors” to pass on knowledge and information to junior faculty. They will inevitably be varied in their skill, motivation, and knowledge as messengers; further, their differences from their mentees, in terms of race-ethnicity, or gender, or country of origin, among many other things, may be a barrier to communication. Here, too, homophily matters. Therefore, important information should be signaled in advance (e.g., providing tenure criteria information at the point of hiring a junior faculty member, at the third year, and in the year before the tenure review is initiated), offered on a “just in time” basis (at the point of initiation of a mandatory tenure review process), and at all times conveyed with a strong emphasis on clear information about timing and deadlines. Ideally, crucial information is also posted on a website, with a straightforward access route and labeling.

### Forms of Institutional Assistance to Faculty

The single most uniformly important resource for all faculty is direct assistance from the institution when they need it in order to do their job (Jordan & Bilimoria, 2007). A sense of institutional helpfulness (or its absence) applies to the full range of issues faculty face. Some issues are everyday practical problems: How do I get the projector fixed in my classroom? Where is the office that supports grant applications? Can anyone help me with letters of recommendation? Other issues are complex and deeply personal questions, like those of career development, work-life boundary management, and leadership and advancement. When institutions do well, they offer faculty opportunities to develop skills (e.g., grant-writing, teaching large lecture courses or small seminars, using technology in the classroom) and to enhance their professional connections (networks and collaborations). These opportunities include access to other human beings—leaders, peers, and mentors—who can help with all of these tasks.

At the lowest end of the institutional helpfulness scale, faculty have to solve every practical problem by themselves, investing considerable time and effort chasing down solutions that are not visible or widely available. They are likely to feel that the institution is indifferent to their well-being and that of their students. One of us tried for weeks to get burnt-out overhead fluorescent bulbs in an elevator replaced. It was a small irritation faced multiple times by multiple people every day. The bulbs were finally replaced thanks to a chance meeting with the head of facilities. For the sake of efficiency and freeing faculty to do what only they can do, it is in all institutions' interest to make it as easy as possible for faculty to do the jobs expected of them.

At the highest end of the institutional helpfulness scale, institutions may communicate to their faculty that they are willing to provide assistance to their partners in finding jobs in the area. Institutions that provide support for dual-career hiring benefit from the loyalty that is engendered at the time of an individual's first engagement with the institution. Some institutions offer formal incentives and assistance in hiring onto the faculty (see <https://oaa.osu.edu/dual-career-hiring-fund.html> for one example); others are able to provide professional dual-career services staff; and some join a Higher Education Recruiting Consortium (HERC) in their region. HERC currently operates in 17 regions and involves over 600 institutions relevant to placement and hiring of faculty and their partners (see

<http://www.hercjobs.org/> for more information). That, of course, supports retention.

Institutional helpfulness includes the provision of resources of expertise (including mentors and advisors) and structured support to facilitate faculty development at all career stages, as we detail further in chapter 8. When institutions offer programs to faculty about how best to develop their professional skills, we hear over and over that faculty are grateful that the institution “cares” about them enough to make this kind of opportunity available to them; some evidence of faculty appreciation for such opportunities can be seen from evaluations of workshops and from some posted data, such as <http://nau.edu/faculty-development/> (visited October 15, 2017).

Institutions are not being purely altruistic by providing faculty with skills development. They not only benefit from the gratitude and appreciation of faculty, but they benefit from higher morale, greater job satisfaction, and higher productivity.

### **Supporting Diverse Families**

Increasingly, it is critical that institutions provide all faculty with support for family-related needs, using a broad definition of “family” that includes households headed by single parents, with and without children; households headed by same-sex partners; and households where faculty may be caring for a family member who is ill. Formally recognizing the diversity of family situations our faculty have—and that they change over time in the course of their careers—is one way an institution can signal its commitment to take the diversity of faculty seriously and support faculty facing many different kinds of challenges. To that end, institutions can develop or revise institutional policies and resources to reflect the diverse personal life needs of their faculty at different stages of their careers, and, equally important, advertise the policies and resources throughout the institution so all faculty have equal access to them and information about them. If individual faculty rely on their department head to know and care about their personal situation, some will be provided with strong support in difficult times and others may receive no support at all. Serious institutional commitment to supporting faculty members’ careers is communicated by high visibility of policies that do that and by wide and repeated dissemination of those policies, and monitoring of their use, at all levels of the institution.

A recent initiative led by Dr. Kelly Mack, the Gender Values project, helps institutions assess the adequacy of their family-friendly policies according to general principles as well as in comparison with other institutions. Having developed a rubric for assessing dependent care and family leave policies, the project team has assessed and studied their language and coverage at 51 institutions that have received ADVANCE Institutional Transformation awards. The team assessed the degree to which institutions had policies at all (most did), had institutionalized them in a broadly diffused fashion (many had), and had deliberately targeted nonmajority women (most did not; Mack & Soto, 2016).

We want to emphasize, then, that all institutions—regardless of the level of research, teaching, or faculty development and support resources they are able to offer—can calibrate their demands on faculty to fit those resources. In addition, institutions need to make sure that the resources that do exist are well targeted to their faculty needs, are widely known, and are evenly available to groups of faculty.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Role of Institutional Fairness in Faculty Satisfaction**

It is clear from the discussion of resources that perceptions of the fairness of resource distribution matter to faculty. In this way, faculty are similar to employees in all kinds of organizations. The perception of one's workplace as fair maximizes morale and increases commitment to the organization; conversely, perceiving the workplace as not fair not only lowers morale, but maximizes turnover or attrition and reduces productivity (Carr, Schmidt, Ford, & DeShon, 2003; Hebl, Hebl, George, & Matusik, 2010).

### **Evaluating Institutional Fairness**

Organizational fairness has three elements: the fairness of the *goal* or outcome sought, the fairness of the *procedures* used to accomplish the goal or outcome, and *respectful interactions* in the workplace. These three elements ideally stream together to create a “fair” environment: one that aims at equitable outcomes and has procedures to achieve those goals that enhance equity, as well as civil and respectful interactions on the ground. However, it is possible for an environment to have the goal of fair outcomes, but unfair procedures in trying to realize them.

As one example, consider this: a department decides to provide everyone with the space they need for their research—a fair goal—but allocates space based on people's claims about their needs made in private in whatever approach to calculation they choose. Because it is neither systematic nor transparent, such a procedure is open to unfairness. Or, consider a different scenario in which there are unfair outcomes but a nominally fair procedure: people with certain kinds of research needs get more space than people who need as much space but for different research purposes, via procedures that appear fair to the individuals in the process because the application states clearly that one criterion will be the type of research purpose. Or, consider the worst case—unfair goals and unfair procedures, where space is allocated according to the loudness of faculty demands and via an informal, unstandardized process.

And, of course, any of those scenarios could include individuals who are committed to respectful, collegial interactions—or not. The perception that an organization is fair includes not only the first two elements (fair outcomes and fair procedures), but also the likelihood that different kinds of constituencies have an opportunity to contribute to decision-making about both the outcomes and the procedures (Settles, Cortina, Stewart, & Malley, 2007). This is one feature of collegial interactions that feel fundamentally respectful.

Since space is a resource that is finite and often contested in departments, we will focus on that a little longer. One of us participated in departmental discussions about the allocation of space that apparently began with the assumption that some faculty required no research space (i.e., no space beyond their own offices), so a “fair outcome” could be that some faculty would be allocated no research space. That happened because all of the people planning the allocation of research space had very large space needs. They assumed that some—perhaps many—of their colleagues needed no space at all. Once the larger faculty community was included in the conversation, it became clear that although everyone felt that space should be allocated according to need, those faculty with the lowest level of need did not agree that they needed no research space at all. Some felt they needed access to some common resources (e.g., space for research assistants, or testing individuals, which did not need to be privately held but could be shared), and some felt they needed a modest amount of space for storing and analyzing their own and their students' research materials.

Thus, a “fair outcome” in everyone’s eyes could be achieved, but only once all kinds of researchers were part of the conversation.

Including all constituencies in the development of both fair outcomes and fair procedures inevitably takes longer than having a small group of the people with the most intense needs make the decision—but the cost in mistrust and resentment of a fast, exclusive process will in the long run outweigh the “advantage” of an initial saving of time.

### **The Role of Institutional Transparency in Faculty Satisfaction**

One element of both well-distributed knowledge about resources and the perception of organizational fairness that deserves special attention is transparency. Often people interpret the call for transparency as literally applying to every tiny detail about how a decision has been or will be arrived at. By defining transparency in that way, they persuade themselves that it is not practical and therefore not desirable. That caricature of transparency is not what is needed to create a work environment that feels meaningfully respectful and inclusive and therefore maximizes productivity and satisfaction. Generally speaking, the kind of organizational transparency that is important is openness about what decisions are going to be made in the near and far term, the reasons those decisions are on the table at this time, and the process by which the decisions will be made. With respect to the process, that includes who will have input, who will participate in actual decision-making, and what criteria will be used for making the decision.

Another obstacle to transparency is the belief on the part of decision makers that it is actually wise—and will help leaders maintain their power and influence, or lower conflict—to conceal information about how resources are allocated and about the principles that are used to govern that allocation. Again, there is a trade-off between benefits and costs. Dictatorships are beneficial to dictators. The cost is suspicion about institutional decisions, fairness, and principles. Using beneficial features of organizational decision-making helps individuals feel that the organization is operating according to some general principles that are intelligible and even admirable, and, even if the final decision is inconsistent with their own preferences, their preferences were taken into consideration.

Once a decision is made, organization members need to understand what it actually is and what its implications are. That is, they need to



understand what outcomes or goals are sought and the procedures by which those outcomes will be pursued. Ideally, the decision will be formalized into a policy that is then accessible to all members of the community. This kind of transparency is essential to a sense of inclusion and participation—and the creation of an academic community.

We hope it is clear at this point that institutional helpfulness, fairness, and transparency are not truly distinct features of work environments. Together they create environments (or the climate of any given environment) that feel helpful, just, and inclusive. Helpful, just, and inclusive environments are the ones in which people generally do their best work, and faculty are no exception. Importantly for the institution, people who are doing their best work rarely want to go somewhere else where they might not be able to keep it up.

### **The Importance of Respectful Interactions and the Climate for Difference**

The varied institutional features that add up to institutional helpfulness, fairness, and transparency are often summarized in the term “climate.” This metaphor is intended to describe the “weather” that defines a person’s work environment. Imagine for a moment the way in which climates determine what plants and flowers can grow: most do well under “temperate” or “moderate” conditions in which they experience adequate sunshine, water, and warmth (Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart, 2006). A smaller number thrive well under what are thought of as “harsh” conditions (little sunshine, great cold or heat, and extremely wet or dry conditions). Human beings are similar: most thrive when they are provided with environments that are moderately supportive (sunny and warm); a hardy few can thrive even when conditions are very “chilly” or extremely “hot.” Resources, fairness, and transparency are the sunshine, water, and warmth of human work environments.

### **Differences in Experiences of the Climate**

Despite commonalities in what creates a good climate, not everyone in a department experiences the same climate. Often people who are in the numerical majority find it confusing when those who are not in the majority report that they find the climate unpleasant. They may even accuse the

minority of being “wrong” about the environment. Typically, men perceive the climate as more supportive than women do (see, e.g., perceptions of academic conference climate, Biggs, Hawley, & Biernat, 2017), and Whites perceive the climate as more supportive than people of color do (see, e.g., Zambrana, Wingfield, Lapeyrouse, Dávila, Hoagland, & Váldez, 2017).

One way they can both be right is that they are not experiencing the same climate. In some cases, the department supports individuals in some demographic categories more than it supports those in other categories. In other cases, the particular features of support are more congenial to some demographic groups than others. Especially when a department has only a single person of color, or a single woman, that person’s perceptions may be dismissed (if they are even known) and may wash out in aggregate measures of the climate. But that person’s experience matters, even if it doesn’t change the average. In short, how an institution—a department, a school, or a university—handles differences among the faculty is revealed in part by discussions of the “climate.”

### **Institutional Cultures That Are Monolithic Preclude Diversity**

One way a bad climate for difference gets created is when people talk about the institutional culture in monolithic terms. When it seems to a community that they must protect a “monoculture”—a culture in which everyone has the same preferences, attitudes, and styles—differences are perceived as threatening and dangerous to community cohesion. In settings like these, someone who is different—female, or from an ethnic minority, or gay or lesbian—may still be okay if the person doesn’t draw attention to their differentness, if she, say, acts like “one of the guys” (see Yoshino, 2007, on “covering”). So a monoculture can absorb people who are superficially different in some way as long as they go along with the cultural practices and their presence doesn’t change anything (see Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Ely & Thomas, 2001). The person is included, but at a cost to herself.

### **Inclusion as a Token versus as a Full Participant**

Another way people who are different may get “included” is as tokens (Hebl et al., 2010; Kanter, 1977; Thompson & Sekaquaptewa, 2002; Yoder, 2002). When this happens individuals who are “different” are routinely “marked” as having a particular characteristic that makes them different that requires attention and comment. Thus, they may be asked for the “woman’s point

of view” or assumed to care about certain things. For example, racial-ethnic minority group members may be assumed to be the ones who care about “diversity” in the department. Equally, women may be assumed to be the people in charge of educating others about sexual harassment.

In one department discussion of the next recruitment priorities and how best to encourage the hiring of women, Martha—the only woman, a junior faculty member, and a person known to have a partner who lived in another state—was asked by the department chair “to tell us what you think” because of her unique perspective. Martha felt singled out as female and as having a “partner problem” (though, of course, many of the senior men in the department had such “problems,” too). She wondered if all her opinions about hiring and the field would be viewed as reflecting those personal qualities. When people are treated as members of a group, rather than as valued individual colleagues, the climate feels “chilly.”

In contrast, that same department chair sometimes sought out Martha’s opinion by telling her that he valued her good scientific judgment and excellent people skills. When he approached her for input on a problem that way, Martha reacted very differently: she felt like a valued colleague with something to contribute to thinking about a problem—not because she was a woman, but because of her unique individual characteristics, and the needs of the situation.

Fortunately, Martha and her chair were able to discuss the different examples because Martha felt there was a reserve of goodwill and respect on both sides. Equally fortunately, when the department chair heard how Martha felt about the first example, he did not suggest that she was overly sensitive (as women and minorities are often told). Instead, he recognized that it was his responsibility to include Martha in what had been a monoculture without treating her as a token member of a group. He worked hard to figure out how better to frame his questions, and invite input, so that his respect for Martha as a colleague was evident. That included not asking her to speak “as a woman” or putting her on the spot in a public setting about a contentious issue. In this case, the department chair was both the problem and the solution.

But often the individuals who create difficulties for those who are “different” are not in positions of authority, but are colleagues, members of one’s community. Robert, the only African American member of his department and a full professor, was sitting in a meeting of his colleagues, discussing

which doctoral student applicants would be accepted into the program. Pete—someone who often expressed unpopular, even crude opinions—indicated that he supposed “we are under pressure to admit unqualified students because of affirmative action.” Robert waited for one of his knowledgeable colleagues to explain that affirmative action did not require anyone to accept unqualified applicants, but no one said anything. The group simply moved on to other comments.

Worrying later that evening about whether he should have spoken up, Robert also wondered how to understand what had happened: did his colleagues really agree with Pete? Did they think Pete was so obviously off-base they didn’t see any reason to answer? Did they think Robert should speak because he was the only individual present who was a member of a minority group? Were they embarrassed that Pete had implied that Robert was unqualified? Being left after meetings with uncertainty about what happened is a common experience for those who do not feel part of the dominant group. This kind of rumination is an indication of how little they fit in or belong. And over time, quite apart from feeling overly visible or invisible, like an outsider or a colluder, the labor it takes to interpret such situations creates a powerful incentive to find a less exhausting niche somewhere else. This is an example of a small disadvantage that being different can impose. We discussed earlier the fact that such small disadvantages are nonetheless destructive. They create problems that occupy a mind that we hope will be free for more satisfying scholarly pursuits.

### **Meeting the Need for Respectful Interactions**

Quite apart from the specific aspects of the environment that spotlight difference, work environments vary in how and how much they tolerate overt or covert expressions of sexual harassment, disrespect, or incivility (Cortina, 2008).

**Sexual Harassment** Many colleges and universities, over the past several decades, have adopted policies that aim to discourage sexual harassment. It remains, however, a live issue on college campuses—one that affects the work environment both for younger women as students, postdoctoral researchers, and junior faculty, and for senior faculty who are their confidants and advisors and who themselves may be the targets of sexual harassment. Although it is difficult to document the prevalence of harassment, because

it is typically underreported, there are studies describing the type and to some extent the frequency of such events (e.g., Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Clancy, Lee, Rodgers, & Richey, 2017; Jagsi, Griffith, Jones, Perumalswami, Ubel, & Stewart, 2016).

Every year we face news of eminent “repeat offenders” who have finally been formally accused and found responsible for their actions. The costs for those who have been harassed are, as we describe, extensive, but there are also costs to the institution and to the academy generally of examples of sexual harassment. Although people of any gender can be the object of sexual harassment, young women are the biggest class. Sexual harassment operates at best to distract from the work that those young women want to do and at worst to destroy their careers, their confidence that they have important and valued work to do, and their trust in the fairness of the academy. The academy has a responsibility to provide everyone with an environment that is free of harassment, no matter how “minor.”

Brave women, younger and older, have described the corrosive impact of experiences of being treated by respected, powerful figures in their discipline as sex objects or sex partners, instead of as work colleagues or students (for one example, see [http://www.slate.com/articles/health\\_and\\_science/science/2016/07/sexual\\_harassment\\_has\\_devastating\\_consequences\\_on\\_victims\\_ability\\_to\\_perform.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2016/07/sexual_harassment_has_devastating_consequences_on_victims_ability_to_perform.html)). It is worth noting that when individuals do not trust their institutional home to “do the right thing” about sexual or other problems, that in turn corrodes their commitment to work and to that organization (Huerta, Cortina, Pang, Torges, & Magley, 2006; Smith & Freyd, 2014; Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007).

Faculty and colleagues have increasingly begun to express public support for women who have been harassed. They have circulated letters criticizing bad behaviors that are known to have occurred and have spoken publicly about the need to sanction such bad behaviors. Some professional societies, such as the American Astronomical Society, the American Geophysical Union, and the American Political Science Association, have developed explicit anti-harassment policies in an effort to address the inappropriate behavior of, usually, more senior males toward junior females, at conferences. We hope that the responsibility such professional groups are taking will be replicated broadly in other societies and in colleges and universities.<sup>2</sup>

Sexual harassment can take many forms in the academy. Some are explicitly sexualized, ranging from the legally unacceptable “quid quo pro” exchange of some kind of work benefit for sexual acts to sexualized comments or “dirty” jokes. Others are now known as “gender” harassment—comments on one’s appearance, especially in reference to a gender-linked standard (e.g., of masculinity or femininity), derogatory comments about women or men, and sexist jokes or comments (Berdahl, 2007a; Leskinen, Cortina, & Kabat, 2011; Reich & Hershcovis, 2012). These kinds of harassment occur in interactions with students, staff, and faculty. Even if they are not pervasive or encountered on a daily basis, their effects are felt by many women (and by some men, especially indirectly when they observe harassment of women). They are experienced by faculty who are straight and gay. One particularly powerful description of sexual harassment of a gay man is provided by E. Patrick Johnson:

A senior colleague, with a repulsive personality, apparently needs to work out his own sexuality through me, the department’s resident Black faggot. He does so by trying to bait me while I’m standing at the copier. He places his latest book in my face (the cover is a picture of Greg Louganis in a Speedo diving into a pool) and chants, “Isn’t that hot? Wouldn’t you like to taste that?” He further shows his affection by groping me in the department office, feeling he is allowed to do this because the LGBT student group has written “Hug a Queer Today” on the sidewalk. (Johnson, 2009, p. 97)

The effects of sexual harassment experiences include increased work stress, decreased life satisfaction, and harm to physical and emotional health (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Huerta et al., 2006). Younger women and women of color are particularly vulnerable to the impact of these experiences (Berdahl & Moore, 2006), and women faculty of all ages are likely to be sought out as confidantes by students, staff, and faculty who have been targeted.

Some faculty cannot imagine why mere expressions of sexual interest are so harmful. It is the way these expressions, when unexpected and unwanted, undermine someone’s confidence in themselves and their chosen field that is so damaging. One articulate complainant described the impact of her experience to her harasser:

... your confession of your romantic feelings changed everything for me. It took away trust, stability, motivation, ambition and the beauty that I had always seen in this place. Yes, I believe I can say it ruined the experience of being [at this institution] to some extent. I am not judging your feelings... but you should never have told me.

When I think back now, thinking that any nice word, any accidental touch, any hug of yours may have been more than that, it makes me sick to my stomach. Nothing appears to be what it seemed anymore. How can I still trust you? ... Everything work-related is related to you and therefore to this incident now. And so I cannot help but feel bad and disturbed, and yes, creeped out whenever I think of our projects. (Quoted in the Sexual Harassment Prevention Program in the College of Literature, Science and the Arts at the University of Michigan, January 22, 2013)

In addition to the costs to the person harassed, other people's experience can weigh heavily both on women faculty and on their enlightened—and troubled—male colleagues (Porath, Macinnis, & Folkes, 2010; Reich & Hershcovis, 2012). Many institutions have enacted policies that discourage these kinds of behavior, but people who have been harassed are often reluctant to report their experiences, given both the frequent power differences between harasser and victim and the close communities of people over long periods of time that are typical of academic settings (Berdahl, 2007a; Rudman, Borgida, & Robertson, 1995). It is therefore critical both to have transparent and effective mechanisms for reporting, evaluating, and addressing sexual harassment complaints and to create a climate in which the egalitarian and civil treatment of all members of the community makes sexual harassment unacceptable and unlikely (see Berdahl, 2007b; Cortina, 2008).

In the face of serious incidents that had occurred on the campus of Yale University, a new and more rigorous policy was adopted and information about it was disseminated on the web (<http://provost.yale.edu/uwc-procedures>), including information about how individuals could get advice and help in formulating their own preferences about what to do (<http://sharecenter.yale.edu/>). In addition, the policy adopted includes explicit summarizing and reporting of formal grievances and their disposition (without identifying details) and publication to the community twice each year ("Each January and July, the University Title IX Coordinator will publish a statistical abstract of the handling of sexual misconduct complaints at Yale, including a list of disciplinary actions. These abstracts will include no information that would reveal the identities of the parties.") The aim of these practices was clearly to communicate that the institution will not tolerate sexual harassment, though we note that after these steps were taken the institution was faced with complaints about its long-standing neglect and mishandling of complaints of sexual harassment. Adopting policies is not enough; the practices they are intended to promote must

become the culture of the institution. It is tempting to think that creating and adopting the policy will solve the problem, but it is only the first step in solving the problem (Ahmed, 2012).

**Incivility** Disrespectful treatment is not confined to harassment. It includes actions that are more covert and not necessarily sexualized or aimed at any particular group—“incivility” (Cortina 2008). Some of the literature that examines these issues labels such actions “microaggressions” (see Sue, 2010a, 2010b; see Lilienfeld, 2017, for methodological concerns about how the term is defined). While incivility focuses on the experience of the recipient of the behavior, we want explicitly to note that many of the actions that come under these rubrics are *not* intentional expressions of disrespect or aggression, or at least are not intentionally aimed at any particular group. In addition, some people are rude to everyone, and at some point almost everyone experiences rudeness. That is part of what makes it easy for bystanders and institutions to ignore incivility: it isn’t constant and the targets are widespread. Although everyone experiences rudeness at one time or other, women and people of color experience it more than do White men. And the impact of rudeness on recipients is consequential.

We digress for a moment to affirm that disagreement is fundamental to academic discourse. We do not align with those who would suppress disagreement in the interest of unanimity or conformity (see Nader, 2001, on “coercive harmony”). Disagreement is a defining feature of a community of intellectual inquiry, and a strength of academic research. The academy is expected to provide opportunities for meaningful, serious, and profound disagreement—otherwise, environments become stifling and deadly. At the same time, openness to disagreement is not the same as incivility. Bugeja (2002) distinguishes collegiality, which he favors because it requires inclusive participation of all colleagues, from congeniality, which he argues may suppress dissent. We agree that disagreement can always be expressed—in a collegial manner.

Disagreement is sometimes claimed as one motivation for, and as a justification for, incivility (or lack of collegiality). We think everyone can learn to express disagreements constructively. Disagreement is also sometimes used simply as a cover for people who say, implicitly, “I disagree with you, but I don’t want merely to point out problems with your argument or your evidence; I want to interrupt you, cast aspersions on your motivations, your



talent, and your sincerity; I want to demonstrate how much smarter than you I am while preventing you from finishing your point!" Departments and institutions that have a reputation for this kind of discourse are—no surprise—often experienced by women and minorities as “hostile” climates (Ackelsberg et al., 2009; Guzman et al., 2010; Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009). Our view is that climates in which hostility is openly expressed are stifling in their own way, by making it difficult for some members of the academy to express their disagreements.

Researchers have differentiated incivility (which is “low intensity” non-congeniality or rudeness) from bullying (which is higher intensity and usually clearly intentional; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003) and workplace abuse (which is even more intense; Richman, Shinsako, Rospenda, Flaherty, & Freels, 2002). While those types are analytically distinct, the differences among them do not have reliably different implications (Hershcovis, 2011). Constructive dissent requires an atmosphere in which the discussants are aiming at a deeper understanding than would be possible without dissent.

In addition to discussion of this issue in terms of workplace incivility (Cortina, 2008), some research focuses specifically on gender or racial or ethnic harassment (Raver & Nishii, 2010). In these cases, scholars argue that any kind of rude or hostile treatment that is due to one’s social identities (race or ethnicity, gender, class, international status, sexual orientation, etc.) creates a work environment that is damaging to morale and productivity, and often to mental and physical health (Jayakumar et al., 2009; Porath, 2017; Raver & Nishii, 2010).

Why do these different hostile features of the workplace climate bother women and minorities more than White men? First, they may not, across the board. There are many White men who do not enjoy this form of intellectual combat but who have learned to live with it and not to resist it (see Keashly, 2012). And there are White women and people of color who do not mind hostile dialogue. However, to the extent that workplace incivility does bother women and minorities more, it is probably because the people most likely to engage in uncivil behavior are those with the greatest confidence and certainty that they are right. Of course, this can include individual female or underrepresented minority faculty members. But most often those with the greatest confidence and sense of entitlement are those with the most status-based privilege: powerful senior faculty with years of

experience of being taken seriously, regardless of their behavior. Statistically, those individuals are more likely to be White males. And, statistically, the casualties of this kind of incivility, while including some junior White males (perhaps especially those who feel like outsiders for some reason—different in terms of family status, sexual orientation, intellectual perspective, etc.), are more often White women and racial-ethnic minorities.

Some academics expect people to develop a tough skin, a tolerance for the incivility of a few individuals. They express little or no concern about the impact of occasions of incivility on those who feel least welcome in the environment. (In fact the two senior faculty who left institutions in the opening stories heard just those expectations from their colleagues.) Such a climate—of tolerance for incivility—is related to higher levels of work-related stress, and poorer health and well-being, among all kinds of workers, not just White women and racial-ethnic minority men and women (Cortina, 2008; Lim, Cortina, & Magley, 2008; Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004). Incivility is also related to poorer worker morale and job performance (Porath & Erez, 2007; Porath & Pearson, 2010). Finally, environments that tolerate incivility are also more likely to tolerate behavior that is even more pernicious and unacceptable, like sexual harassment (Gutek, 1985; Lim & Cortina, 2005).

There is, then, reason for us all to be more effective at requiring our interactions with one another to meet a minimum standard of respectful civility, even as we express vigorous disagreement. The University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching has guidelines for fostering productive discussions in the classroom, many of which are also appropriate for faculty talking to each other (<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/examples-discussion-guidelines/>). One department's experience in working to create a better climate, motivated by concerns about graduate students, is presented in box 7.2.

### **Meeting Faculty Members' Human Needs**

The climate of our work environments is created in the course of our interactions with our leaders, our peers, our students, and the staff who support our work lives. It is also defined by the quality of the recognition it affords to the human needs we have that go beyond work but affect and are affected by our work lives. These include features like the nature of the community ties that bind us (see Jordan & Bilimoria, 2007). Some academic

**Box 7.2****How One Department Addressed a Climate Issue**

The impetus for change in one department was the observation that female graduate students were dropping out of the program at a much higher rate than male students were. Climate seemed to be the major problem. Two faculty went to a workshop on gender and, inspired by what their colleagues at other institutions were doing, formed a committee consisting of faculty and graduate students to discuss climate issues in the department. They created a survey based on existing surveys and on comments from the students. One practical issue that took some time to work through was the university's concern that the survey might disclose problems that they would be legally obligated to address. Although the committee had wanted the survey to be completely anonymous, the university required links that would allow it to identify individuals if someone reported any illegal activity. Respondents were informed that the university might identify them if it thought it had a duty to intervene. Developing the survey and reaching agreement with the university took about a year. Because the committee believed in the importance of assessing and changing the climate, they persevered.

The survey combined multiple-choice and short-answer items. The office of institutional research, not the department, analyzed the results in order to preserve the confidentiality of students' responses and forwarded aggregate data to the committee. The committee summarized the data—basic patterns, numerical results, and some quotations—and discussed the results in three meetings: a faculty-faculty meeting, a student-student meeting, and a meeting with the department as a whole.

To ensure receptivity among the faculty, the committee tied the issues to education. For example, if students were not attending colloquia because of the climate, that interfered with the department's educational mission. One surprise was that all students had complaints about the climate. Another surprise was that women were about twice as dissatisfied as men. Faculty were taken aback and concerned by the extent of the problem.

The department developed several faculty-student subcommittees to make recommendations for change. Each subcommittee met four to five times over a two-month period and presented recommendations to the main climate committee. That group created a combined list of recommendations, which ranged from learning about bystander interventions to creating a more respectful climate. The whole department met again to discuss the recommendations.

While not everyone agreed that the recommended changes should be adopted, there was a consensus to take an experimental attitude. Most of the

(continued)

**Box 7.2 (continued)**

department recognized that there was a problem, respected the work the committees had performed, and were willing to adopt many of the recommendations, with the understanding that, in two years, the department would reassess the climate with a repeat survey and determine the value of the recommendations. The second survey found dramatic improvement on almost every question. Dissatisfaction had been cut roughly in half and greater attrition by women from the program had stopped. A large majority of students thought that the department now had a respectful climate. As with the first survey, the results were presented at a joint meeting of students and faculty.

The subcommittees continue their work, and there will be another survey in a year. Newer students take the current climate to be the norm. Some older students and faculty are still skeptical, but since the department is manifestly a much more congenial place, they are willing to go along.

What we find exemplary about this department's efforts are (1) their recognition that there was a problem; (2) their efforts to find solutions that went against long-standing norms; (3) their persistence in the face of difficulties, including legal constraints imposed by the institution and reluctance on the part of some faculty; (4) their recognition that climate issues cannot be solved in one fell swoop but require ongoing efforts on a number of fronts by a number of people; (5) their commitment to gathering and analyzing data on a regular basis; and (6) their discovery that their department became a better place for almost everyone.

work settings are associated with elaborate social ties outside of work; others have none. Faculty can be happy and productive in both kinds of settings (though individuals may have different preferences), but no one's work life is made more tolerable and productive when a person feels excluded from the social ties that others have.

**Experiencing Exclusion from the Community**

Sandra was one of two African American faculty members in her department. After her first year in the department, she began to notice that every Wednesday all the women in the department went to lunch together. Except her. No one had ever told her about these lunches; no one ever invited her to participate. But every week she noticed all the other—White—women went to lunch together, with no male colleagues, and without her. This kind of exclusion strained the collegial ties Sandra felt with those women

and made every departmental interaction with them charged in a different way than it would have been if they had included her in the weekly lunches.

People who do belong find it difficult to understand, or even perceive, what it is like not to belong. They fail to recognize the cushion of air on which they float, thanks to their integration in the community, a cushion that makes it possible for them to say what they think to each other without worrying about how it will be received. Someone in that position thinks that free and open dialogue is available to everyone in the community, not realizing that their vantage point is not everyone's vantage point.

### **Variety in the Demands of Private Life**

While the social connections between work and social life are important, we all need to be able to feel free of work demands at some times—free to pursue other interests, to relax, to take care of personal business, to have a private life. Family-friendly resources, policies, and practices have increased with the increased representation of women on the faculty, but we underline the fact that support for faculty members' family responsibilities was present long before women's needs were the focus (Girgus, 2011). The availability of benefits like life and health insurance that covered not only a faculty member but his partner and children was not recognized at the time to derive from men's family roles, but it did. Similarly, the once-common provision of paid college tuition for faculty children was a benefit that assumed a particular family arrangement and a particular set of needs.

Academic households are different now than they were in the past, and they will continue to change. There are more and more households made up of individuals not previously imagined in universities' policies: faculty caring for elders, siblings, or partners; or faculty who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. The kinds of supports faculty need at different life stages, and as a result of different life situations, varies. Institutions that create environments that not only recognize and address the range of needs faculty have, but are welcoming and provide warm communities, will succeed in retaining a diverse faculty.

Sometimes particular kinds of faculty members are targeted to meet some work-related demands outside of normal work hours precisely because it is assumed that they have less need of this freedom. For example, Jack—a White man—reported that he was expected to take every guest speaker to

dinner because he is single, and his colleagues assumed that he had no need for freedom from work demands in the evening. Equally, Elaine—a White woman—reported that she resented the fact that no one seemed to grasp that as a single person and a homeowner she had to cope with every household emergency on her own, unlike her partnered colleagues, who complained about how little their partners helped. No matter how little their partners may have done, to *her* it appeared that her partnered colleagues could count on two sets of hands around the house and not just one. The point here is that we often make assumptions about how much, or how little, our colleagues need firm, clear boundaries that separate the times when they are expected to respond to work demands from time they can control. Work environments vary in how easy they make it for people to articulate their needs in this domain and to have their preferences stick.

All faculty need assistance in meeting the joint needs of work and a personal life. Those needs change at different points in the life cycle. They may be the result of the presence, absence, or illness of a partner, or a parent, sibling, or child for whom one is responsible; or it may be the result of an illness, accident, or infirmity of one's own.

### **Dual-Career Services and Childcare Resources**

The issue of faculty needs for support for their family lives has been addressed most openly around the needs of parents of young children (Mason & Goulden, 2002a, 2002b, 2004) and the needs of two-career households for dual-career services (Schiebinger, Henderson, & Gilmartin, 2008). Faculty have pressed for on-campus childcare facilities and information about other community resources, as well as family-friendly policies for new parents (including parental leaves). There is increasing evidence that the current generation of graduate students, postdocs, and junior faculty is not as willing to sacrifice family for career as previous generations may have been—and that applies to both women and men (see Ecklund & Lincoln, 2016).

### **Financial Support at Critical Transition Points**

Some universities have special funds aimed at supporting faculty who are at a critical point in their careers and have experienced major life events that make it difficult for them to pursue their work effectively. WISELI, at the University of Wisconsin, for example, has Vilas Life Cycle Professorships. A faculty member applies for support, stating both why his or her current

situation counts as a critical juncture and what major life events make it difficult to move forward. The professorships are intended to respond to the large variety of pressing life events that can happen at just the wrong time in someone's career.

The same logic that applies to bridging grants—keep active faculty active—is the logic that applies to any mechanism for supporting faculty. Some universities have internal grants for new work—seed money to help develop new areas of research.

*Stop-the-clock* and *modified-duty* policies make the route to tenure more flexible. In both types of policies, certain principles hold. First, the policies are available to as wide a group of people as possible. They do not, for example, assume that only women take care of children. Second, the policies are a genuine time out: people are not required in any way to compensate for time that they spent off the clock or in modified duties. Third, there is no penalty for faculty who avail themselves of the policies for which they are eligible.

**Stop-the-Clock Policies** In *stop-the-clock* policies, faculty with new responsibilities for children or other family members (such as an ailing partner or parent) may take—but are not required to take—more than the prescribed number of years (usually between five and seven except in medical schools) before being considered for tenure, without there being any increase in the faculty member's expected productivity. If faculty wish to keep the clock running, they are, of course, free to do so. There are two key aspects to such policies when they are successfully implemented. First, everyone—male or female, of any race-ethnicity—is free to opt in or opt out. "Free" means that if a White man wants to be the primary caretaker of a new child, and can demonstrate that he will in fact be the primary caretaker, he can do so without opprobrium.<sup>3</sup> Second, stopping the clock means that faculty are not considered to have had an "extra" year and thus are not expected to demonstrate the productivity of someone who has had an additional year of full-time effort.

It is very important that institutions' policies be easily accessed and well-documented for their faculty. Many institutions' policies are vaguely worded (or refer the reader to another site with a broken link). As is the case with any policy, too little specificity can leave too much discretion in the hands of an unknowledgeable or unreceptive chair or dean. But too much

specificity can create a rigidity that is unresponsive to the variety of difficult life situations that people may face. Some universities' policies differ from school to school, while others have a policy that extends across all schools (generally excluding medical schools, and sometimes business schools).

**Modified-Duty Policies** In *modified-duties* policies, faculty may be considered for tenure at the canonical time but have reduced teaching responsibilities to balance the heavier responsibilities they have in their personal lives. This too is a change that potentially equally benefits all faculty, regardless of sex or race-ethnicity. There are many variants of such policies. In some cases, modified duties are available only with the addition of a new child to a household. (See, e.g., the policy at Northeastern University.) In other cases, although the addition of a child is the expected reason, others are possible. (See, e.g., the policy at the University of South Carolina.) As with stop-the-clock policies, no "make-up" is expected and no penalties are exacted. In addition, a number of schools have formalized language that is used when seeking outside letters so that external reviewers do not inadvertently penalize candidates who have taken advantage of such policies.

An additional feature of one modified-duties program, at the University of Michigan, is the provision of one semester to all new parents, and a second semester of modified duties for a birth mother whose child is in the home. The grounds for this are that only a birth mother experiences the accompaniments of pregnancy, labor, and breastfeeding.

### **Lactation Rooms**

One change that directly benefits only some women is the provision of lactation rooms across campus so that female faculty can express milk at work in a private setting. Although only the woman benefits directly, there are indirect benefits to the woman's household as a whole: for example, the woman's partner does not need to be ferrying the child to the mother's work to be nursed.

### **The Importance of Time at Work and Home**

Feminist legal scholar Joan Williams (2000) argued in her book *Unbending Gender* that the American "ideal worker" and "ideal mother" are each available for work or mothering at all times. The dramatically increased presence of mothers in the labor force has challenged both of these ideals,



but institutions vary widely in how actively they have accommodated this change. To the extent that employers retain a notion of a worker who is available at all times for work, parents of young children (increasingly both men and women) will be dissatisfied.

Moreover, Galinsky and Bond (2009) showed that employees who emphasize their family lives over their work lives or put equal emphasis on each “exhibit significantly better mental health, greater satisfaction with their lives, and higher levels of job satisfaction than employees who are work-centric.” They conclude, “Although employers [for us, colleges and universities] may want their employees to be work-centric—focusing on work to the exclusion of the rest of their lives—actually achieving this goal could be a pyrrhic victory, especially in light of escalating work stress and its potential cost in health care” (p. 432). Organizational scholars Lotte Bailyn, Rhona Rapoport, Joyce Fletcher, and Bettye Pruitt (2002) showed that organizations can actually increase productivity while addressing demands for improved “work-life balance” if they recognize that far from limiting work performance, policies and practices that address workers’ need to balance work and family roles actually enhance it.

Some faculty have successfully encouraged their departments to limit department meetings and functions to specified working hours, so that parents of young children can meet their responsibilities to them. Indeed, some institutions have adopted work-hour policies, which make this freedom something the institution recognizes and therefore something individuals do not have to wrest from the institution; see, for example, Texas A&M (<http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life/BALANCING-WORK,-PERSONAL-AND-FAMILY-ISSUES>, visited July 26, 2016); the Microbiology and Immunology Department at the University of Michigan Medical School (personal communication, Professor Michele Swanson, May 6, 2013); the Sociology Department at the University of Iowa (personal communication, Professor Jennifer Glass, May 7, 2013); Oregon State University’s “Toolkit for Academic Administrators” ([http://academicaffairs.oregonstate.edu/sites/academicaffairs.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/osu\\_family-friendly\\_toolkit\\_final\\_2015.pdf](http://academicaffairs.oregonstate.edu/sites/academicaffairs.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/osu_family-friendly_toolkit_final_2015.pdf); see p. 13; visited January 20, 2018); and the College of New Jersey’s policy of a set-aside meetings time on Wednesday afternoons (when no classes are scheduled; see p. 5 of the Governance section of the policy manual: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=9894>; visited January 20, 2018).

Departmental and institutional practices about “extra” work meetings (formal and informal), as well as norms about how much “face time” is expected in the corridors, all define the degree to which institutional demands consume all, some, or none of a faculty member’s time outside of the classroom, office hours, and required meetings. These norms about time are often tacit, so individuals can run afoul of them without even knowing it—and, of course, those most likely to run afoul of tacit norms are those most “out of the loop” of informal communication: women and minorities.

Not only can institutions (whether departments, schools and colleges, or universities) help faculty by formulating explicit policies about time that are communicated in a transparent way (e.g., on the school or department website; in the faculty handbook), but they can also offer other kinds of supports that assist faculty in meeting the demands associated with their nonwork lives (see Philipsen, 2008, for detailed recommendations).

### **The Cost of Inadequate Childcare Resources**

Increasingly, institutions provide some kind of support for childcare (whether sponsoring it onsite or subsidizing the cost), for dual-career hiring, and for elder care (Bowman & Feeney, 2011). Some faculty without children find institutional attention to those with them excessive. However, as we noted earlier, we believe that is because they feel overlooked in institutional attention. The remedy is not removal of support for those with children, but inclusion of the different kinds of support needed by those without children.

An institution may falsely think that it has “good resources for working parents” even when those resources no longer meet the needs of newly recruited faculty. Hiring more female and male faculty who have egalitarian relationships with their working partners results in more children who need care. A few examples from faculty at one research-intensive university that prides itself on being family-friendly make this clear. Two examples—about one male and one female new recruit—reflect this generation of young faculty’s concern about this issue:

A female candidate for an assistant professor position mentioned that she was about four months pregnant during her second visit. She asked me about daycare options at [this institution] and was disappointed to hear that spots were quite limited such

that she would be unlikely to get infant care. She told me that the other university she had an offer from had relatively inexpensive, readily available childcare. She ended up accepting a position at the other university.

A junior male faculty member had offers from other universities.... He said that he decided to come to the [university] because it was family friendly.... He had a child about two years after coming to [the university] and expressed great frustration that daycare spots were unavailable for his infant. He felt like this lack of daycare indicated that [the university] wasn't as family friendly as he had originally been led to believe.

Another example points to the chain of disappointments and the cost to a young mother in the early years of her tenure-track career:

We struggled with infant care for our first child. We got on the wait-list when we were about three months pregnant. We were told we were #404 (I will never forget) and that there was no way we would ever get him in.... We enrolled our son at [a community center] but found the care to be below our standards. We moved him to another [center] and were paired up with a wonderful teacher. We had a good experience until our daughter was born. Her teacher at the same school was not that good. It is incredibly stressful to know that your child is not getting "good" care. We made the tough decision to move the older one, and separate him from the teacher he had since he was six months old so that we could get our younger one into the [university]. We played the game... the same way we were thwarted with our first born. Even after moving him, that just moved us "up" on the waiting list. We were #3 in line now for an infant spot. And we had to wait, and wait, for several months before we were able to get our youngest in. At this point, she was 11 months old and spent 8 months in the care of a substandard teacher. And... as both of us were faculty at [the university]... we spent two hours of each day just commuting between the two centers and doing two drop-offs and pick-ups across town. Now that both are in [the nearby on-campus day-care center], our "commute" is a seven-minute walk. Both of us gained about two hours in our work day. And our children are in an amazing, supportive environment.

Another mother outlined her experience this way:

The process was incredibly stressful and time-consuming (all the interviewing and touring) and confusing. It's hard to explain to someone who hasn't gone through this how all-consuming this is. It's your baby! A whole little human being! You end up spending all this workday time figuring this out, rather than writing papers, working on grants, etc. The daycare folks would not even estimate when a spot would open up and were quite literally unwilling to give us our number despite its existence (I now understand that's because they literally don't open up spots for babies hardly ever). I have heard countless similar experiences of withholding of information like

spot number, and inability to find daycare spots for infants. And, of course, the burden of finding these spots seems to lie mostly with women faculty even though it shouldn't. So the lack of daycare for infants is a double burden on women faculty here. There has to be a better way.

Finally, one father expressed his frustration this way:

I would hope that the number of spots or new university sponsored daycare centers could be expanded. With the growing emphasis on diversity in academia, STEM fields, and all other endeavors at [the university], certainly one type of diversity is having children or taking care of dependents. The days of single White men with no dependents leading academic fields or filling faculty rosters is over. If [the university] expects to continue to attract top quality researchers and also fulfill their mission of fostering diversity/inclusion issues, it seems reasonable to increase the family-friendly nature of [the university] by increasing access to daycare centers.

Institutions need policies that enable faculty to manage the periods in their lives when nonwork demands are great, even as they are free to benefit from the increased time commitment of faculty during periods when they are not. Moreover, it is best when these "benefits" are available as entitlements rather than as requests that may or may not be granted (commonly referred to as "opt out" rather than "opt in" policies, emphasizing that the choice not to take them up belongs to the individual faculty member; see, e.g., Rosser, 2012). Operating in an environment where these demands are either taboo (cannot be mentioned) or openly disapproved of inevitably limits faculty members' commitment to the institution. Feeling that an institution has provided crucial freedom, flexibility, or assistance during a particularly difficult time engenders loyalty and appreciation, as well as a faster return to full productivity.

### **Maximizing Faculty Satisfaction and Retention by Building Community**

How can an institution maximize faculty satisfaction and retention? We can summarize our discussion: maximize supportive, helpful resources; be fair; be transparent; enhance the warmth and respectfulness of the faculty community; and meet faculty members' human needs. Maximizing satisfaction and retention requires deep and pervasive institutionalization of these features in policy and practice. They should be explicitly articulated as part of the mission and culture of the institution, embedded in official

formal policies, and reflected in the procedures adopted to implement policies.

Ideally, institutional leaders at every level underscore these values as issues are discussed and routine business is conducted, and they themselves reflect a helpful stance and a concern with being fair and transparent. This may sound obvious but we have talked with university leaders who spoke dismissively of these issues as not the business of the academy; faculty who hear or hear about this kind of talk are often shocked and demoralized. In any case, ensuring that the institution is experienced as helpful, fair, and transparent requires recruitment of internal leaders (deans and department chairs) who share these values and are well-educated about the policies and practices that reflect them. These values are supported when faculty are invited to have input into decision-making processes early on and are provided with a clear account of the process of decision-making after the input. It is also supported by regular assessment of the institution's progress (success and failure) toward fully enacting these values. This includes assessing and discussing the climate of work environments for various groups of faculty, as well as assessing more concrete features of the work structure, such as salary, space allocation, time in rank, progress to promotion, uses of internal research funding, use of family-friendly policies, and teaching and service assignments. Finally, maximizing these outcomes requires that the institution prevent the stigmatization of faculty who make use of institutional policies.

Regular collection of data, along with discussion of perceived issues they uncover, provide all faculty and administrators with the information they need about institutional success in providing resources, fairness, and transparency to the faculty. Regular assessment of institutional outcomes also provides opportunities for developing and tweaking policies and practices so they are more widely and uniformly experienced as creating and maintaining the kind of institutional workplace that maximizes faculty satisfaction and commitment.

From frequent and serious institutional conversation, individual faculty will emerge who have the personal interest, skills, and talents to suggest better policies and provide leadership in developing enthusiasm for them. By engaging the faculty in the project of improving the institutional work environment, a new generation of faculty leaders will emerge who can make

these issues a priority: they will understand fully that a work environment that maximizes the satisfaction and productivity of all faculty provides the best guarantee of institutional excellence over the long term.

### **Recommendations for Maximizing Faculty Retention and Building Community**

#### **Institutional Policies**

Create, publicize, and implement policies that

1. link institutional expectations (e.g., for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure) to institutional resources provided to faculty
2. ensure broad access to resources for all faculty
3. guarantee fair and transparent procedures
4. address human needs of faculty throughout the life cycle (e.g., dual career and child and elder care) as faculty entitlements
5. respect the need for boundaries/limits to demands of work and the workplace

#### **Institutional Programs**

Create, publicize, and implement

1. formal programs that support development of faculty professional networks inside and outside the institution
2. networks of faculty with similar life situations (e.g., faculty of color, LGBT faculty, women scientists, single parents, etc.)
3. formal programs that increase the likelihood of a climate of civility, respect, and freedom from harassment
4. data collection and regular reporting on issues of equity (salary, workload, etc.) and climate, as well as policy use; act on findings proactively

#### **Senior Administrators**

1. Ensure that all communication about important issues (e.g., tenure criteria and procedures, grievance procedures) takes place through multiple methods of communication (e-mail, websites, snail mail, discussion in formal meetings).
2. Set an institutional norm of zero tolerance for disrespect, incivility, and harassment.

3. Provide educational opportunities for department chairs and deans to learn about how to create and maintain a positive departmental, school, or college climate.

#### Department Chairs

1. Proactively ensure that all probationary faculty receive information, advice, and assistance.
2. Develop transparent practices of decision-making and allocation of resources based on principles of equity and fairness.
3. Avoid treating any faculty member as a representative of a group.
4. Be alert to evidence of faculty members' isolation or marginalization and proactively seek ways of engaging those faculty members in key departmental activities of interest to them.
5. Set a departmental norm of zero tolerance for disrespect, incivility, and harassment. Interrupt disrespect and incivility as it occurs; address complaints of harassment rapidly and fairly.
6. Adopt departmental meeting times (including colloquium and other speaker times) that are consistent with humane and family-friendly boundaries on workplace expectations.

#### All Faculty Members

1. Proactively ensure that all probationary faculty receive information, advice, and assistance.
2. Help explain practices of decision-making and allocation of resources and act to ensure that they are based on principles of equity and fairness.
3. Take seriously the need to assist other, less senior, faculty members in finding resources for their work and in identifying an appropriate professional network.
4. Avoid treating any faculty member as a representative of a group.
5. Respect workplace time boundaries even if you personally feel comfortable with meeting times outside those boundaries.
6. Be alert to evidence of faculty members' isolation or marginalization and proactively seek ways of engaging those faculty members in key departmental activities of interest to them.
7. Do not tolerate disrespect, incivility, or harassment when it occurs; intervene to stop it.

## Notes

1. It is difficult adequately to assess the impact of these policies on faculty outcomes such as salary, promotion, and retention. Some studies have focused on the impact of any one of these policies. For example, two have examined “tenure clock stopping” (regardless of the presence of modifications of duties or parental leaves). One of these focuses on a single institution but across disciplines, and results are constrained by low numbers, and a single policy formulation and set of practices (e.g., Manchester, Leslie & Kramer, 2013). Another examines a single discipline but across 50 institutions, but obtains no measures of individual policy use and instead attempts to attribute differential gender rates of outcomes to the presence or absence of a policy institution-wide (e.g., Antecol, Bedard & Stearns, 2016). In the absence of better data about the impact of particular policies on faculty outcomes, we base our recommendations on the signal these policies send to faculty that their particular life situation is one the institution recognizes and seeks to support.

2. For the American Astronomical Society, see <https://aas.org/policies/anti-harassment-policy/>; for the American Geophysical Union, see <https://harassment.agu.org/>; for the American Political Science Association, see <http://www.apsanet.org/Portals/54/governance/anti-harrassment.pdf?ver=2017-01-26-141514-047&timestamp=1485458151478>; for the Boston University Conference on Language Development code of conduct, see <https://www.bu.edu/buclcd/conference-info/conduct/>.

3. Some institutions apply stop-the-clock or modified duties automatically to new mothers and require that new fathers demonstrate that they will be a (or the) primary caretaker. We prefer a system that does not cement stereotypical gender roles but requires either member of a couple to demonstrate that they will be a caretaker.

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