

### Introduction

Improving university work/life policies has been a major focus of *AdvanceVT* since Virginia Tech received an NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant in 2003. In order to continue to make progress in this area and improve job satisfaction for faculty across Virginia Tech, *AdvanceVT* tracks the utilization of university work/life policies by eligible faculty members on an annual basis.

### AdvanceVT Work/Life Initiatives

#### New Faculty Mentoring Grant

❖ Faculty members may each receive up to \$1,500 designated for a project that engages at least one mentor, over time, to advance their academic career. The project should represent a career development opportunity that may not otherwise be possible without this grant.

#### Dual Career Program

❖ Created in 2005, components include dual career hiring guidelines for department heads, a dual career coordinator who provides referral assistance, and transition funds from the Provost's Office.

#### Child Care Partnership

❖ With support from Virginia Tech, a new local child care facility opened in 2009 with 60% of slots reserved for Virginia Tech employees.



#### Modified Duties

❖ Created in 2006, modified duties enables collegiate, tenured and tenure-track faculty to request a semester of modified duties at full pay.

❖ The Provost's Office provides funding to hire instructors to teach courses for faculty who are on modified duties.

### New Faculty Mentoring Grant

- ❖ Each fall and spring, several workshops are held to describe this program and discuss mentoring more broadly. Presenters include department heads and past grant recipients.
- ❖ In the 2016-17 53 of the 75 new faculty eligible for this program submitted grant proposals and were approved for funding.
- ❖ Examples of mentoring grant projects include conference travel, hosting scholars at Virginia Tech, and research collaboration visits.

*"I built a collaborative research relationship with my mentor that resulted in a proposal and a book chapter that have been accepted for publication."*  
*-new faculty grant recipient*

### Dual Career Program

- ❖ Virginia Tech recognizes that meeting the needs of today's professional couples is a key factor in recruiting and retaining new faculty members. The Dual Career Program hopes to bring a new level of support to couples and their families when considering employment opportunities within the University and the surrounding community.
- ❖ Between 2006-07 and 2016-17, over 850 faculty cases were referred to the dual career assistance program through the Human Resources/Provost Office's partnership. Approximately 87% of these cases were recruitment-related and 13% were related to the retention of existing faculty.
- ❖ Over 25 new dual career faculty hires were facilitated by the Provost's Office and Human Resources in 2016-17. The overall retention rate for dual career hires employees as of July 2016 was 87%.

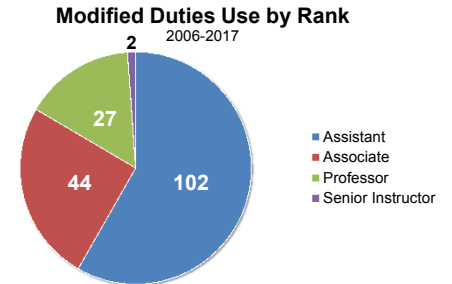
*"Without [the dual career assistance program] we would not have come. I think it's critical because lots of people have spouses that are also in research or in the same area, so they will only come if you hire both. So, if you have a program like that, it's really important to get people here."*  
*- recent faculty hire*

### Modified Duties



*Megan Dolbin-MacNab, now an Associate Professor in Human Development, was the first faculty member to use the modified duties policy*

*"The new work/life policies at VT, such as modified duties, have been hugely instrumental in our getting our top Candidates in recent years."*  
*- faculty survey respondent*



- ❖ During the first eleven years of the modified duties policy (2006-07 through 2016-17), 175 requests for modified duties were granted involving 88 female faculty and 57 male faculty (24 faculty members utilized the modified duties policy more than once).
- ❖ Unlike the stop the clock policy, modified duties is not being utilized consistently across Virginia Tech's 8 academic colleges. Faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences (58 requests), the College of Engineering (59 requests), and the Pamplin College of Business (23 requests) account for 140 of the 175 requests.
- ❖ The modified duties policy has been utilized by faculty members in all ranks. Approximately 58% of faculty requests have been made by assistant professors, 25% by associate professors, 16% by professors, and 1% by senior instructors.
- ❖ The most common reasons for requesting modified duties were child-related (122 requests), family health/other (27 requests), and personal health (26 requests).

### Child Care Partnership

- ❖ To help meet the growing demand for high-quality, affordable child care services for the children of university employees, Virginia Tech and other partners entered into an agreement to support the expansion of a locally owned and operated child care facility in August 2009.
- ❖ A total of 99 children have been enrolled at the new and existing facilities through the Virginia Tech agreement as of summer 2016.

### Hokie Wellness

- ❖ Hokie Wellness provides prevention services, education, outreach, and resources to employees and students. The department strives to educate and empower every Hokie to take an active and engaging day-to-day approach to their wellness in order to enjoy a long, healthful, and purpose-filled life.
- ❖ Programs include:
  - Annual Health and Benefits Fair
  - Elder Care Symposium
  - Finding Balance Conference



#### Acknowledgments

*AdvanceVT* was initiated with support from the National Science Foundation (Grant #SBE 0244916). Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

For more information: [www.advance.vt.edu](http://www.advance.vt.edu) or email [advancevt@vt.edu](mailto:advancevt@vt.edu)