
OFFICE OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Kirsten M. Volpi
Executive Vice President
Chief Financial Officer
Treasurer

Date: August 20, 2015

To: Faculty

From: Kirsten Volpi

Re: Faculty Conference



Dear Faculty,

In April, Faculty Senate presented to the Administration a proposal that outlines suggestions and ideas that would enhance Mines as a “family-friendly” university (the full proposal is attached). As described in the proposal, the intent is to *“create a family-friendly campus that stands out nationwide, making CSM a destination university not just for top young faculty with families, but also for non-traditional students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers with families”*.

Former President Scoggins asked me and Tom Boyd to take the lead in addressing this proposal. Over the summer, we have been working through each recommendation with key administrators in order to: assess the feasibility of the recommendation; determine what, if any, initiatives are already in place that align with the recommendation; and assess the availability of resources to manage the programmatic elements of the recommendations. We have not, however, garnered feedback from the broader faculty, staff or students as the timing in the summer is not ideal to reach a significant number of faculty and students. To begin to solicit broader feedback, we will discuss the family friendly proposal as one of the breakout sessions at Monday’s faculty conference – this session will be co-led by Kamini Singha.

We have incorporated in the attached powerpoint our initial assessments that we look forward to using as a basis of discussion on Monday.

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To: President M. W. Scoggins
Provost and Executive VP Terry Parker
Kirsten Volpi, Executive VP of Finance and Administration
Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate School Tom Boyd
Associate VP of Diversity and Inclusion Debra Lasich
Associate VP for Human Resources Michael Dougherty

About: Family-Friendly Campus Proposal

From: Faculty Senate of the Colorado School of Mines

Date: April 20, 2015

Due to our location in picturesque family-friendly Golden, Colorado, the Colorado School of Mines is a good destination for young faculty, post-docs, graduate students with families, and non-traditional students with children. Although we do stand out nationally for the way we support our students, unfortunately we have not yet achieved a family-friendly campus. We ask the CSM Administration to develop a plan toward a family-friendly campus over the summer, to be presented in the fall at the Board of Trustees meeting and in a document for the whole faculty, as well as a response to this memo for the Faculty Senate. We propose below actions large and small, that can dramatically transform the campus environment, many with little to no cost. Rather than merely borrowing ideas from other campuses, we feel CSM can do better: we suggest the first goal in this discussion be to create a family-friendly campus that stands out nationwide, making CSM a destination university not just for top young faculty with families, but also for non-traditional students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers with families.

Action in this area addresses an important component of the strategic plan: from Mission, Vision, and Values, "Mines is committed to providing a quality experience for students, faculty, and staff through student programs, excellence in pedagogy and research, and an engaged and supportive campus community." The faculty senate believes a benefits package themed on family to be a great opportunity for growth at little cost and large outcome; it is an easy way to improve faculty climate, recruitment, and retention. While recognizing that we do have a great health insurance program for faculty, a partial parental leave policy, and half-tuition benefit for dependents (the latter realized under the tenure of President Scoggins), we believe the time is ripe for the next stage, to create a family-friendly campus that achieves national and international recognition. Moreover, for the outstanding "Generation Y" faculty we are now hiring, a family-friendly campus is key to attracting and retaining them. The 2014 faculty survey clearly supports this statement with data indicating strongly that quality of life is the key item that facilitates retention.

By creating a family-friendly campus for students, too, Mines has an opportunity to achieve increased national and international recognition. One of our hallmarks is the individual attention we give to students. In fact we have created an excellent undergraduate environment, especially over the tenure of President Scoggins, including the residential campus and diversity initiatives, the creation of outstanding new teaching facilities emphasizing studio-style classes, and the beautification and improvement of campus facilities. Such efforts have made CSM more attractive to many constituencies,

including under-represented groups. For example, our Society of Women Engineers is twice the size of any other in the country, and this year CSM received a national award from the Society of Black Engineers. The list is very long, and the faculty feel very good about the growth of our students and their campus involvement.

Let's build on these efforts to also promote an environment that further enriches our community. A family-friendly campus will also support our non-traditional students and post-docs with families, and grow our student-centered focus to be even stronger. It would allow us to more effectively pursue the ~75% of Americans nationwide who have not obtained a four-year degree, many of whom have family responsibilities, as well as veterans. Veterans present a potential increased revenue stream toward the university's mission of excellence, via the GI Bill. The Board of Trustees has several times asked CSM to focus on underserved groups, especially the poor, who are considered untapped intellectual resources; at present 2/3 of children are born below poverty line in the US and over 1/2 born outside of marriage, to single mothers. Moreover a large fraction of veterans are drawn from the poorer parts of American society. Thus CSM has a real opportunity to meet important societal needs while also broadening its student base and attracting outstanding young faculty, in accordance with the Strategic Plan.

The Faculty Senate proposes the following steps, ordered by practical timescale of implementation, rather than priority. A complete family-friendly package should include all these items. Faculty Senate will be glad to support such development via working groups during the academic year, or other means, and present this plan jointly to the Board and the faculty. This initiative was supported unanimously by the Faculty Senate and included input from many parties around campus from faculty to CSM administrators.

1. **Family resources web page, <http://family.mines.edu>**, to be created by new campus and college web content managers – Summer 2015
 - a. *There are numerous family-friendly events held on campus and in Golden, e.g. Jefferson County Symphony performances in the Green Center on weekends, or Mines Little Theater. Young faculty are often unaware of such events, as they come piecemeal in the usual deluge of emails, sometimes last minute. A family resources web page should list such events and could possibly be coordinated with the present event calendar.*
 - b. *We recognize and appreciate present resources on <http://inside.mines.edu/WISEM-Mines-Policies-of-Interest>, but feel this page is more a policy page than a resources page. To this end an interactive component of family.mines.edu in the form of a listserv, message board, or other medium would also be helpful and easy to create, providing babysitter resources, pediatrician recommendations, a stroller to give away, etc. This will build campus community.*
 - c. *A family resources page should also clearly state family-supportive policies across campus. We take as an excellent model the new Quick Reference Guide created by the CSM graduate office: <http://inside.mines.edu/GS-Quick-Reference-Guide>.*
2. **CSM calendar shift** to match Jefferson county public school holiday calendar as much as possible – Summer 2015
 - a. *In particular, spring break should be made flexible year to year and, as soon as the Jefferson county public school calendar appears, be aligned accordingly. We note that there is a precedent with this year's change of E-Days, and there is no reason to wait.*

We also note that the undergraduate student government appears to have no objection to this change, according to representatives present at the 3/31/15 faculty senate meeting.

- b. It is extremely burdensome to faculty with families to not have spring break aligned with at least the county in which our campus resides. It has a serious impact on work productivity and family closeness, and is perhaps the most negative family policy presently on campus, called “anti-family” by many faculty. We note also that staff and administrators with families are able to take these days off, while most faculty in good conscience cannot do so without damaging instruction.*
 - c. The faculty senate request that spring break be modified now, for spring 2016, just as E-Days was for spring 2015. We see no reason to wait on implementing this change. There are no federal or state constraints on moving the spring break to coincide with the Jefferson County public school calendar.*
3. **Campus facilities opened during school holidays** listed on Jefferson County, Boulder County, and Denver County school calendars – Summer/Fall 2015
- a. Once our spring break is aligned (see item 2), there are still going to be holidays which do not line up with the public school calendar. For example, we have not been able to arrange to have Martin Luther King Jr. day off, despite faculty requests. Unfortunately, daycare centers are often not open on such days as well. This leaves faculty scrambling. Some faculty remain frustrated over this matter. We ask a change be made to campus facility use to help support the many faculty who have to bring their children to work on such days. An announcement to that effect will have great effect on faculty morale.*
 - b. We request the gym be made accessible on these days for students with children and faculty who choose to join the gym. This may in fact grow income for the gym, by attracting new members. The concept here is that faculty who have to bring their children to work can at least take a one hour break and take their kids to the gym. Anybody who has had a squirming 7 year old sitting in their office for 9 hours will deeply appreciate such a gesture on the part of CSM. We note that presently the gym is only open to children on weekends.*
 - c. We ask that the geology museum provide special kids’ activities on these days (perhaps sponsored by sororities/fraternities, see item 4 below). The Denver Art Museum has been extremely successful with such activities. They are low cost and easy to set up and maintain.*
 - d. We ask that the library have a story hour on these days, just like public libraries do. This would be great press for the campus for our family-friendly initiative, low cost, and easy to implement.*
 - e. Additional campus facilities opened on these days can include lab tours. Lab tours might also serve a double purpose as a recruiting tool, particularly for middle and high schoolers from the area. We note that some lab tours already take place with Bell Middle School; recently students in the Bell Middle STEM program visited campus and used the electron microscope, among other activities.*
 - f. We are open to other facility use ideas from the administration, most of whom have children themselves and will have good thoughts on this topic.*

4. Joint family programs coordinated with sororities/fraternities and campus clubs on school holidays – Fall 2015

- a. Sororities, fraternities, and campus clubs presently hold a number of events each year to support families and reach out to the community, such as free or cheap babysitting, kids' activity days like the Haunted Physics Lab, etc. Here we would like to see CSM administration coordinate with these enthusiastic student associations to hold such activities on public school holidays, and list these events on the family resources webpage, family.mines.edu.*
- b. There are also many dorm activities families could participate in, and the themed dormitories could be challenged to create family programs once per semester. This is another "free" resource which would even increase student involvement on campus and help retain young students, especially our many outstanding young female students, who ask themselves, "Can I have a family and be an outstanding engineer/scientist?" As faculty members, we on the senate have been asked this question countless times. Imagine if we could say, "Yes, and look how supportive CSM is of families! Have you seen family.mines.edu? Engineers and scientists are devoted to their children."*
- c. These types of actions not only affect faculty and students; they have the potential to reach out to the community in a meaningful way at a time optimized for reaching those with children. It thus serves a community relations, recruitment, and outreach function as well.*

5. Parental leave improvements – Fall 2015

- a. At present parental leave is only used sporadically around campus, and does not extend adequately to post-docs and faculty within their first year. We are aware of a case in which a department head informed male faculty members that they could not take parental leave, in contradiction to the faculty handbook. We are also aware of a case in which a young faculty hire became pregnant in the first year and was forced to teach three classes through her pregnancy and directly after the birth of her child, simply because she had not yet been on campus for 12 months. Such actions pose special hardships for women faculty, with potential implications for their research, teaching, progress toward tenure, and overall job satisfaction. Similarly the post-doc situation is a complex one which requires some unraveling in terms of benefit structure: some faculty feel strongly that female postdocs are discriminated against under current policy, and male postdocs preferentially hired. So this is partly a training issue and partly a policy/resource issue.*
- b. One obvious improvement to parental leave is to provide a parental leave explanation page on the family resources website. Parental leave is for both men and women, and hosting our link to this on the Women in Science and Engineering Page is a good step, but does not fully encompass modern 21st century families in which both parents are strongly involved with child care.*
- c. Ideally, we would like a parental leave policy that covers all academic faculty (teaching and T/TT) from the moment they begin working at CSM; that clearly treats mothers and fathers on an equal footing; and that extends to post-doctoral researchers and graduate*

students without breaking the bank on grants. Faculty Senate understands that such financial issues must be carefully considered to match the CSM budget, and is ready and willing to work directly with administration to develop the best possible policy given constraints. We note that Faculty Senate is not asking for European-style benefits of 3-6 months family leave, but is making a minimal request according to US standards. We feel strongly that growth of our graduate program, and therefore our research excellence, is tied in part to family policy.

6. Diaper-changing facilities in all buildings, and mother's room for nursing – Fall 2015/Spring 2016

- a. *Over the next year, we ask that all buildings have designated diaper changing facilities installed in both male and female bathrooms, at least two per building (one male, one female). At present on campus such facilities are almost non-existent, except in newly constructed buildings. A plastic diaper changing fold-down attachment can be installed, and is relatively low cost. We ask that this item be included explicitly in the facilities budget. Right now people have to change their babies or toddlers in their offices, or other very awkward places. A spouse visiting on campus may not feel welcome to bring their child for this reason.*
- b. *In the long run, we would like to see one family restroom per building. This is of course a long term goal. However, in planning for new buildings and/or major updates on existing structures we ask that such facilities be included as part of the plan.*
- c. *We ask that a room be designated specifically for nursing mothers starting in Fall 2015, and a link on family.mines.edu provided with information on this room. We are aware that such a room recently existed in the Student Center; however, it was deemed “unwelcoming” by some users and not known widely on campus. We would like all nursing mothers working at CSM and/or visiting to feel welcome to nurse their children in a safe and supportive place. To this end we suggest nursing mothers and mothers with young children on campus have input as to the décor of the room, so that the place be friendly and pleasant, not a bare room with white walls and desks. In the long run we would like to see several such dedicated spaces across campus, where nursing mothers can support each other but not have to walk 15 minutes outside in winter with a crying baby. While we understand space at CSM is at a premium, we feel strongly that a mother's nursing room is a key component of any family-friendly campus.*
- d. *Many faculty, and certainly post-docs and graduate students, have shared office spaces that are not appropriate and/or comfortable for nursing. We therefore ask that mothers returning from parental leave be offered an additional room in their building for nursing as long as they have need, and at what hours they request. This campus benefit should be prominently featured on family.mines.edu.*

7. Dependent tuition exchange program between CSM and other universities, especially in Colorado – Fall 2016

- a. *Although we are pleased to have a 50% dependent-tuition program, unlike many schools it extends only to our campus. One way to attract outstanding students and also provide*

benefits for our children who are attracted to science and engineering is to develop an exchange program with at the very least other universities in Colorado.

- b. It is possible to greatly expand such a program. For example, over 600 universities are members of <http://www.tuitionexchange.org/>. We would like CSM administration to do a cost/benefit analysis of expanding our dependent tuition program to this or other organizations, as well as growing our program to 100% tuition coverage, at least for attending CSM.*
- c. Few things would be more attractive as a retention and recruitment tool for young faculty. Thus, if this goal can be accomplished sooner we strongly recommend it.*

8. On-campus daycare facility – Spring 2017

- a. One of the major issues to have come up over the last five years repeatedly to faculty senate and graduate student government both is creation of on-campus daycare. A provider has been identified, Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) Early Education program, but there has not yet been any action on this front. The faculty senate is asking that a preliminary financial, insurance, and logistical estimate be made in Summer 2015 toward an on-campus daycare facility. In this way young parents can work more effectively on campus, stopping by the daycare to see their children as needed during the day. RRCC operates such a facility in their main campus and it is highly effective. In this sense, RRCC is more family-friendly than Mines. We can lean on our excellent liaison relationship with RRCC to determine the parameters for creating such a facility.*
- b. Imagine how powerful it would be during a faculty interview to show a young faculty member a dedicated playground on campus full of young children, and say, “Your child can play here while you work, and you don’t have to worry so much about juggling your job and your family life. We are a family-friendly campus! You can work longer hours in the lab and be more productive, without sacrificing your closeness with your children.”*

Family Friendly Campus Proposal



COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES

Family Friendly Campus Proposal



- ▶ In April 2015, the Administration received a proposal from Faculty Senate to make Mines a more “family friendly” university.
- ▶ Tom Boyd and Kirsten Volpi asked by the President to lead the Administrative response to the proposal.
- ▶ Eight overall recommendations were included in the proposal.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal



1. Family resources web page, <http://family.mines.edu>, to consolidate all family related policies, activities, enhancements, etc.
 - We are in the process of creating family.mines.edu.
 - family.mines.edu will include:
 - Family related policies.
 - Mines calendar distinguishing family related events.
 - Highlight Mines events that are open to the public and family related.
 - Geology Museum activities.
 - Related Greek Life activities.
 - Provide links to the calendar of events hosted by the City of Golden.
 - Locations of Nursing Mother's Rooms.
 - Other relevant information.
 - We could include an e-classified system as part of family.mines.edu. Other e-classified systems have been implemented in the past, but did not see significant use.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal



2. Shift CSM calendar to match (primarily spring break) Jefferson County public school holiday calendar (as much as possible)
 - Per our Handbook policy (section 12.7), the Calendar Committee is charged with making recommendations on academic calendar changes to the President and Board of Trustees. We have forwarded this Senate recommendation to the Chair of the Calendar Committee for further consideration. The Calendar Committee first meeting of the academic year is to be held in September 2015.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



3. Campus facilities opened during school holidays that are listed on Jefferson County, Boulder County and Denver County school calendars *

- Faculty may be able to bring their children to work on days when they have no school. Input is needed from DHs, Deans, and other administrators as to how potential disruptions can best be managed.
- Monday Holiday Pilot Program – we propose putting together a small working group to discuss, coordinate, and organize a pilot program on campus.
 - The program would consist of a series of child-friendly, on-campus activities for a portion of a Monday holiday in the Fall semester and another in the Spring semester.
 - The committee would explore activities to be offered, work with the relevant functional areas to understand the boundary conditions and costs of offering these activities, coordinate volunteers, organize activity pre-registration, and manage the activity days.
 - Activities might include Library time, Geology Museum, Recreation Center, Laboratory Tours, and others as appropriate.
 - Relevant stakeholders would need to include representatives from the faculty, Research Council, Student Life, Library, Museum, AA, F&A, HR, and Compliance.

* Appendix 1

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



4. **Joint family programs coordinated with sororities/fraternities and campus clubs on school holidays**
 - Currently, the sororities offer babysitting services several times a semester. We will coordinate with the sororities to better advertise these services on family.mines.edu.
 - The Cheerleaders also host a cheerleading camp on a Saturday in both the fall and spring semesters. We will coordinate with the Cheerleaders to better advertise these services on family.mines.edu.
 - The Greek community could be engaged as volunteers for activities organized outside of the Greek system. For example, could the Greek community provide volunteers for the Monday Holiday Pilot Program?

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



5. Parental leave improvements – currently does not adequately extend to Faculty or Post-Docs (or anyone) in their first year

- Mike Dougherty has redrafted the existing parental leave policy that will be used as a basis for discussion on whether the new or revised elements in the policy meet the needs of faculty broadly.
- Currently, graduate students supported on RA or TA contracts may request up to 8 weeks for parental leave (the cost of this leave is shared between the PI/Program and OGS).
- Recognition must be made that any increase in leave benefit will likely result in an increase in the fringe benefit rate that is then charged to a research grant, department, or other program. Current fringe rates are:

FY2016 Fringe Benefit Rates	Academic Faculty	Research Faculty
PERA	18.65%	18.69%
Medicare	1.42%	1.45%
Health and Dental Insurance	17.80%	17.75%
Other Insurance	0.75%	0.74%
Vacation and sick payout	0.23%	2.14%
Prior years actual to estimate	0.51%	3.01%
	39.36%	43.76%

- There is some federal coverage for post-docs and graduate students for parental leave who are working on research grants – both NSF & NIH appear to have programs (see Appendix 2 for an example).

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



6. Diaper-changing facilities in all buildings, and mother's room for nursing

- Diaper-changing facilities:

- At the end of Spring 2015 semester we had 53 baby changing stations on campus. Over Summer 2015 we installed 23 additional baby changing stations in both men's and women's restrooms such that there are at least two baby changing stations in each building.
- Appropriate signage has been added.



- Family/gender neutral restrooms:

- There are family/gender neutral restrooms on campus and we are in the process of assessing the feasibility to renovate or add additional restrooms. This assessment will be completed Fall 2015.
- We have recently added a family restroom in Stratton Hall and the new football stadium and one will be added in CoorsTek Center.



Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



- Nursing mother's rooms:
 - Student Center – renovation of an existing nursing mother's room is scheduled to be completed by the end of the Fall 2015 semester.
 - Hill Hall – nursing mother's room is scheduled to be open by September 2015.
 - Starzer Welcome Center – nursing mother's room is scheduled to be open by September 2015.
 - CoorsTek Center – nursing mother's room is scheduled to be open by Fall 2017.
 - Beyond the existing nursing mother's rooms, we encourage departments to identify appropriate space that could be dedicated to such usage. Once identified this information should be provided to the Office of Public Relations for inclusion on family.mines.edu.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



7. 100% dependent tuition benefit at Mines and a dependent tuition exchange program between CSM and other universities, especially in Colorado
 - Since its inception, the dependent tuition program has had good usage. The university expends between \$45,000 - \$65,000 annually in support of this program. As the program provides a 50% tuition benefit, a change to 100% tuition will require an additional program budget of at least \$50,000 - \$60,000+.
 - As part of the regular budget process, we will determine the ability to increase this benefit and how it might relate to any implementation of a “Colorado exchange” or broader exchange program.
 - Tuition Exchange.org Program has membership of ~ 600 universities (primarily private). The only Colorado institutions that participate in this program are Regis University and Johnson and Wales University. Any broadly impactful Colorado exchange would need to be created and negotiated with the other Colorado institutions along with a full financial analysis.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



8. On-campus daycare facility

- This recommendation has considerable ramifications and impacts on many fronts, therefore a comprehensive response will require additional time and consideration. We note, however, the following items:
 - We need to better understand the scale of the demand for such a facility. We can obtain estimates of the pool of participants based on insurance enrollment of faculty/staff. As these are only insurance datasets, a survey would need to capture not only true desire, but actual agreement to utilize the facility. Based on prior years insurance enrollment, the size of the potential participant pool is:

	Number of Employees With Dependent Under Age 6	Dependents Under Age 6
Faculty	100 (14% of all)	125
Classified Staff	15 (5% of all)	16

- There are many existing facilities in Golden as well as the surrounding communities of Arvada, Lakewood, and even Denver that provide daycare services, including Red Rocks Community College. A meeting is scheduled with Red Rocks CC to gather information regarding their daycare experience.
- We need to better understand the licensing considerations, insurance, safety, if the building used is cleared for children, food facility, etc.
- Space is a scarce commodity on campus, we will need to carefully assess the best location that will accommodate a daycare facility.
- We have contacted an outside professional to perform a formal feasibility analysis during the Fall semester.
- Met with Bright Horizons (Day Care provider) to discuss options.



Appendices

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



Appendix 1

3. Campus facilities opened during school holidays that are listed on Jefferson County, Boulder County and Denver County school calendars

- Geology Museum:

- The museum currently hosts numerous family-friendly activities - museum scavenger hunt, education station, and areas of the museum that are dedicated to young children and infants.
- The museum provides brochures for self-guided tours of indoor exhibits and the outdoor geology trail.
- The museum is open 355 days/year and available virtually every day during the regular school year.
- The museum is not currently staffed to coordinate or lead specific faculty events.
 - Would faculty be available as volunteers to staff such activities?
 - Would faculty support additional administrative/student staffing to support such activities?
- Begin addressing opportunities and challenges by exploring as part of a Monday Pilot Program.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



- Gym accessibility:
 - While there are overall concerns about unregulated gym usage by minors (e.g. lack of dedicated supervisory staff), these concerns are not insurmountable. Within the context of identifying specific times of availability and determining specific usage needs, Rec Center staff are amenable to exploring how to manage and support such an effort.
 - Begin addressing opportunities and challenges by exploring as part of a Monday Pilot Program.
- Library:
 - The library can provide a venue for such activities (story hour), but is not currently staffed to coordinate these events, nor provide the requested early literacy programming.
- We have contacted Golden Library and they appear to be interested in a Children's Hour at the Arthur Lakes Library – likely additional CSM resources not necessary.
 - Jefferson County provides regularly scheduled story hours, baby time, and toddler time at various library locations, including Golden.
 - The Library is currently not staffed to coordinate or lead specific faculty events.
 - Would faculty be available as volunteers to staff such activities?
 - Would faculty support additional administrative/student staffing to support such activities?
 - Begin addressing opportunities and challenges by exploring as part of a Monday Pilot Program.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



- Campus lab tours:
 - Tour coordination would need centralized support and faculty/student volunteers. An existing employee has not been identified to assume this coordination responsibility.
 - Would faculty be available to volunteer their labs and student employees for tours during the academic year?
 - Would faculty support additional administrative/student staffing to support such activities?
 - Begin addressing opportunities and challenges by exploring as part of a Monday Pilot Program.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



Appendix 2

Maternity Leave and Federal Funding Guidelines

Paid maternity leave. Postdocs supported on investigator grants from agencies such as the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) can receive paid maternity leave via fringe or indirect costs. The institution and its leave policies for comparable employees typically determine how this benefit is offered. Postdocs supported on individual fellowships, such as NIH's National Research Service Award (NRSA) program and NASA's postdoctoral program, sometimes will have fellowship-specific maternity leave guidelines, while others, like most NSF postdoctoral fellowships, may encourage fellows to follow their institution's typical practice.

Grant extensions. Most federal agencies will allow at least one no-cost extension of the grant budget period for reasonable cause, such as absence by key research personnel for maternity or care giving. Individual fellowships often have specific policies on funding extensions and leaves of absence.

Supplemental technical assistance. DOE, NIH, and NSF typically allow grant supplements and re-budgeting to provide technical support to keep a project going while key personnel are on maternity leave. NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has [an explicit program for this](#).

For more information, NIH and NSF offer specific guidance on these topics:

- [NIH Family-Friendly Initiatives](#)
- [NSF Career-Life Balance Initiative](#)
- [NSF's FAQ Related to Dependent Care](#)

Consult your funding documentation or talk to your program officer for more detailed guidance.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



Maternity Leave and Salary

Research your options. Your options for being paid during maternity leave will vary based on your institution's usual practice, your source of funding, and your appointment classification. You'll have to do some research for your particular situation; below are some common options for leave you may have available. For any of these options, find out if you must cover your own health insurance premiums during leave. *Talk to your postdoctoral or human resources representative for more information.*

- *Sick and/or vacation leave.* Find out how much you will have accrued by your due date, keeping in mind that you may use some up in the interim.
- *Short-term disability leave.* If you are eligible for short-term disability (STD) insurance, pregnancy can usually be treated as a disability. Typically, STD will pay you a fraction of your salary for a certain period of time (often six weeks following a vaginal birth and longer with a doctor's approval) and may require a waiting period before it starts. It may be possible to supplement your STD benefit with other paid leave options. **Be sure you are officially enrolled for STD insurance before you become pregnant, otherwise you may not qualify for benefits or receive reduced benefits.**
- *Institutional paid maternity leave benefit.* Some institutions may have an explicit program or leave benefit allowing a certain period of paid maternity leave independent of standard leave accruals or disability benefits.
- *Specific leave provisions dictated by your funding source.* Some grants and fellowships may have their own guidelines for maternity or family leave. Consult your paperwork.
- *Unpaid, job-protected leave, guaranteed by FMLA and/or Title IX.*

Make a maternity-leave salary plan. Do you want to maximize your salary during leave by supplementing disability benefits with sick leave? Do you want to maximize the duration of your leave by taking a fraction of your salary over a longer period with a combination of disability and sick days? Could you also extend this period by you, your partner or both of you working part-time? Decide what you want to do, then make sure you have all the paperwork and instructions in hand. Also, consider having a contingency plan in the case of complications. For example, if you go on bed rest three weeks before the birth, this may shave three weeks off the paid time you spend with your baby after the birth.

Parental/spousal leave. Find out if your spouse/partner has a parental leave policy and if there are any limitations. For example, if you both work at the same institution, there may be a cap to the total, combined time you can each take for extended family or child care leave. If you and your spouse or partner work at the same institution and you take 8 weeks of unpaid leave under FMLA, your spouse/partner may only take up to four weeks of FMLA leave, for a combined total of 12 work weeks between the two of you.

Family Friendly Campus Proposal (cont.)



Make a Maternity Research Plan

Try to make a general plan for how your research will continue through your pregnancy and maternity leave and write it down. Such a plan can help keep your research on track and address concerns your supervisor or collaborators might have. Some general considerations for that plan are:

How much can you get done before your delivery? Try to identify some milestones you can *reasonably* reach before you go on leave, especially ones that require you to physically be at work. Allow yourself some flexibility here.

Is there anyone who can continue some of your work while you are on leave?

- Collaborators or members of your lab or group might be able to continue some aspects of your project during your leave, so talk to them in advance.
- A specially hired technician might also be able to continue some of your research. Funds for this temporary hire could be available through grants, grant supplements or even from your institution, which might offer transitional support to faculty for career interruptions. Find out if your maternity leave might qualify for such institutional support for your supervisor's project where you are the primary supported researcher.
- In all cases, be sure to discuss *in advance* how credit for this work will be assigned (e.g. acknowledgement or authorship?) and what will happen upon your return (e.g. who now leads the project? who will continue to work on it?). Consider having these understandings in writing.

Are you willing to do any work from home? Being on leave means you **are entitled** to spend all your time recovering and caring for your newborn, instead of working. When considering how much you might *want* to do during leave, be mindful of committing yourself to doing work before you know how feasible it might be. Some tasks you might consider are: paper writing; grant writing; literature review; and conference calls.

Make a backup plan for pregnancy complications. Despite your best-laid plans, complications can arise. Try to think through some of these in advance. For example: you are put on bed rest before the delivery; the baby comes much earlier than expected; or you need a longer recovery time after the delivery.