

# **Faculty Work-Life Issues at Virginia Tech**

**October 24, 2005**

**Deans and Department Heads Meeting**

# Reports Related to Current Faculty

- **Work-Life Issues at Virginia Tech: Faculty Focus Group Report** (Joint Task Force, Commission on Faculty Affairs and *AdvanceVT* Policy Workgroup)
  - Conducted 5 focus groups, April 2005
  - 62 participants (26 M, 36 F)
- ***AdvanceVT* Work-Life Survey** (E. Creamer, *AdvanceVT* Assessment Team)
  - Surveyed all instructional and research faculty, February 2005
  - 816 Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents (599 M, 217 F)

# Reports Related to Former Faculty

- **Faculty Exit Survey** (S. Willis-Walton, Center for Survey Research)
  - Sent to all faculty who departed, May 2002 - Dec. 2004 (excluding retirements, deaths, dismissals)
  - 49 Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents (23 M, 26 F)
  
- **Voluntary Departures Among Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty at VT: A Gender Perspective** (C. Amelink and P. Hyer, Provost's Office)
  - BANNER data for all voluntary departures 1997-2004, excludes retirements, deaths, involuntary terminations

# Faculty Focus Groups

## April 2005

# Question Posed to Faculty Focus Groups

What are the issues of work-life balance that have been, or are currently, concerns for you or for close colleagues?

# Summary of Focus Group Findings

- Changing University mission
- Resource constraints
- Unclear direction from administration
- Lack of recognition, rewards, compensation
- All time is university time
- Lack of diversity and collegiality
- Lack of flexibility in tenure and promotion
- Lack of mentoring
- Consequences for family life and personal health

## Changing University Mission – Resource Constraints

*“There is a whole new mission with nothing to cover new responsibilities. There are insufficient resources for achieving Top 30 status yet the expectations are that we perform like one.”*

*“Faculty must work for money, resources, research, space... this leaves faculty feeling as though they cannot do any part of their job well...the Top 30 mentality makes matters worse.”*

# All Time is University Time

*“I am feeling more and more that you sign on as a faculty member to work 24/7.”*

*“Right now I feel like everyone thinks they own my soul, I feel abused.”*

# Lack of Flexibility in Tenure and Promotion

*“Expectations are built around men at this university who have stay-at-home wives...”*

*“I requested family leave after the birth of our child and my department head laughed in my face ...I used vacation time so I could spend time with my child and I did the same with our second child .”*

# Lack of Flexibility in Tenure and Promotion

*“I waited until post tenure to start a family and now it is too late-my biological clock stopped before my tenure clock did.”*

# Consequences for Family Life

*“For some faculty...work is their life... My daughter best summed it up to her teacher when asked if she wanted to be a professor like her dad ..., my daughter replied, “No, professors neglect their families.”*

# Consequences for Family Life

*“Work becomes the faculty member’s life...they neglect family. It is an individual choice...but the university creates a culture that encourages this behavior by not allowing time for anything else if you want to be successful.”*

# **2005 *AdvanceVT* Faculty Work-Life Survey**

# AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey Respondents

	Work-Life Survey Respondents		Total VT Population Sept. 2004	
	n	%	n	%
Male	599	73.4%	985	77.1
Female	217	26.6%	293	22.9
Caucasian	718	88.0%	1060	82.9
Non-Caucasian	98	12.0%	218	17.1

# AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey Respondents

	Work-Life Survey Respondents		Total VT Population Sept. 2004	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Agriculture and Life Sciences</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>16.0</b>
<b>Architecture and Urban Studies</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>Business</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>22.1</b>
<b>Liberal Arts and Human Sciences</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>21.6</b>
<b>Natural Resources</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>14.6</b>
<b>Veterinary Medicine</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>Administrative/Other</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

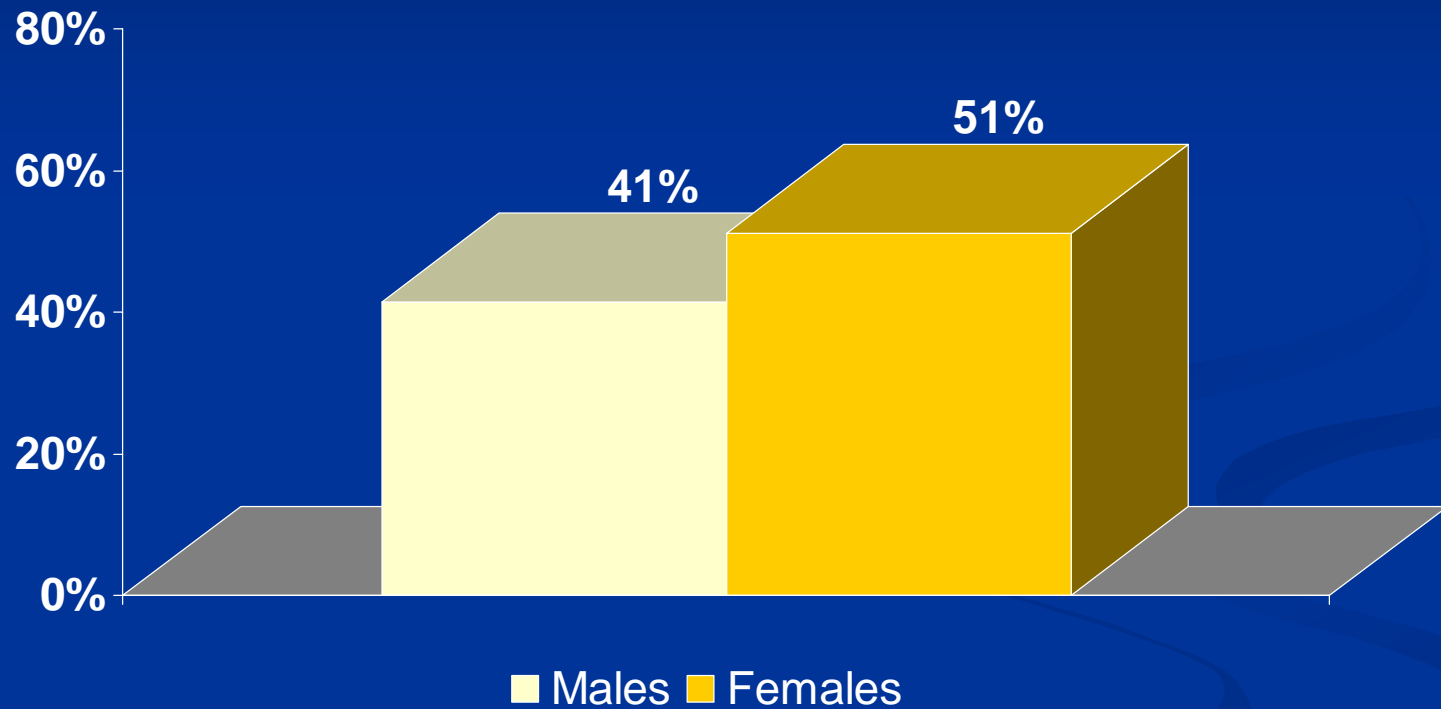
# Work-Life Balance Issues

	% Agree M	% Agree F
<b>VT cares about the family/home life of its faculty</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>39.6</b>
<b>Faculty in my dept. respect responsibilities I have outside of work</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>59.0 *</b>
<b>It is difficult to have a personal life and be promoted/earn tenure</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>75.5 *</b>
<b>My personal/family responsibilities have slowed my advancement</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>59.5 *</b>
<b>Professional demands force me to make unreasonable compromises about personal/family responsibilities</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>55.1 *</b>

Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;

\*Items significantly different by gender,  $p \leq .05$

# Seriously Considered Leaving Current Job to Achieve Better Balance Between Personal and Professional Life\*

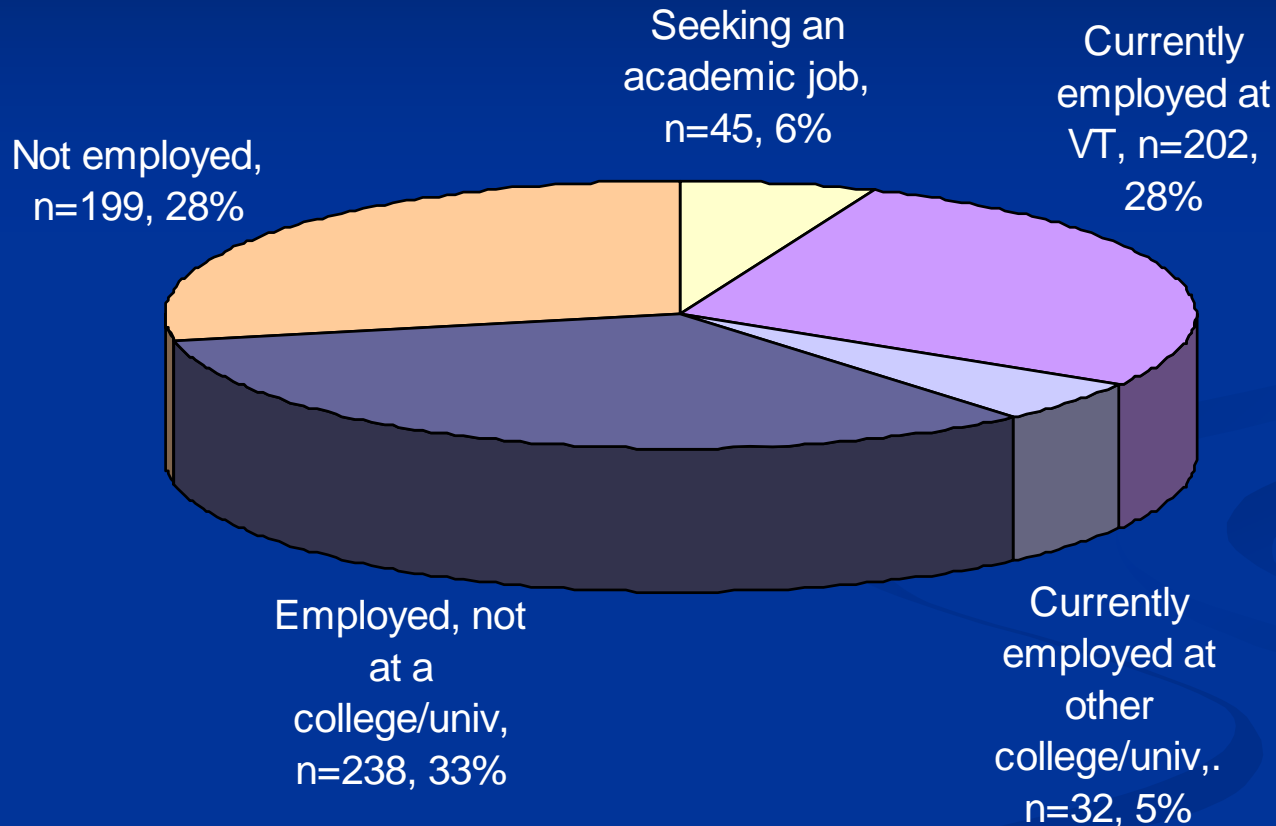


Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;

\*Items significantly different by gender,  $p \leq .05$

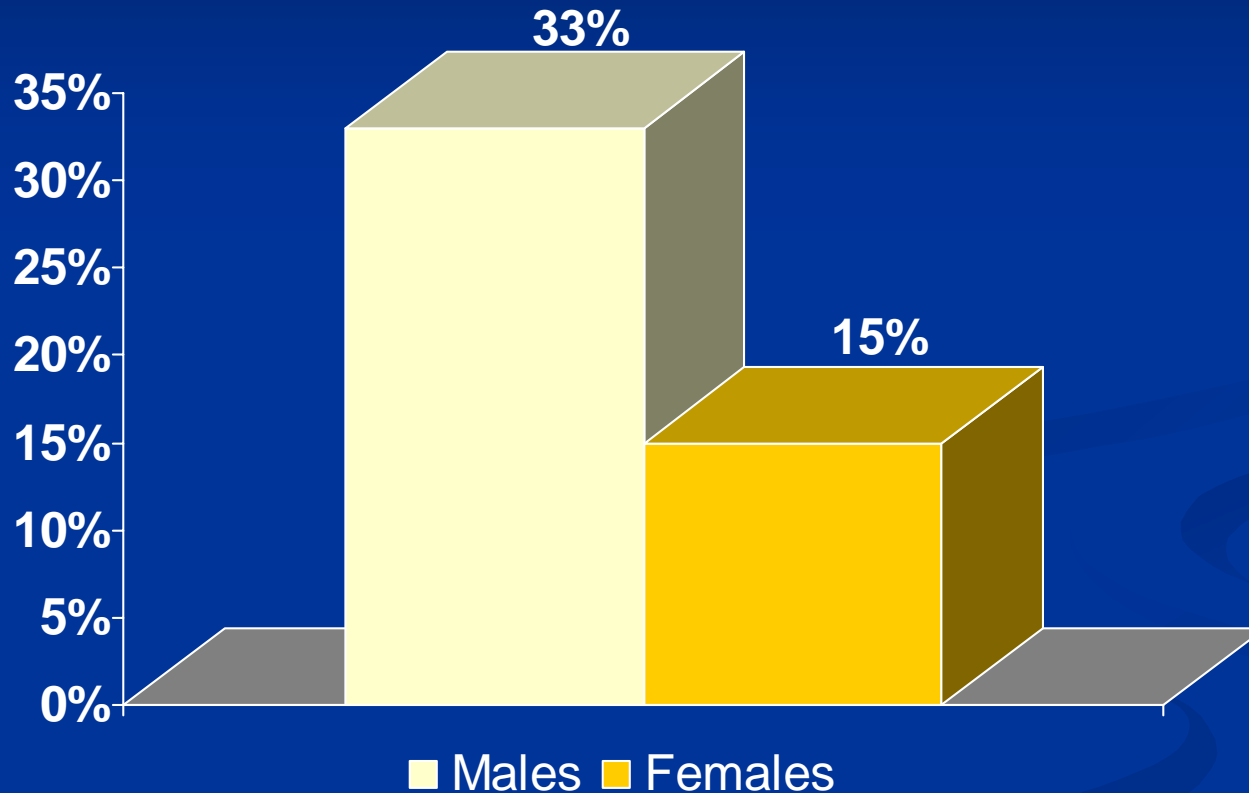
# Dual Career Issues:

## Employment Status of Spouse/Partner



# Dual Career Issues

Spouse/partner not employed (n=199) \*:

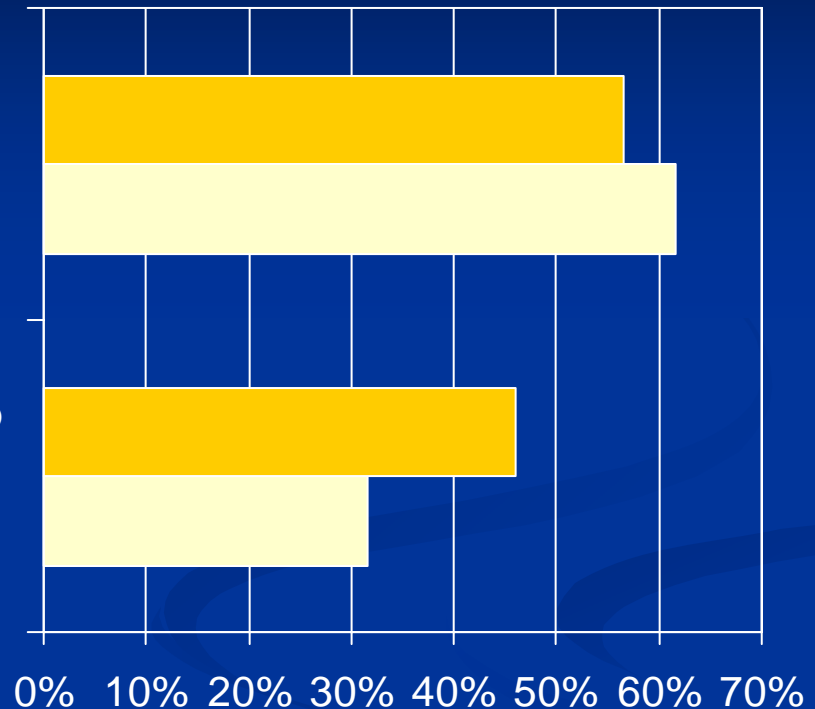


\*Item significantly different by gender,  $p \leq .05$

# Dual Career Issues

**\*Satisfied with partner's employment opportunities in region**

**\*Seriously considered leaving to improve partner's employment opportunities**



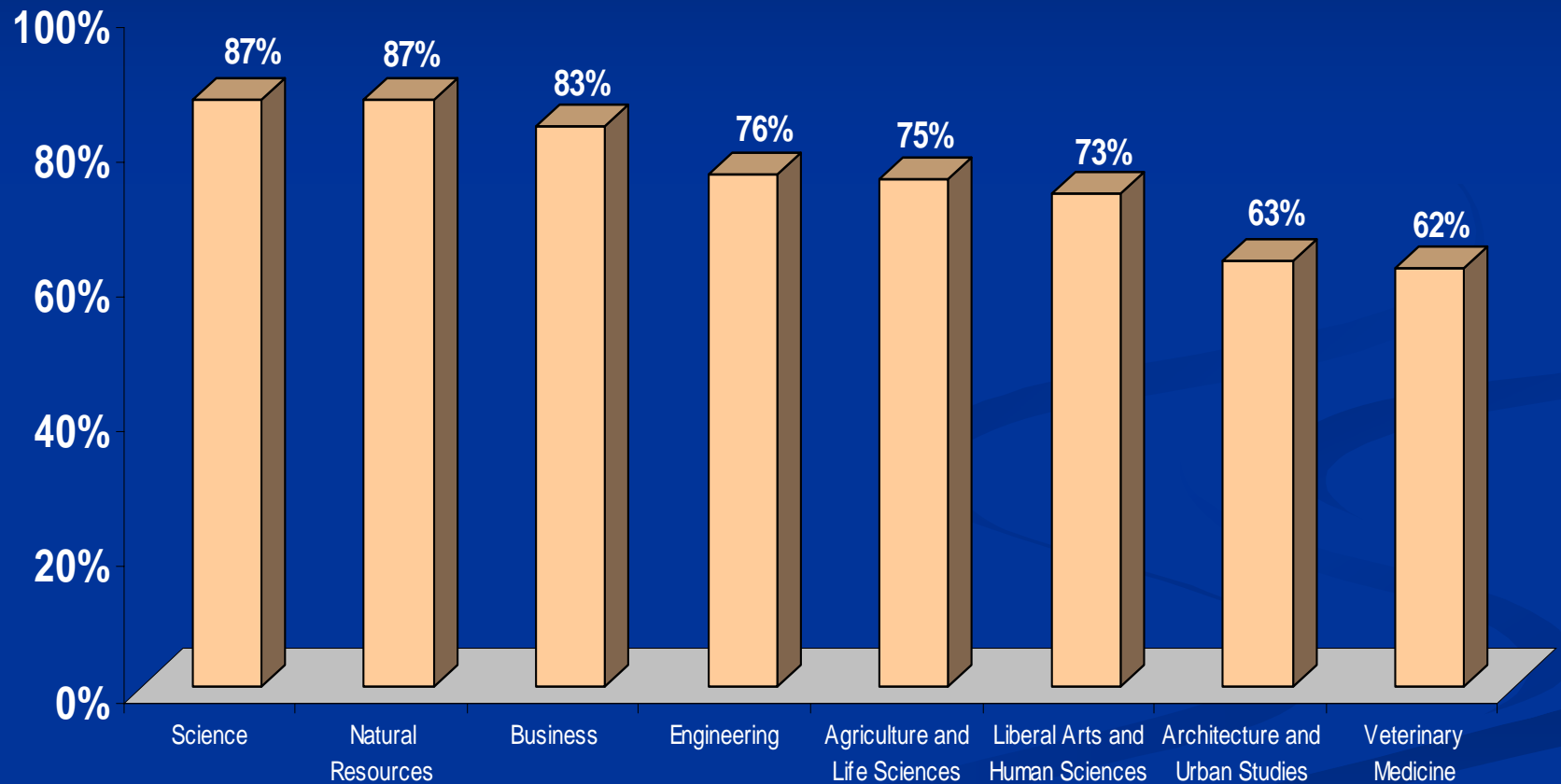
■ Males ■ Females

Includes combined responses of very and somewhat satisfied or strongly and somewhat agree

\*Items significantly different by gender,  $p \leq .05$

# Dual Career Issues

Policies that facilitate the hiring of faculty spouses/partners strengthen the success of the university's efforts to recruit the most highly qualified faculty:



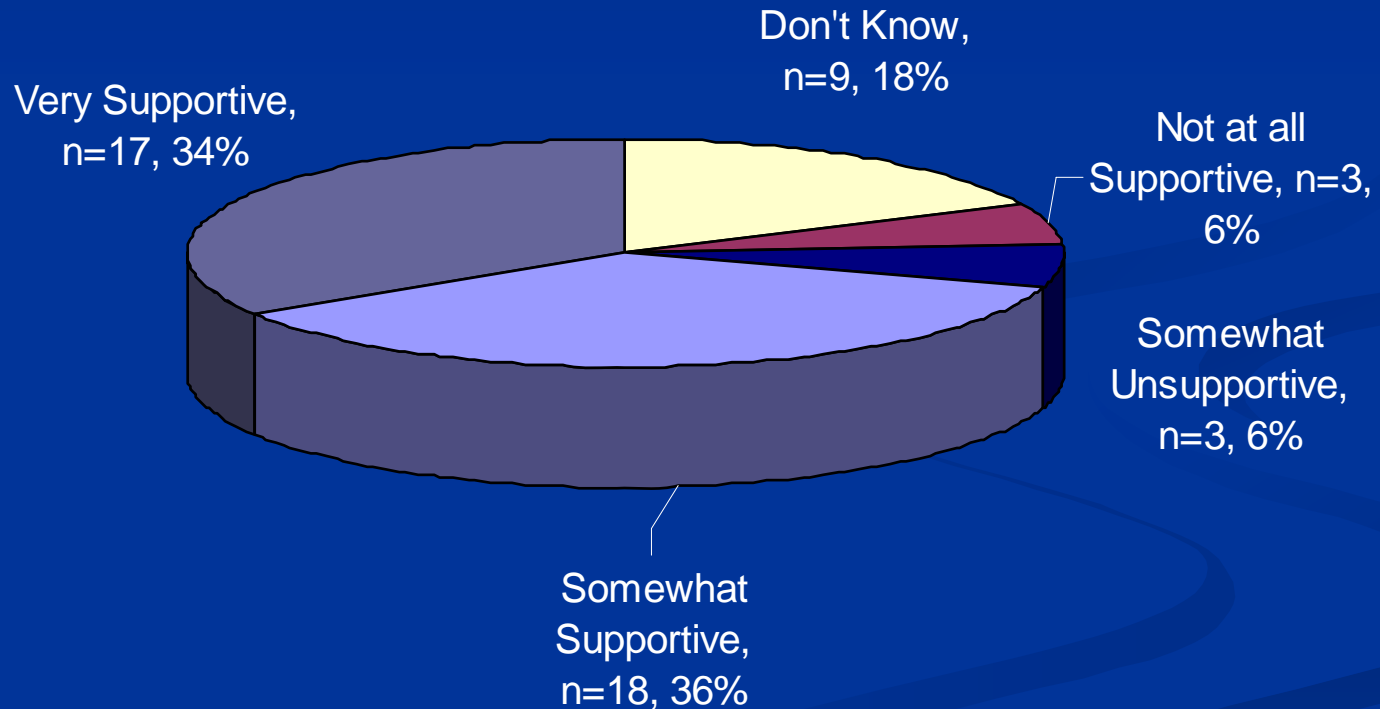
# Stopping the Tenure Clock at VT

## 1996- July 2005

Reasons for stopping the clock:	M	W	Total
<b>Childbirth</b>	0	26	26 (36.6%)
<b>Dependent care</b> (ill family member, adoption of special needs children, paternity leave)	7	2	9 (12.7%)
<b>Ext circum – Job</b> (delays in setting up research lab/equipment; change in college; change from extension appt, etc.)	3	3	6 (8.5%)
<b>Ext circum – Personal</b> (death of spouse or family members, divorce)	2	3	5 (7.0%)
<b>Late initial appointment</b> (initial appointment in late Nov/Dec but tenure clock started in Aug.)	3	0	3 (4.2%)
<b>Leave without pay</b>	2	1	3 (4.2%)
<b>Medical reasons</b> (stroke, cancer, back injuries/disability)	3	5	8 (11.3%)
<b>Completed degree late</b>	2	3	5 (7.0%)
<b>Reduction in prior service credit</b>	5	1	6 (8.5%)
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>71</b>

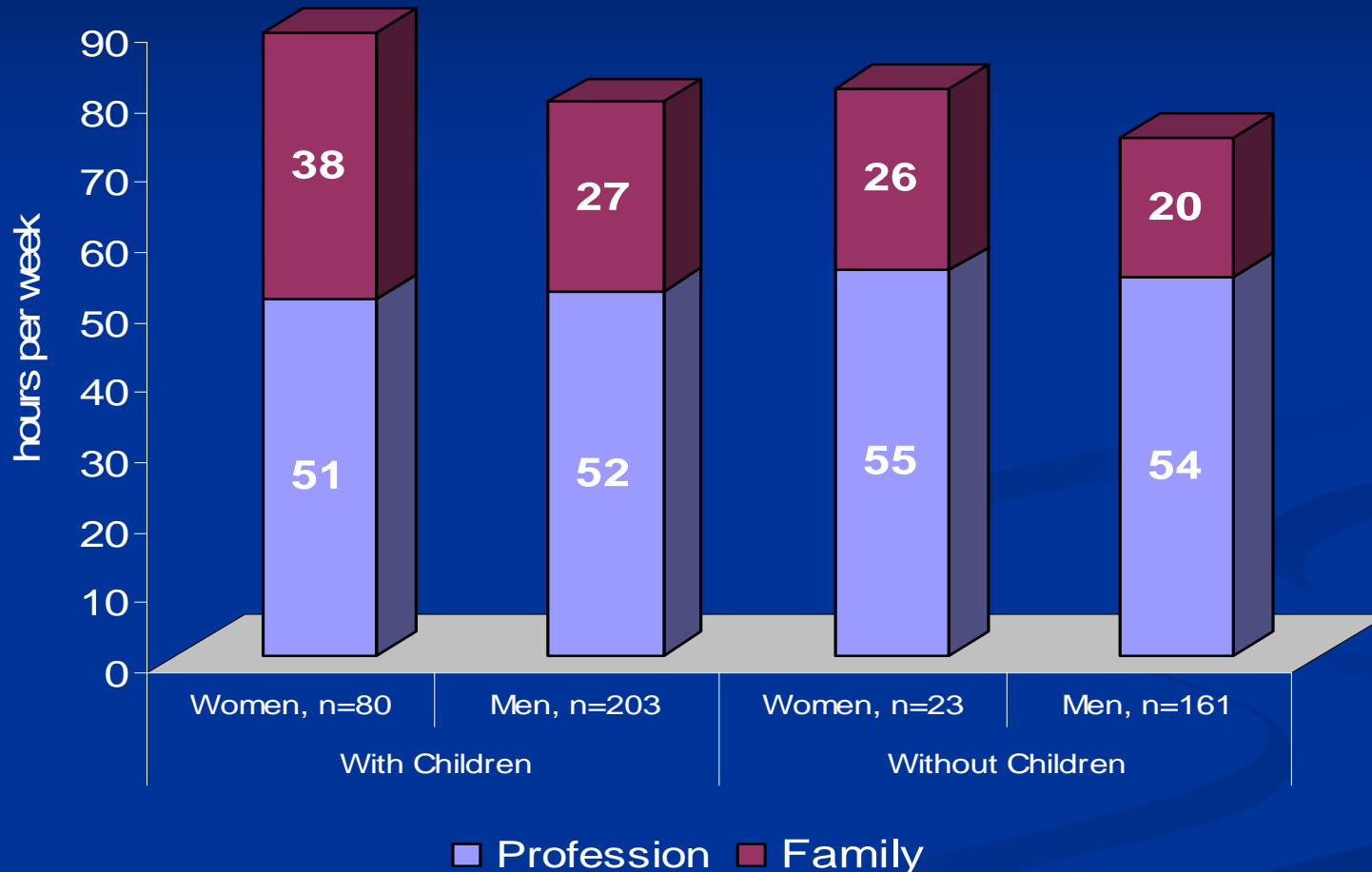
# Stopping the Tenure Clock

How supportive are faculty in your department of faculty who extend the tenure clock:



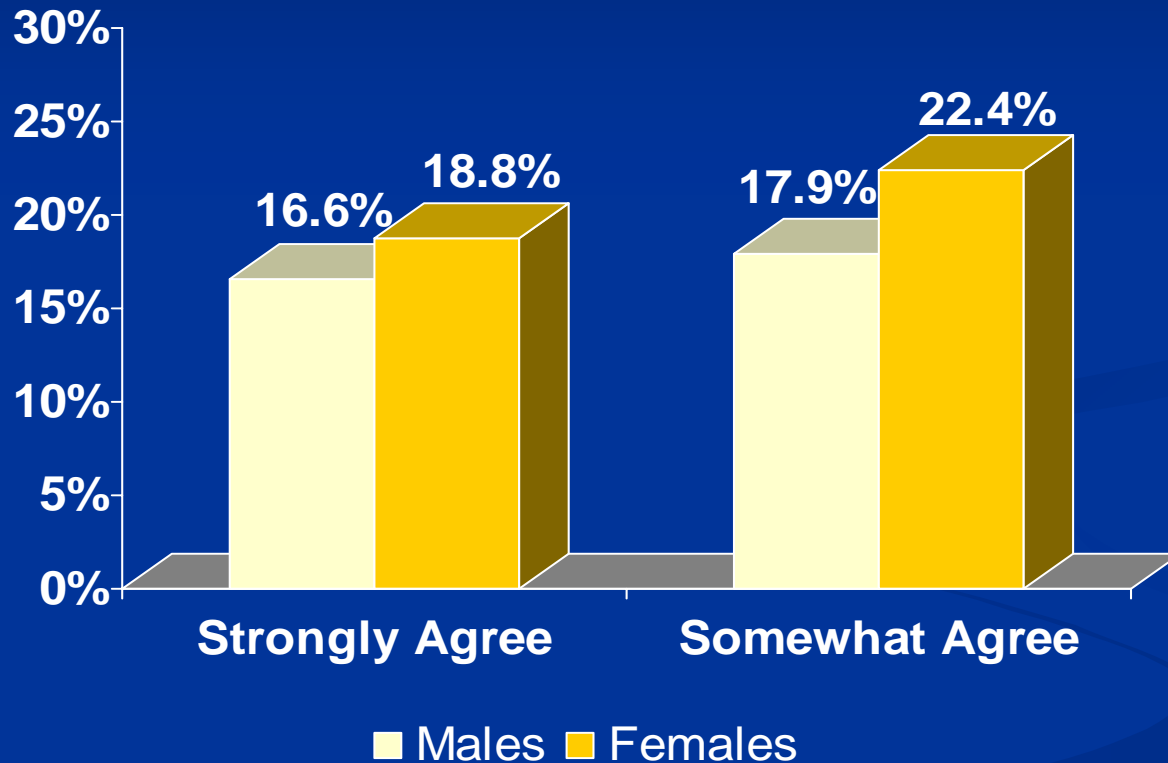
# Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

Reported average number of hours spent on activities related to profession and family responsibilities, by gender:



# Modified Duties/Temporary Part-Time

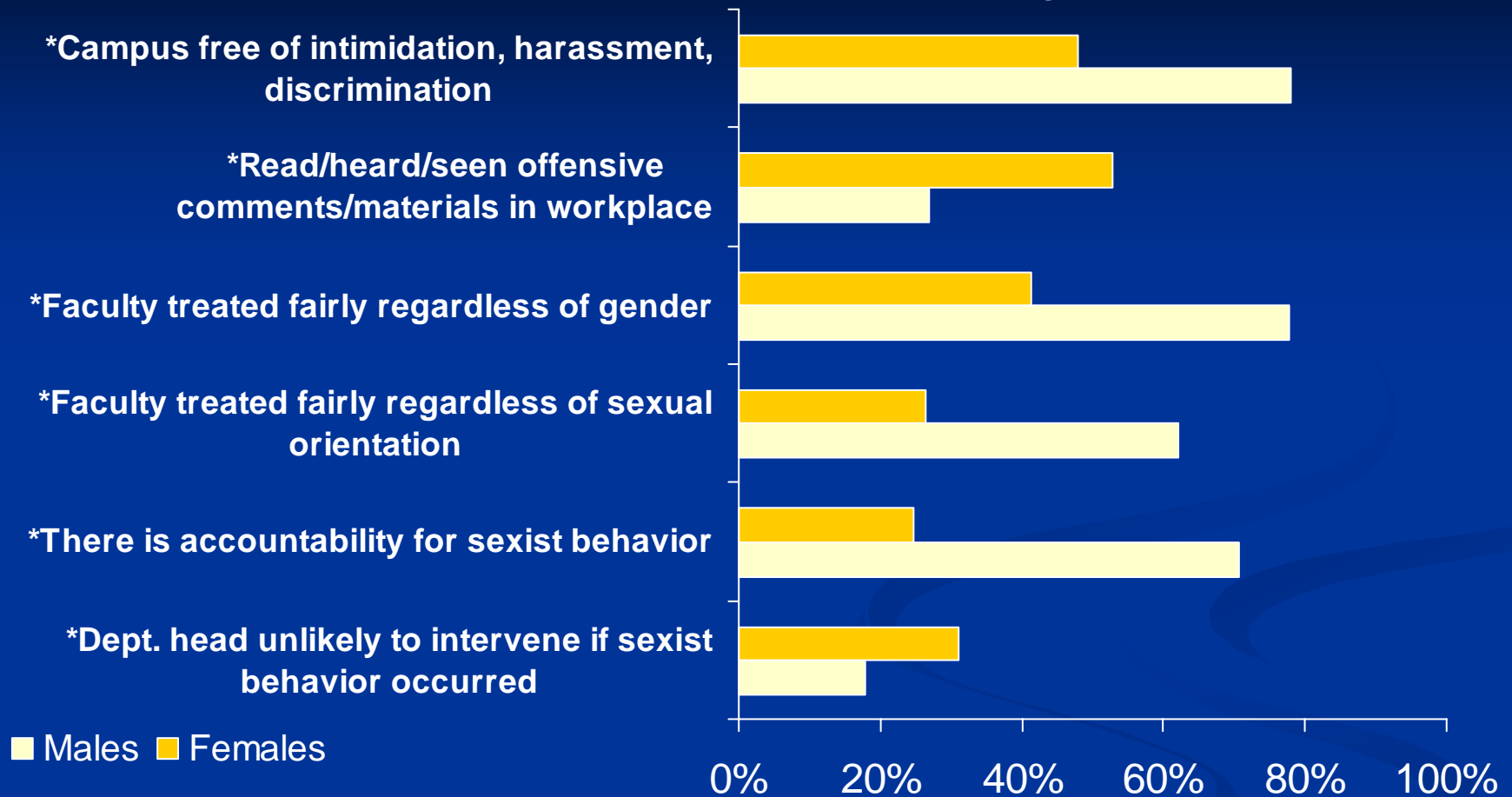
Interested in working part-time if benefits like health care were available:



# Climate Issues

## 2005 *AdvanceVT* Faculty Work-Life Survey and Faculty Exit Survey

# Climate Issues: Perceptions by Gender



Advance Survey, N=816; Includes combined responses of strongly agree and somewhat agree;

\*Items significantly different by gender,  $p \leq .05$

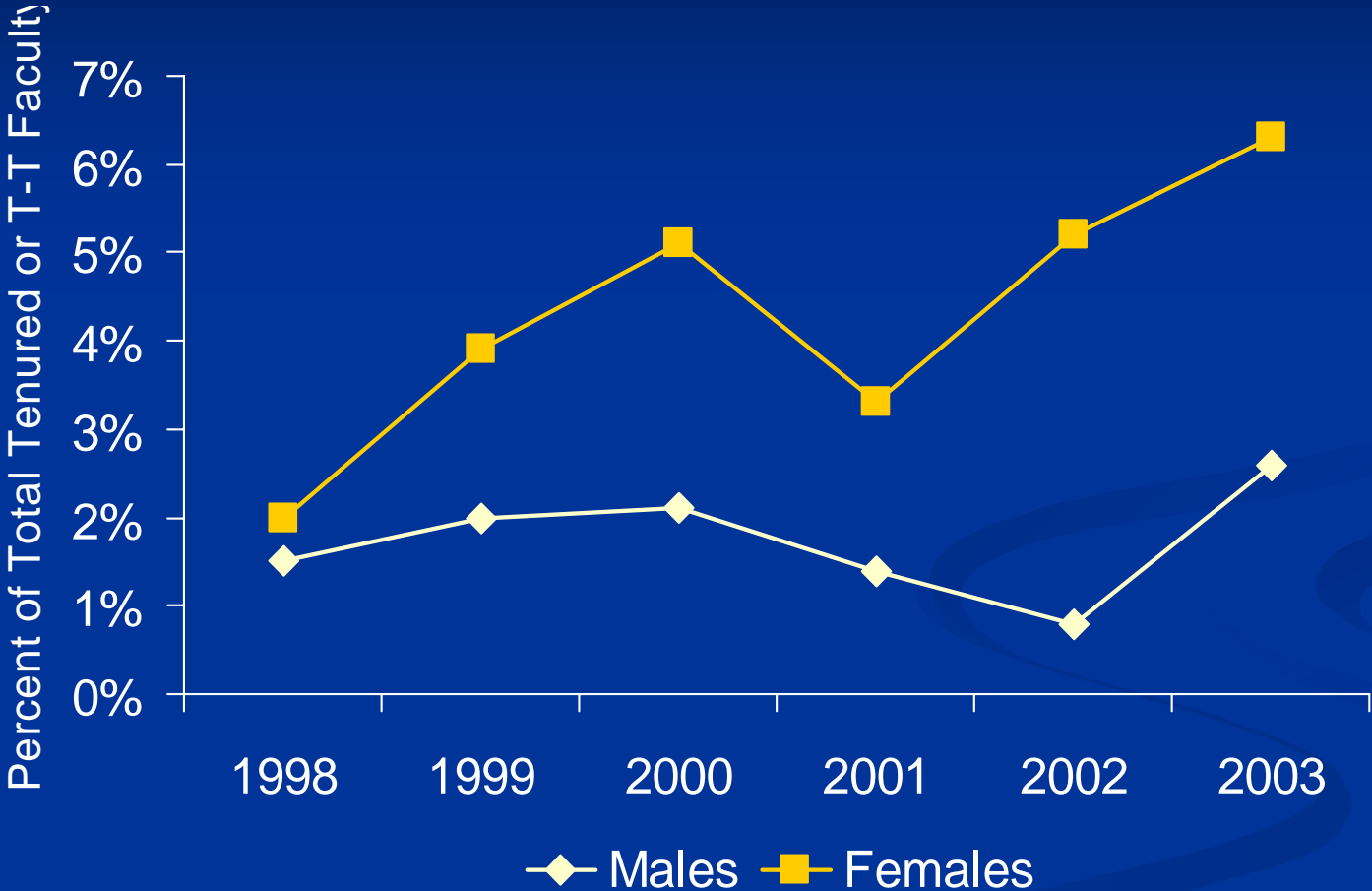
# Departmental Climate Issues

Includes combined responses of strong or somewhat agree *Items significantly different by gender, $p \leq .05$	AdvanceVT Survey n=816		Exit Survey n=49	
	% M Agree	% F Agree	% M Agree	% F Agree
Treated with respect by faculty members in dept.	88.0	74.7*	91.3	76.9*
Others in my dept. seem to know about policies/opportunities of which I am unaware	27.6	41.0*		
I felt excluded from an informal network in my dept in which others seemed to know about policies or opportunities of which I was unaware			21.7	46.1
I am (was) recognized for the contributions I make to the department	79.3	72.8	82.6	61.6*

Likely to leave position at VT at some point in next two years:

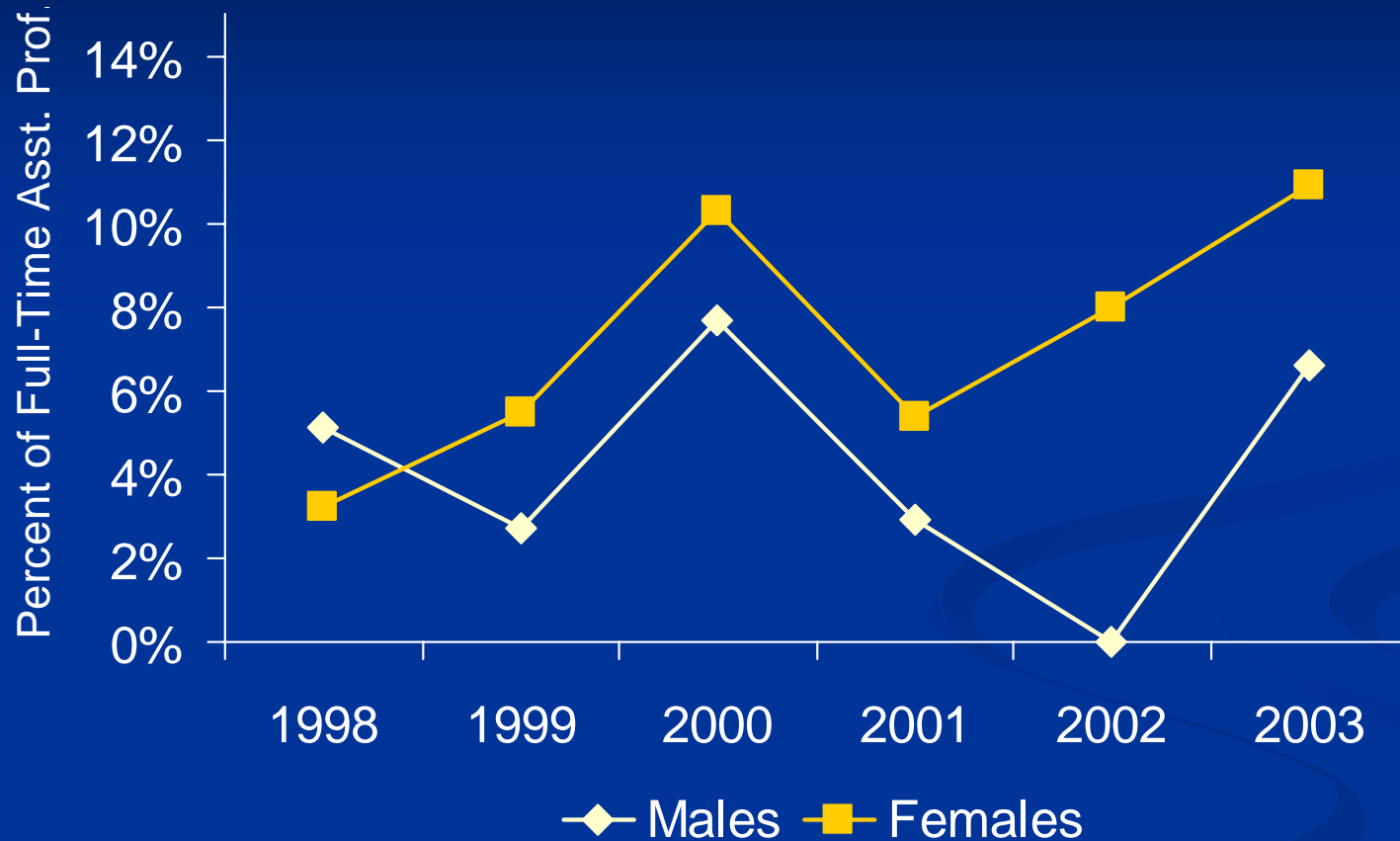
- About one-third of both women and men respondents say they are very or somewhat likely to leave their position within two years
- Gender differences are not significant on this item

# Voluntary, University Wide Departure Rates Among Tenured & Tenure-Track Faculty by Gender



\*Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> census date used for each year to determine the total number of full-time faculty

# Voluntary Departure Rates Among Assistant Professors by Gender



\*Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> census date used for each year to determine the total number of full-time Asst. Prof.

# Current and New Initiatives

# Work-Life Initiatives

- Dual Career Assistance
  - Guidelines on web; tracking data base
  - New Coordinator -- Beverlyn Samuels, 1-7748
- Stop-the-Clock: policy under revision (CFA)
  - Language adopted for external letters for P&T
  - Letter from Provost to deans/dept heads
- Modified Duties: policy in draft form  
(*AdvanceVT* policy workgroup then CFA)

# Work-Life Initiatives

- Temporary Part-time Appointments  
(under consideration by CFA)
- Benefits for salaried part-time faculty
  - Retirement  $\geq 50\%$
  - Full health care  $\geq 80\%$
- Child care  
(Univ-wide child care task force, Linda Woodard, chair)

# Climate-Related Initiatives

- Strengthening EO Office Capacity and Effectiveness
- University-wide on-line harassment prevention training  
(CALS pilot Oct, remaining areas beginning fall 2005, EO Office)

# Climate-Related Initiatives

- Major new investments in Office of Multicultural Affairs
- New Director of Education and Training (Jane Ann Williams)

# Climate-Related Initiatives

Policies Approved by the Board of Visitors:

- Principles of Community
- Revised Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Policy 5615 Campus and Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

# Next Steps?

- Engaging the university community in reviewing the data, discussing the issues, and developing strategies to be implemented at all levels.
- Setting goals and making commitments as part of the revised strategic plan