



**Parental Leave for The Pennsylvania State University Graduate Students and Postdoctoral
Scholars/Fellows:
Recommendations to Improve Policy and Practice**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a leading institution of higher education and research with accolades for its openness to diversity, quality academics, and winning athletics, The Pennsylvania State University should continue to pursue university policy that reflects its commitment to fostering a supportive and equitable academic community. This report shows a clear and compelling need to establish a formal leave and accommodations policy for pregnant and parenting Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

Currently, the Penn State New Parent Accommodation Guideline recommends leave and other accommodations for pregnant and parenting Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. The Accommodation Guideline represents an important step toward creating a more supportive university environment that is cognizant of the work-family issues graduate students and postdoctoral scholars face.

Notably, our report highlights multiple strengths regarding Penn State's commitment to supporting pregnant and parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. We note the following strengths as particularly commendable:

- Penn State updated a new parent accommodation guideline for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows in 2012.
- Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows are eligible for paid leave under the accommodation.
- Penn State's guideline provides a clear application process for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to apply for paid leave due to the arrival of a new child.
- Many graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who shared plans regarding their pregnancy and leave plan experienced support from a variety of individuals in supervisory or leadership positions at Penn State, suggesting that there is support for work-life balance within Penn State's university culture.

Although these strengths are notable, our report also identifies limitations regarding the current Accommodation Guideline. We note these limitations in the following three findings:

Finding 1: The existing parental leave accommodation guideline is useful to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, but knowledge, access, and consistent application are lacking.

Recommendations for immediate action based on Finding 1:

- Increase transparency related to the existing accommodation guideline including distribution of existing accommodation guideline in department graduate handbooks
- Decrease student apprehension and confusion regarding the current accommodation guideline by increasing knowledge about guideline and mechanisms to appeal leave decisions

- Increase education for current graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows on the existing accommodation guideline
- Increase education for faculty, staff, department heads, supervisors, etc. on the current guideline; education will increase efficiency and consistency in administering paid leave requests

Finding 2: Penn State has the opportunity to be a leader in offering paid, substantive leave accommodations. However, Penn State currently lags behind other Big Ten and major research institutions in providing a formal parental leave and accommodation policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. In addition, the current Accommodation Guideline is not inclusive of same-sex partners and does not provide adequate provisions for international students.

Finding 3: A formal leave policy would help foster a supportive workplace environment for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, many of whom are in prime child-bearing years. A formal policy would assist graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, their advisers, and their departments in planning and efficiently balancing work expectations with family responsibilities.

Recommendations for action based on Findings 2 and 3:

- Create an official University parental leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to meet or exceed the standards of other Big Ten universities
- Develop a consistent and permanent funding stream for paid parental leave for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows
- Create an official University parental leave policy that is clear, consistent, and flexible to allow graduate students, postdoctoral scholars/fellows, supervisors, and administration the opportunities to prepare for and manage individual circumstances
- Create an official University parental leave policy that is sensitive to and factors in the unique needs of the following graduate student and postdoctoral scholar/fellow populations:
 - Same-sex partners
 - Graduate students who are self-funded
 - Part-time graduate students
 - Both parents are graduate students and/or postdoctoral scholars/fellows
 - International students with visa statuses contingent upon residency status
- Create an official University parental leave policy that addresses the varied responsibilities of teaching assistants or research assistants
- Develop an information sharing mechanism to ensure information regarding formal parental leave policy circulates to all vested parties

Executive Summary Conclusion

Our report also highlights several ways that Penn State can improve workplace resources for pregnant and parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. As Penn State strives to maintain its status as a premier research university, and as research demonstrates that workplace policies and benefits related to work-family balance are an increasing priority among the millennial generation of employees, we strongly recommend Penn State implement a parental leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

The report that follows draws attention to the ways that the absence of a formal university leave policy for pregnant and parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows creates opportunities for inconsistent experiences across this population. For example, some mothers receive paid leave for six weeks, while others receive unpaid leave with some reduction in teaching and research responsibilities.

While inconsistent experiences are a notable concern for individual graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, we also note the ways that the absence of a formal parental leave policy negatively affects the University more broadly. Without a formal parental leave policy, advisers, supervisors, and administrative staff face challenges in efficiently planning for the leave times of their graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. A formal leave policy would provide increased opportunities to plan ahead, ensure research and teaching responsibilities are covered, and reduce the amount of lost time in productivity. An institutionalized funding stream developed for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows parental leave would also reduce the burden on individual departments to secure funding for paid parental leave. Faculty invest significant time and energy in the training of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows; a formal parental leave policy better ensures not only a supportive work environment, but better guarantees that graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows receive the support needed to successfully finish their degrees and contribute to the success of Penn State as a premier institution for research, teaching, and service.

Penn State's commitment to implementing a parental leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows positions the University as a leader in work-family balance issues. A strong parental leave policy also supports the University's commitment to address diversity concerns, in particular increasing and maintaining the presence of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. As an institution that supports the success of all members of its community and who publicly recognizes the invaluable contributions of its graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, the development of a formal parental leave policy supports the broader mission of the University and its commitment to higher education.

BACKGROUND

Initiative by the Commission for Women

The Commission for Women (CFW) serves as an advisory group to the President of the University on the status of women at Penn State. As an advocate for women's concerns, CFW examines and makes recommendations regarding issues that affect female faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars/fellows, and students. Family leave issues are a long-term focus for the CFW, and include maternity and child/elder-care policies. Recently, the Family Leave Issues Committee of the CFW has explicitly focused on the experiences and needs of pregnant and parenting faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars/fellows, and graduate students. In 2009–2010, the Family Leave Issues Committee conducted two projects to identify where Penn State stands in meeting the needs of working parents.

In 2009, the Family Leave Issues Committee conducted focus groups with Penn State faculty and staff—who were also parents—to better understand their experiences with Penn State's leave and accommodation policies (Commission for Women 2010). Information shared during the focus groups revealed that the level of support from supervisors and colleagues for faculty and staff's work-family balance varied considerably across the University. Discrepancies in levels of support for family appeared to be widespread and well-noted by both faculty and staff. Focus group participants perceived Penn State as a place where supportive work environments do exist, but not as an institution that promotes a family-friendly culture overall.

Robert Drago and Kelly Davis (Commission for Women 2009), members of the CFW Family Leave Issues Committee, also conducted a comparative analysis of parental leave and modified duties for faculty and staff across the Big Ten universities. The findings revealed that Penn State's leave policies stood fairly well among its competitors, with several strengths, but that the policies also had room for improvement. For example, Penn State's relatively generous leave length for faculty was a negative outlier in terms of reliance on departmental and colleague coverage for funding this leave. The 2009 Commission for Women study also found that Penn State maintains clear policies in terms of the length and definition of modified duties for faculty, and that specificity makes those policies superior to the more ambiguous policies found at some of the other institutions.

As for staff policies, the 2009 Commission for Women study found that Penn State was at the forefront with unpaid leave provisions akin to those found in Europe—of at least one year in length, and irrespective of gender or biological/adoptive parent status. Penn State also provides analogous unpaid leave funding mechanisms for staff when compared to other universities; the typical length was six weeks for biological mothers, with funding via vacation time, personal time off, and sick days. Although provisions for fathers and adoptive parents were on par with other Big Ten universities, the 2009 study noted need for improvement. Biological fathers and adoptive parents tended to receive less or no paid time off relative to biological mothers.

With its focus on faculty and staff, the 2009 Commission for Women study provided a limited summary of leave allotted to postdoctoral scholars and graduate students. In 2012, Penn State

released an updated accommodation guideline specifically addressing graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Building on the already existing reports addressing family leave accommodations for Penn State faculty and staff, this report provides an overview of the current leave guidelines for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows across the Big Ten universities, as well as a study of the experiences and needs of pregnant and parenting Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows Family Leave Policies: Trends in United States Universities

Leave policies have become more common for university faculty and staff given that their appointments are more standard and comparable with contracts in the nonacademic workforce. However, graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows also require protection and support for managing dual-responsibilities of work and family, especially as most are in their prime child-rearing years. As part of their educational training, many graduate students receive teaching and research assistantships. As paid instructors and researchers, graduate students perform roles in the University that necessitate formal support. Postdoctoral scholars/fellows are also similarly employed in paid work that requires institutional support. Both populations provide faculty, programs, and departments with research and teaching assistance, and are increasingly relied upon as integral members of the university community who assist with daily and long-term operations.

Attention to family leave policies for faculty has come amidst strong evidence of continued gender disparities within universities. Concern about the loss of talented women has resulted in improved parental leave policies for faculty as research has documented the tendency of women to “leak out” of the academic pipeline at rates disproportionate compared to men (see for example: de Wet 2002; Mason 2004; 2002; van Anders 2004). The “leaky problem” has been particularly noted for women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields due to the lower proportion of women to men in these fields (although the numbers of women have increased over the past decades) and related gender bias or less family-friendly cultures in many STEM departments compared to others (Goulden et al. 2009).

Less is understood about the experiences of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows regarding similar family commitments. In a unique study of doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars at the University of California (Mason and Goulden 2006), both men and women (but women in particular) reported altering their career goal of becoming a professor. Doctoral students, particularly women, reported career-family conflicts as the most common reasons for changing their career goals. Women who had a child during their postdoctoral scholarship/fellowship were twice as likely to change their career goal as men and childless women (Mason and Goulden 2006). The majority of doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows were concerned about how family-friendly their future jobs would be and viewed research intensive universities as the least family-friendly (ibid).

Notably, women’s fertility begins declining around the age of 32, yet the average Ph.D. recipient is 34 years old (Yoest 2004). Therefore, childbearing years for women frequently

overlap with time spent in graduate school. Biology and age, coupled with career trajectory, result in a need for flexible parental leave policies, particularly for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the combination of career and family responsibilities is not just a women's issue; balancing work and family is important to men, too. Today's fathers are more involved with childcare than previous generations, and research has shown that fathers' involvement is important for child development starting in infancy (Cabrera et al. 2000).

By providing desirable family leave policies for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, Penn State will be increasingly poised to attract and retain top talent—some of whom could be future Penn State faculty. Research demonstrates that workplace policies and benefits related to balancing work and family responsibilities are an increasing priority among the millennial generation of employees (Smola and Sutton 2002). The quality of science and innovation in the various fields depends on the quality of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows attracted to and trained at Penn State. Supporting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows with families requires proactive attention in order to prevent the loss of important talent through the implementation of family-supporting university policies.

The majority of the sixty-two Association of American Universities implemented policies of at least six weeks of guaranteed paid maternity leave for faculty. However, only 13 percent have the same policy for graduate students and 23 percent for postdocs (Goulden et al. 2009). Most universities, including Penn State, do not have guaranteed paid maternity or childbirth accommodation policies for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows (Wilson 2006). Penn State should meet or exceed the accommodations provided by its competitors in order for Penn State to attract graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who will become the future researchers and innovators in our fields.

Current Accommodations for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows at Penn State

Administrators updated Penn State's parental leave accommodation guideline for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows in 2012. The guideline includes recommended accommodations and does not represent official University policy, a serious limitation for ensuring equal support for all graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

Graduate students are eligible for paid leave in the case of childbirth and adoption. The University guideline instructs graduate students on the appropriate process to request paid leave, eligibility requirements to receive paid leave, and the chain of command regarding how approval is determined. In the case of graduate students, the procedure for requesting leave is made to the head of the unit providing the assistantship, in consultation with the assistantship supervisor, the graduate student's academic program, and the associate dean for Graduate Education (i.e., not Human Resources). The graduate student's department is responsible for securing funds to replace the graduate student. The guideline permits graduate students be paid a leave period of up to six weeks.

Similarly, postdoctoral scholars/fellows are eligible for a leave period of up to six weeks and must also submit a written request for accommodation. Unlike graduate students, the request is made to their college/unit's human resources representative who then consults with the postdoctoral scholar/fellow's supervisor. The guideline proposes that the external grant through which the postdoctoral scholar/fellow is funded will pay for the accommodation. However, if the funding agency has terms and conditions that do not permit funding pursuant to this guideline, the supervisor "should" fund the parental accommodation period with "other" funds. Postdoctoral scholars/fellows who work in positions funded by their college or administrative unit "should" receive their parental accommodation pay from unit resources.

In both cases, the guideline for parental leave for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows supports paid leave time for new parents. However, the guideline does not ensure that graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows *will* receive paid leave, nor that individual departments/units will have the funding to provide paid leave. The absence of a formal policy places an undue burden on graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to request accommodations in environments potentially hostile to family leave, without strong institutional support legitimizing their needs. This concern is compounded when increasingly strict budgetary constraints are placed on departments with pressure to make additional funding cuts.

In what follows, we introduce findings from two studies that we completed for this report. First, we introduce a comparative study that analyzes parental leave policies across the Big Ten universities and two other outstanding research institutions in order to understand how Penn State's current leave guideline ranks among its competitors. We then present our second study, the analysis compiled from a university-wide survey conducted in 2012–2013. Data from the survey provides information about perceptions and experiences of pregnant or parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Penn State, and those who expect to become parents while at Penn State. We draw on the findings from these two studies to provide recommendations for ways Penn State can maintain its status as a premier research institution by meeting the needs of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

STUDY I FINDINGS: FAMILY LEAVE POLICY COMPARISON

Paid family medical leave benefits for United States government employees have improved in recent years as legislation has acknowledged the significant role such leave facilitates in social and community development (Ness 2014). Three states, California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island have expanded paid family medical leave benefits (“Paid Family Leave” 2010; “Your Guide to Family Leave Insurance in New Jersey” 2013; “Temporary Caregiver Insurance” 2014). Further, evidence has shown that expanded family medical leave offers benefits to both employees and employers by increasing workplace equity and satisfaction, along with increased retention rates (Appelbaum and Milkman 2011). This section’s focus on policies in institutions of higher education is warranted, given these outcomes and growing political interest in family medical leave policies.

Purpose

To contextualize the findings of this study, this section of the report examines family leave policies for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows within the Big Ten community and two notable research universities.

Following the passage of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)¹, many United States universities instituted parental leave guidelines and policies for faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars/fellows, graduate students, and in some instances, undergraduate students.² These policies are far from uniform and vary from university to university. Still, many institutions have recognized the benefit of parental leave policies for different populations within their university communities, and have instituted policies and guidelines that exceed FMLA requirements. This report examines the parental leave available to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Big Ten universities and two private research institutions: Stanford University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). To provide a non-Big Ten point of comparison, Stanford University and MIT were included in the analysis because, as internationally renowned research institutions with strengths in STEM fields and the liberal arts, they recruit graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows that Penn State also seeks to attract.

Study Design

Data in this study is drawn from personal email correspondence and information posted on university human resources websites, in graduate handbooks, and university policy web resources. Email contact was available for only ten of the fourteen Big Ten universities. All ten

¹ The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) grants employees who meet federal requirements the right to protected unpaid leave. FMLA applies to local, state, and federal public workplaces and private employers with 50+ workers. The act covers employees who have worked for 1250 hours in the twelve months prior to taking leave and have worked for the employer for a minimum twelve months. For leave related to the birth or adoption of a child, FMLA entitles eligible employees to twelve workweeks of unpaid leave in a given year. For more information about FMLA coverage and amendments, visit: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>

² For the purpose of this study, undergraduate students are not part of the analysis.

of these were contacted as well as Stanford and MIT, however, only two human resource representatives responded. Additional information was obtained through searches of university graduate school websites, human resource/benefits websites, and university policy documents (Appendix A). The data collected for this study includes: the existence of a policy/guideline, the populations that the policy/guideline covers, the requirements to be considered a member of an impacted population, length of leave, paid or unpaid status, and timeline/work requirement modifications due to the birth of a child.

Comparative analysis of specific benefits among schools proved difficult because data availability and comparability is uneven. For example, not all schools have clear policies for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows; other schools have policies for graduate students, but not postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Additionally, not all schools provided information about family leave benefits in equal detail (Appendix B and C). Perhaps most importantly, schools categorized these populations in different ways, varying from graduate students with no benefits to considering graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows as university employees. Consequently, these categorical distinctions affected whether universities consider FMLA or other guidelines/policies to be applicable.

Despite these limitations, our findings demonstrate that important trends are emerging in family leave provisions for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows within these institutions. We present this portion of the study in three parts. First, the study examines family leave provisions made available to different categories of new graduate student parents, and highlights Rutgers' policy, which at the time of the study had the most generous family leave policy for graduate students. Second, this study examines the family leave accommodations afforded postdoctoral scholars/fellows at institutions for which information was available. Third, the study evaluates Penn State's parental leave guideline for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to offer points of comparison and difference.

Graduate Students

Appendix B includes tables that summarize the family leave policies across the studied institutions. Of Big Ten schools, seven institutions (Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Northwestern, Ohio State, and Rutgers) had a parental leave accommodation policy for graduate students that was separate from and/or exceeded FMLA. Purdue had a policy that was separate and exceeded FMLA, but that was applied to faculty, staff, and graduate students. Five institutions (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota, and Nebraska) followed FMLA requirements when graduate students met eligibility requirements as employees. Wisconsin did not have a formal policy, although individual departments have their own policies and/or guidelines. Both MIT and Stanford had Childbirth Accommodations policies that are separate from FMLA.

Although there was no uniform standard for family leave policies for graduate students, nor were the graduate student populations recognized uniformly across institutions, the application of policies and guidelines to specific instances was often contingent on three criteria: the academic status of the graduate student, the status of the graduate student as an employee,

and the status of the student as a category of new parent (mother, father, adoptive, domestic partner).

Student Status: At institutions where student status mattered, requirements for eligibility for family leave policies and guidelines included: making progress toward degree, full-time status, one semester to twelve months of enrollment, appointment as graduate research assistant or teaching assistant, and maintenance of stipulated number of credits while on leave. Institutions for which this was most significant were those with specific accommodations for graduate students that were separate from and/or exceeded FMLA. Although graduate students can participate in a variety of activities including coursework, teaching, lecture, and research assistantships, and can be funded through diverse mechanisms (self-supported, research grants, teaching assistantships, and fellowships), only certain activities and funding streams are counted.

Employee Status: FMLA is applicable to university employees; thus, this status is particularly important at universities that offered no family leave policy or guideline for graduate students. Universities using FMLA for graduate students were consistent in their requirements, including twelve months of service and 1250 hours of work in the last year, per FMLA requirements for employee FMLA eligibility. However, schools may count the activities of their students differently, leading to uneven applicability for FMLA to graduate students.

Many schools do not consider graduate students as employees, but developed leave policies for the graduate student population. For example, graduate students at Maryland were not considered employees, and therefore were not covered by FMLA. However, Maryland has developed a Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Policy. Stanford offers a Childbirth Accommodation policy, and MIT has developed a Childbirth Accommodation Fund to support their maternity leave policies (only mothers are covered). Rutgers' family leave benefits were the most comprehensive of those examined, and are detailed below.

For schools that used FMLA as their only policy, schools offered twelve weeks unpaid leave to biological mothers, biological fathers, and adoptive parents. Some schools also included domestic partners, including Iowa and Minnesota, although complete data was not available. Illinois required use of paid sick leave and vacation concurrently, while Minnesota and Nebraska offered this as optional. For policies separate from and/or more extensive than FMLA, the category of new parent was more important.

Biological Mothers: Compared to other new parent types (e.g., fathers, adoptive parents), biological mothers received the most generous accommodation. At the five schools that used FMLA for graduate students, biological mothers were offered twelve weeks unpaid leave. At schools with their own policies regarding leave, most offered paid leave. Leave ranged from four weeks paid leave (MIT), six weeks unpaid leave (Maryland), six weeks paid leave (Indiana, Michigan, Northwestern, Ohio State, Stanford, MIT), eight weeks paid leave (MIT), two quarters unpaid leave (Stanford), 240 hours paid leave (Purdue), and fourteen weeks paid leave (Rutgers). MIT requires biological mothers to choose a term of leave, and Rutgers divides

maternal leave into two categories (six weeks paid recuperative leave and eight weeks paid parental leave). MIT, Stanford, and Northwestern had specific policies for maternal leave. Most policies also provide accommodations for delays in milestones and course work, although some suggest working with departments and advisers.

Biological Fathers: At the five schools that used FMLA for graduate students, biological fathers were offered twelve weeks unpaid leave. At schools with their own policies regarding leave, leave was divided between paid leave and unpaid leave. Six schools offered accommodation as part of a policy (Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio State, Purdue, Rutgers); two offered accommodation only through leave of absence (Northwestern, Stanford). One policy did not mention biological fathers (MIT). Leave ranged from three weeks paid leave (Ohio State), 120 hours paid leave (Purdue), six weeks unpaid (Maryland) six weeks paid (Michigan, Indiana), and eight weeks paid (Rutgers). Most policies also provide accommodations for delays in milestones and course work, although some suggest working with departments and advisers.

Adoptive Parents: At the five schools that used FMLA for graduate students, adoptive parents were offered twelve weeks unpaid leave. At schools with their own policies regarding leave, leave was divided between paid leave and unpaid leave. Six schools offered accommodation as part of a policy (Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio State, Purdue, Rutgers); two offered accommodation only through leave of absence (Northwestern, Stanford). Leave ranged from 120 hours paid leave (Purdue), six weeks unpaid (Maryland), six weeks paid (Michigan, Indiana), and eight weeks paid (Rutgers). Like policies applying to biological parents, most policies also provide accommodations for delays in milestones and course work, although some suggest working with departments and advisers. One policy did not apply to adoptive parents (MIT).

Domestic Partners: As domestic partners are currently not covered by FMLA, many policies did not mention, and potentially did not cover, domestic partners. However, some schools have broadened their policy language to consider domestic partners. Domestic partners are eligible for benefits at Minnesota under a separate policy. Although complete data were not available, schools with accommodations for domestic partners include Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio State, Purdue and Rutgers. Leave ranged from 120 hours paid leave (Purdue), six weeks paid (Indiana), and eight weeks paid (Rutgers).

Exemplar University Family Leave Policy: Rutgers

Of the schools considered in this comparative analysis, Rutgers has a policy for family leave that the authors think bears specific mention. The policy, the American Association of University Professors-American Federation of Teachers (AAUP-AFT) Guidelines for the Implementation of Family Leave Benefits, negotiated in 2008, offers fourteen weeks paid leave to biological mothers, six weeks for recuperation, and eight weeks for parental leave. Biological fathers, adoptive parents, and domestic partners are all eligible for eight weeks paid parental leave. Although there is no specific mechanism in place to accommodate graduate student milestones, the policy lists ways that graduate students can maintain full student status through independent and research credits. This policy offers more leave that is paid than any other

institution investigated, has clear accommodations for all populations, and clearly exceeds FMLA minimum requirements.

Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows

Appendix C summarizes the information concerning family leave policies for postdoctoral scholars/fellows. More so than for graduate students, the positions that postdoctoral scholars/fellows take within the university varies widely depending on their funding source. Although the official titles vary, most schools consider post-doctorates as either postdoctoral research assistants (employees) or postdoctoral fellows (not employees). This status is critical to postdoctoral scholars/fellows eligibility for benefits, including family leave. Employee status is either conferred as 'faculty' or 'staff' and the relevant policies to those populations then apply. Nonemployees were not eligible for leave benefits, except at Michigan, where provisions could be made for non-FMLA-eligible cases.

Postdoctoral scholars/fellows were eligible for FMLA at Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Northwestern, Rutgers, Stanford, and MIT among the universities examined. These schools offered twelve weeks unpaid leave to new parents. Stanford offered maternity leave of six weeks paid leave, while other parents were only eligible for FMLA. Like graduate student policies, policies indicated that postdoctoral scholars/fellows who are eligible for FMLA were either obligated (Illinois, Michigan) or allowed (Minnesota) to use paid time off, paid sick time, and paid vacation. Rutgers' policy also encouraged postdoctoral scholars/fellows to work with postdoctoral supervisors for modifications. Across all institutions examined, three schools (Iowa, Minnesota, Purdue) had specific accommodations for domestic partners, in addition to biological mothers, biological fathers, and adoptive parents, although data availability was incomplete.

Finally, at least three institutions did not find postdoctoral scholars/fellows eligible for family leave at an institutional level (Indiana, Ohio State, Wisconsin), although it was possible that department level and funding agency accommodations were available.

Other issues to consider for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows

It is possible for both parents of a newborn or adopted child to be students/postdoctorates at a university. For graduate students, Indiana, Maryland, Ohio State, and Purdue, indicated that parents would be eligible for their own leave benefits as individuals. However, Purdue allowed leave time to be combined between two parents, if they were both eligible for the Paid Parental Leave Policy.

International students are subject to additional requirements related to student and employment status for work permits and study visas. Although not examined here, policies should consider these constraints on international students when awarding leave.

Finally, there are graduate students who are self-funded and part-time and postdoctoral fellows/scholars who are not considered employees. Policies addressing parental leave should

consider the needs of these populations when providing adequate accommodations for their university responsibilities.

Penn State Guideline

Most Penn State graduate students are not eligible for FMLA as most graduate students at Penn State do not work the required number of hours in the previous year to become eligible for FMLA³. Graduate students are often at Penn State for a limited number of years and may become expecting parents, or new parents before working the required twelve months to also be eligible for FMLA, even if they have worked the required hours. Postdoctoral fellows/scholars, similarly, do not always have employee status at Penn State. Furthermore, even if considered employees, postdoctoral scholars/fellows come to Penn State for one to two years, and thus often have not worked the requisite twelve months to become eligible for FMLA.

Full-time graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows are eligible for Penn State's New Parent Accommodation Guideline. This applies to new parents, defined as biological mothers, biological fathers, and adoptive parents. Penn State's guideline does not provide for domestic partners, falling short of what other schools offer in both their parental-leave accommodations and extended implementation of FMLA requirements.

Penn State's New Parent Accommodation Guideline recommends how colleges and departments should assist new parents under their purview, but as a guideline and not a policy, it provides potential for significant variation given differing circumstances. The guideline suggests that parents be granted six weeks paid leave with full benefits and provides that deadlines and milestones be extended. Although several schools offer only FMLA, Penn State's guideline is consistent with the minimum offered by most schools with a family leave policy for graduate students, and is generous for a family leave policy offered to postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

However, these benefits might not be offered if an individual's funding derives from an external source, such as a grant, that does not provide for family leave. Further, the New Parent Accommodation Guideline only applies to the primary caregiver of the child, thus if both parents of the child are graduate students or postdoctoral scholars/fellows, only one partner can claim the accommodation. This falls short of accommodations offered at Big Ten institutions, including Indiana, Maryland, Ohio State, and Purdue, that offer leave on an individual basis. For these reasons, Penn State's New Parent Accommodation Guideline is average or below average in comparison to many other Big Ten schools.

³ Graduate students employed on half-time assistantships as Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants in fall and spring semesters would likely not exceed the federal requirement of FMLA of 1250 hours work in the previous year. However, it is conceivable, with summer teaching and research appointments and/or employment in other units of the university, a student could work more than 1250 hours in a previous year and be eligible for FMLA.

Regarding graduate students, Penn State lags behind many Big Ten schools and MIT and Stanford as it lacks a formal policy regarding family leave. Further, Penn State's guideline would rank as average to below average were it to be implemented as a policy, indicating that formalizing the current guideline into a formal policy would be inadequate. However, Penn State has the opportunity to be a leader in offering substantive family leave benefits to postdoctoral scholars/fellows, as many schools do not yet offer protection and support to this population beyond FMLA.

Conclusion

Although federal law through FMLA protects modest access to unpaid leave for new parents, these accommodations are only applicable to students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows when they are considered university employees. Guidelines and policies have been put in place at institutions to cover these populations. Of the schools examined, Rutgers had the most comprehensive policy for graduate students, offering the longest and most inclusive benefits to new parents. Other schools had less generous but clear, inclusive policies. In considering a policy, Penn State should consider the shortcomings, omissions, and inconsistencies across Big Ten policies and look to clear models at its peer institutions for leave provisions and funding sources.

STUDY II FINDINGS: SURVEY OF CURRENT GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS/FELLOWS

PURPOSE

Building on Study I, the purpose of Study II is to better understand various issues that Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows face who are pregnant and/or parenting. Preliminary data collection on this issue by the Commission for Women began in 2010–2011 through informal focus groups with graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, during which Family Leave Issues Committee members recognized that many graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows are uninformed about campus resources and also have difficulty managing work/school and family responsibilities. The following survey was designed to build on these initial qualitative findings and provide a more systematic analysis of the issue.

The survey was designed primarily to address these basic themes: 1) *experiences* with school/work/family balance, 2) *awareness* of existing policies and resources; 3) *use of/willingness to use* existing policies/resources; and 4) *attitudes* toward available/proposed resources.

STUDY DESIGN

The Survey Research Center (SRC) sent an email inviting all (see specific criteria below) graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to participate in the brief online survey (Appendix D). Participants were asked to share thoughts and experiences about Penn State's accommodations for pregnant and/or parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. The SRC sent initial and two reminder emails between December 4, 2012, and February 12, 2013. For participation, each person could choose to enter a drawing for a \$50 gift card. Participation was completely voluntary; participants were told they could skip any questions and/or stop at any time. Penn State's Institutional Review Board approved this study (IRB # 39146).

Participants

The target sample was current, degree-seeking Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Graduate students at the Harrisburg, Great Valley, and University Park campuses were eligible to participate. Medical and law students were excluded because the medicine and law programs operate under their own policy-making jurisdiction and do not fall under the Graduate School umbrella.

The overall response rate (for any participation—completes and partial completes) was 18.5 percent (see Table 1). The SRC indicated that this is a higher participation rate than rates for surveys with similar procedures (i.e., email request with survey link). While a comparatively high response rate, the survey topic resulted in a participation rate lower than what we hoped; we believe the study's specific focus on pregnant/parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows may have caused potential participants not to respond because they felt the topic was irrelevant to them. Nonetheless, 1,567 people responded, providing a

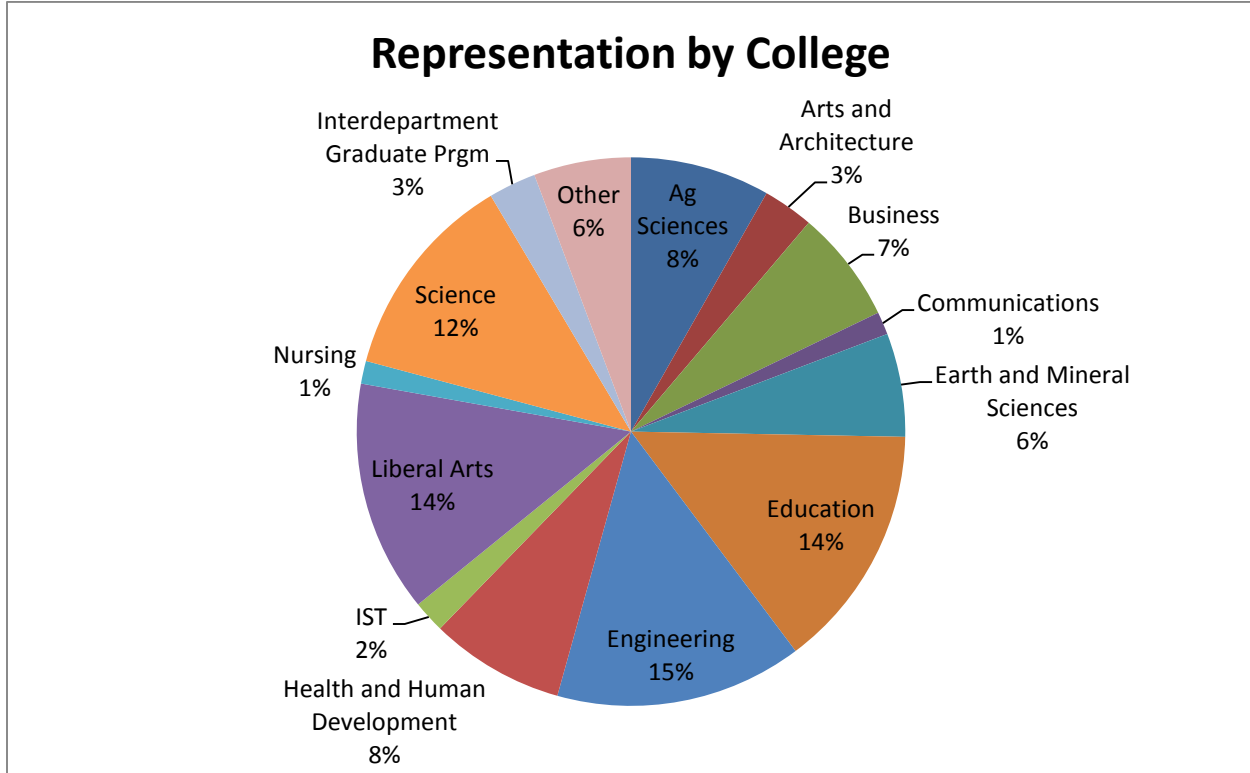
sample that can begin to provide insight into the experiences of current pregnant and/or parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Penn State.

Table 1. Survey Participants

	GRADUATE STUDENTS	POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS	TOTAL
Potential # of respondents	8004	448	8452
Actual # of respondents (complete or partially complete surveys)	1468	99	1567
Response rate	18.34%	22.5%	18.5%

The majority of participants (87.1 percent) were from the University Park campus, followed by Harrisburg (7.6 percent), and Great Valley (4.5 percent). All postdoctoral scholar/fellow participants were from the University Park Campus. The top three colleges represented in this sample were Engineering, Education, and Liberal Arts. However, postdoctoral scholars/fellows who participated in the survey were most likely to be from the colleges of Science, Agricultural Sciences, and Engineering (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Representation of Survey Participants by College



Of the graduate students who participated in the survey, 78.4 percent were full-time students and 20 percent were part-time students. Sixty-five percent of graduate students who participated in the survey were pursuing their doctorate degree while 35 percent were pursuing their master's degree. Most participants were funded through a graduate or teaching assistantship (47 percent), faculty research grant (12.2 percent), or other type of fellowship (16 percent). However, 19.6 percent of participants were funding their education through loans or other personal funds.

The sample had only slightly more women than men (54 percent compared to 42 percent). The youngest participant was age 20, and the oldest participant was age 64. The average age of the participants was 29.4 years with a standard deviation of 6.6 years. The overwhelming majority of participants were in their twenties and thirties (86.6 percent), the prime childbearing years.

The majority of the participants (62.2 percent) indicated that their race/ethnicity was white, followed by Asian (18.5 percent), Hispanic (4.0 percent), Black or African American (3.5 percent), and other. Nearly 25 percent of respondents indicated that they were international students. Participants were also asked to indicate their annual household income using categories from less than \$10,000 up to \$200,000. Most participants were in the \$15,000-\$24,999 bracket (29.2 percent). Notably, this percentage was made up entirely of graduate students as no postdoctoral scholars/fellows fell into an income bracket below \$25,000/year. The second most likely household income was between \$25,000-\$49,999 (27.5 percent).

Forty-two percent of the sample was married and 12 percent were cohabiting with a serious, romantic partner; 35 percent were single. Although most participants who have a spouse or same-sex domestic partner indicated that their partner was not affiliated with Penn State (62.5 percent), 37.3 percent of participants' partners are affiliated with Penn State as a student, postdoctoral scholar/fellow, staff, faculty, or in another capacity.

The majority (72.8 percent) of survey participants were not current parents. However, 26.5 percent of participants surveyed identified as parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Notably, nearly 40 percent of postdoctoral scholars/fellows who participated in the survey are currently parents.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Survey Findings: Current Parents

Of the survey respondents who were currently parents, 51.2 percent became parents while at Penn State. Most respondents (47.8 percent) who became parents while at Penn State did so through birth (174 graduate students and 23 postdoctoral scholars/fellows). About 3 percent of respondents adopted or became parents of step-children through marriage. In addition, 20.6 percent of current parent respondents indicated that they planned to have or adopt another child while at Penn State.

Table 2. Percent of respondents who became parents while at Penn State

Year	Graduate Students		Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
2012	51	3.6%	11	11.2%	62	4.1%
2011	64	4.5%	4	4.1%	68	4.5%
2010	22	1.6%	4	4.1%	26	1.7%
before 2010	34	2.4%	5	5.1%	19	1.3%

In this sample, male participants were more likely than female participants to be current parents (31.1 percent of men vs. 23.1 percent of women). Furthermore, older respondents were more likely to be parents than were younger respondents. Notably, the percentage of respondents who were currently parents increased from 12.1 percent in the 23-30 age group, to 48.9 percent in the 30-40 age group.

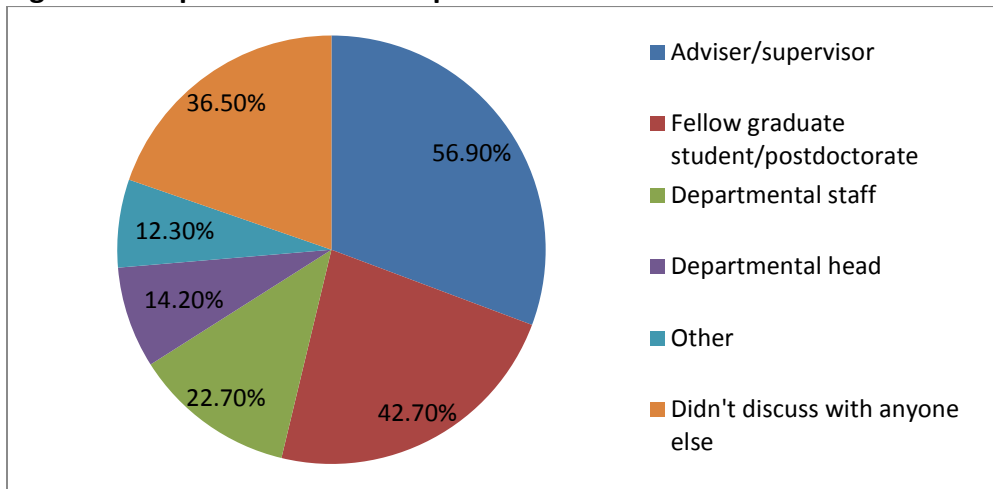
Discussing Pregnancy/Adoption Plans with Advisers/Supervisors

Of the respondents who indicated that they became a parent while they were a graduate student or postdoctoral scholar/fellow at Penn State, 37.4 percent *did not* discuss their pregnancy/adoption plans or any leave accommodations with their adviser or supervisor, while 31.3 percent of survey respondents discussed their plans somewhat, but made no clear arrangements, and 27.3 percent discussed their plans and worked out a clear arrangement.

This result varied by gender. Men were much less likely to discuss their plans or accommodations with their adviser or supervisor than were women; 46 percent of men did not discuss these issues at all, whereas 25.9 percent of women did not discuss the issues at all. In addition, 47.1 percent of women discussed the issues with their adviser or supervisor and worked out a clear arrangement, compared to only 15.9 percent of men.

Well over one-third of respondents who became parents while at Penn State *did not* discuss their plans or accommodations with anyone else (besides their adviser). Those who did were most likely to discuss these issues with a fellow graduate student or postdoctoral scholar/fellow.

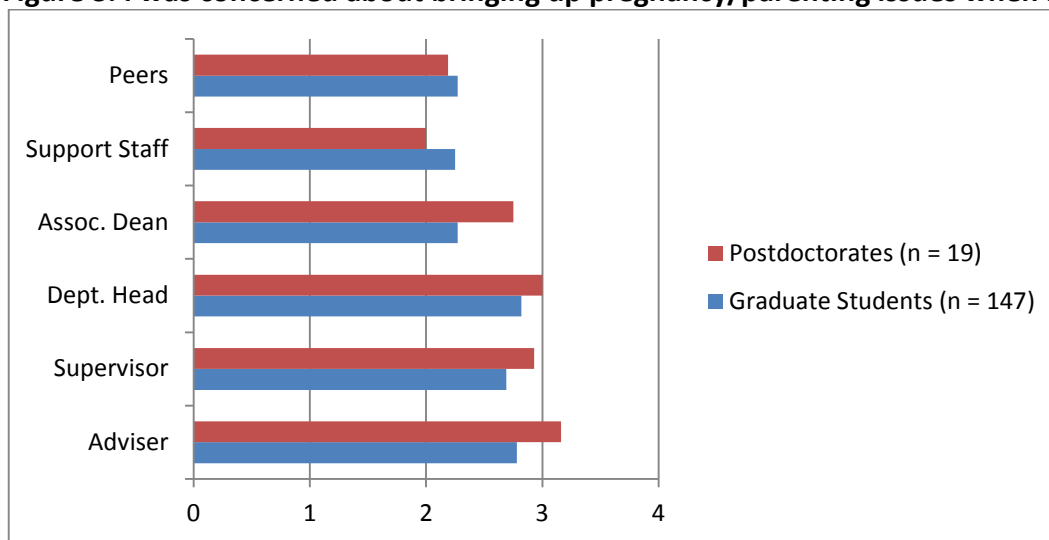
Figure 2. People with whom Respondents Discussed their Plans and Leave Accommodations



Concern about Discussing Pregnancy/Parenting Issues

Current parents were also asked to gauge their concern regarding raising pregnancy/parenting issues with their adviser, supervisor, department head, associate dean, support staff, and peers. Thirty-four percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were concerned about bringing up these issues with their adviser. The most notable difference between men and women when answering this question is that more women (20.2 percent) strongly agreed that they were concerned about discussing these topics with their adviser when compared to men (8.9 percent) who indicated the same concern. However, most respondents reported that they felt neutral or disagreed that they were concerned about bringing up pregnancy/parenting issues to the people indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. I was concerned about bringing up pregnancy/parenting issues when I talked to my:

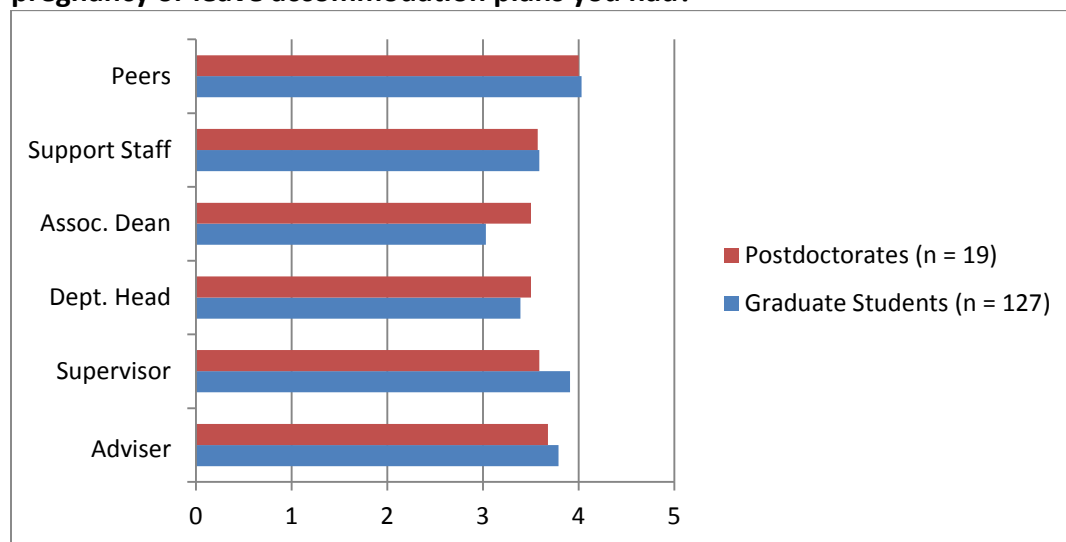


*Note: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree
Respondent numbers fluctuate slightly by category of support and represent means of respondent responses.*

Support for Pregnancy/Leave Accommodation Plans

Current parents were also asked to characterize the support they received from their adviser, supervisor, department head, associate dean, support staff, and peers for any pregnancy/leave accommodation plans they had. Respondents were more likely to rate the support as good, very good, or excellent than they were to rate the support as fair or poor. Nonetheless, 14.2 percent of current parents characterized support from their adviser as fair or poor. In addition, while 35.7 percent of current parents who were women indicated that the support from their adviser was excellent, a lower percentage of men indicated this level of support (26.8 percent). This result was also reflected in the characterization of support from the department head (21.4 percent of women reported excellent support compared to just 5.4 percent of men) and support staff (19.0 percent of women reported excellent support compared to just 9.8 percent of men).

Figure 4. How would you characterize support from the following individuals for any pregnancy or leave accommodation plans you had?



Note: 1= Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good, 5 = Excellent

Respondent numbers fluctuate slightly by category of support and represent means of respondent responses.

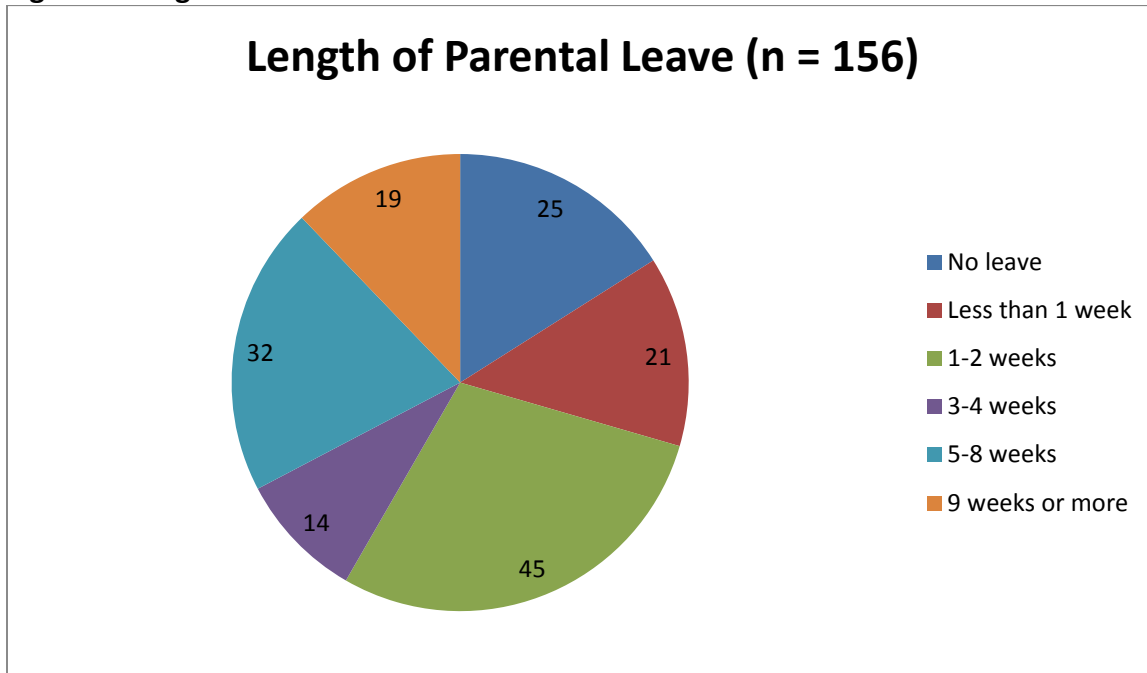
While participants reported experiencing support from a variety of individuals with whom they shared their pregnancy or leave accommodation plans, participants' responses also indicated that significant variation exists between individual experiences and level of support offered across University departments.

Length of Parental Leave

The survey also asked current graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to report the length of leave they took following the birth or adoption of a new child. Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows took an average of five weeks (range zero to seventy weeks)

for leave. As represented in Figure 5 below, most respondents were on leave for one to two weeks.

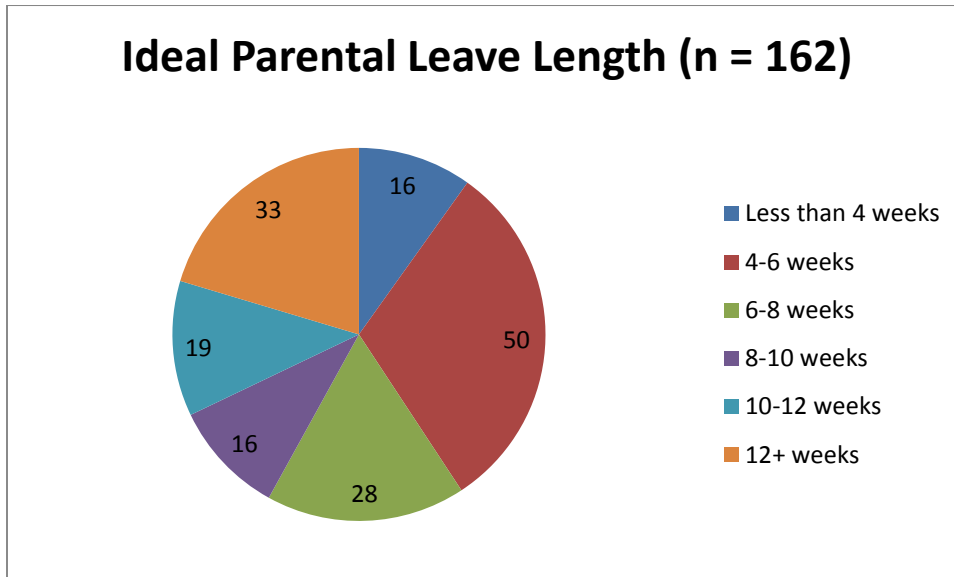
Figure 5. Length of Parental Leave



Ideal Parental Leave Length

While some parents were satisfied with the amount of leave they took, some specified what they believed would be the ideal amount of parental leave. Fifty percent of this group indicated that four to six weeks leave would be ideal. Again, however, the gender of the survey respondent mattered. Men were more likely to say four to six weeks than any other length and were more likely to indicate this length than women. Most women indicated that twelve or more weeks for leave were ideal.

Figure 6. How much time would you have liked to have had, if possible, when the child arrived?



(Lack of) Awareness of Parent Accommodation Guideline

Current parents overall were more likely to characterize the support at Penn State as good, very good, or excellent. However, 71.9 percent of current parents reported that they did not know about the Penn State New Parent Accommodation Guideline during their last pregnancy/adoption experience (79.3 percent of men and 61.9 percent of women). Additionally, another 9.7 percent of current parents reported they were aware that there was a guideline, but did not know what it entailed.

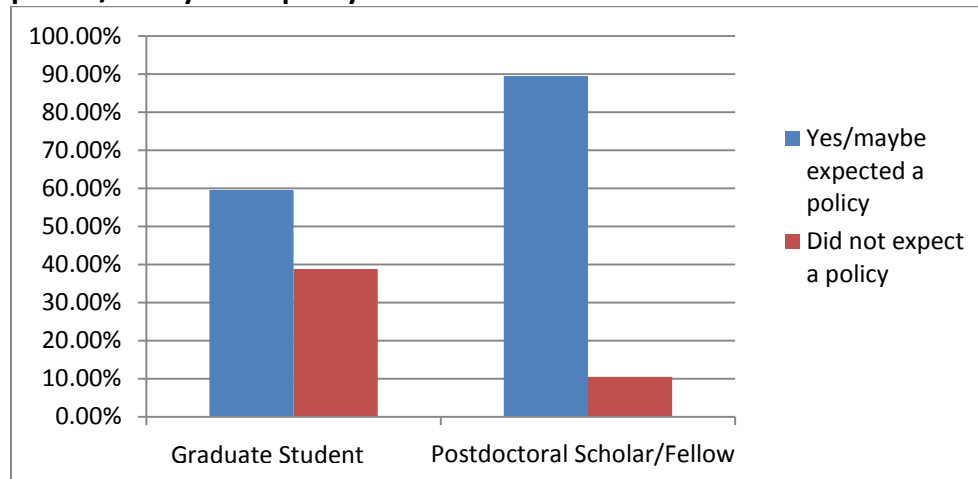
Only 13.8 percent of current parents reported that they were aware of the guideline and had the guideline in their files (8.1 percent of men and 21.4 percent of women). Of those current parents who were aware of the guideline, 43.8 percent of women requested to use the guideline during their last pregnancy/adoption at Penn State (compared to 8.7 percent of men). Of those current parents that did not request to access the accommodations within the guideline, 62.1 percent reported that they did not need them or received adequate accommodations without the guideline. However, 20.7 percent reported that they did not know enough about the guideline. One male respondent indicated that he felt uncomfortable requesting to use the guidelines.

Current parents were also asked if during their last pregnancy/adoption experience at Penn State if any information about new parent accommodation guideline was in their program(s) graduate student/postdoctoral handbook or other orientation materials. Only 5.1 percent of respondents indicated that they had received this information, and 86.1 percent indicated that this information was not provided or that they did not receive those materials.

Expectations Regarding Parent/Leave Policy and Accommodations at Penn State

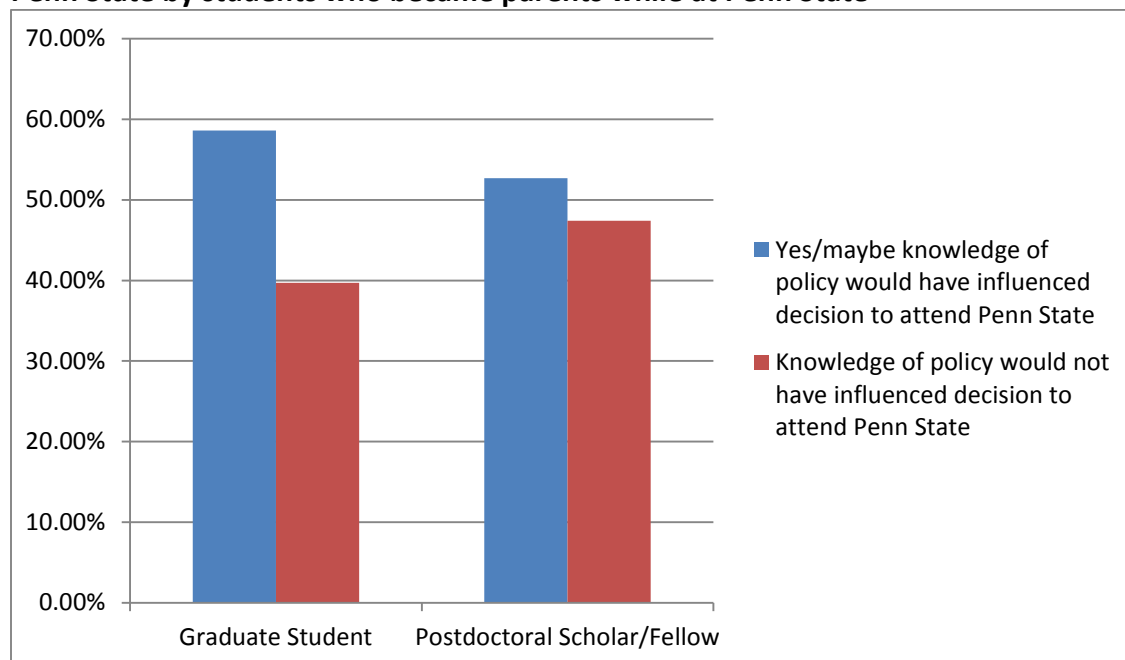
Of the respondents who became a parent while at Penn State, 57.8 percent said “yes” or “maybe” when asked if they expected there to be a new parent/family leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Penn State.

Figure 7. Expectations among respondents who became parents at Penn State for a parent/family leave policy at Penn State



Furthermore, 57.5 percent said “yes” or “maybe” when asked if a new parent/family leave policy would have influenced their decision to come to Penn State (64.3 percent of women said “yes” or “maybe” compared to 51.8 percent of men).

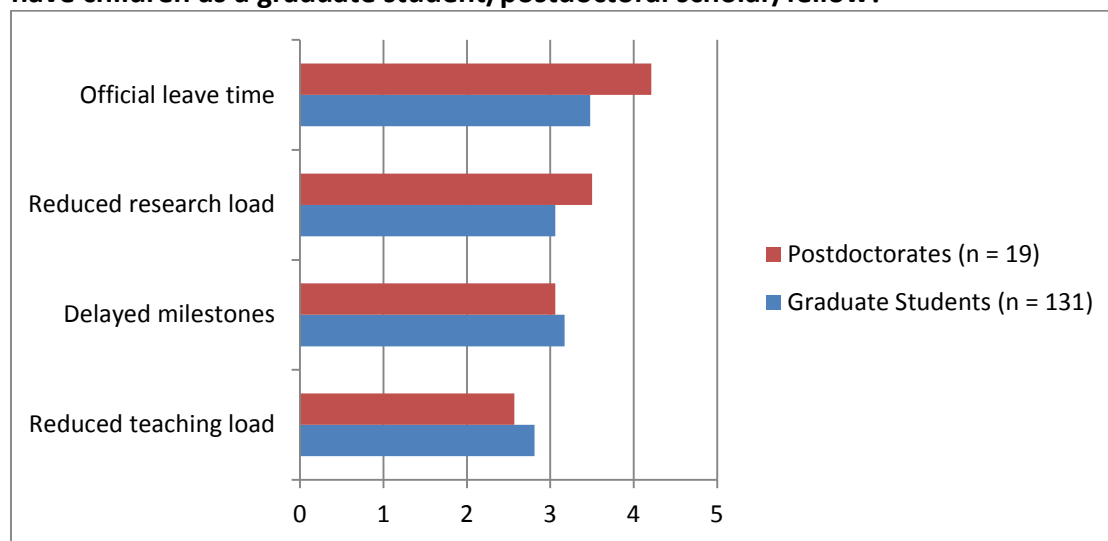
Figure 8. The impact of knowledge of a parent/family leave policy on the decision to attend Penn State by students who became parents while at Penn State



Bar graphs represent means of respondent responses.

Current parents were also asked how much reduced teaching load, reduced research load, delayed milestones, and official leave time would have affected their decision to have children as a graduate student, postdoctoral scholar/fellow. Current parents were most likely to choose “very much so” and “quite a bit” for each of the accommodations. Current parents most frequently chose official leave time as the accommodation that would have affected their decision to have children (45.4 percent of men and 56 percent of women).

Figure 9. How much would the following accommodations have influenced your decision to have children as a graduate student/postdoctoral scholar/fellow?



*Note: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Moderately, 4 = Quite a bit, 5 = Very much so
Respondent numbers fluctuate slightly by category of support and represent means of respondent responses.*

Survey Findings: Expectant Parents

Data analysis in the following section shifts focus from current parents to understand the experiences and perspectives of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who expect to become pregnant/parents while at Penn State. Although most survey participants indicated that they were not expecting a child within the next year (89.9 percent), 143 participants indicated that they were expecting a biological, adopted, or step-child within the next year.

Moreover, 15.4 percent of all survey respondents intended to have a child during their time as a graduate student/postdoctoral scholar/fellow. Thirteen percent of nonparents indicated they intend to become a parent during their time at Penn State. Of the current parents, 20.6 percent intend to have another child during their time at Penn State. Of note, however, is recognition that not all pregnancies are expected and thereby there is potential for a higher number of actual pregnancies than those that are planned.

Discussion of Parenthood Plans

Of the respondents who indicated that they are currently expecting to become a parent while a graduate student or postdoctoral scholar/fellow at Penn State, 72.7 percent *had not* discussed their pregnancy/adoption plans or any leave accommodations with their adviser or supervisor. While 16.1 percent discussed their plans somewhat but made no clear arrangements, only 8.4 percent discussed their plans and worked out a clear arrangement with their adviser or supervisor. Most respondents who expected to become parents while at Penn State *had not* discussed their plans or accommodations with anyone else at Penn State. Those who did were more likely to discuss these issues with their fellow graduate students or postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Importantly, participant responses to this question indicate that few respondents chose to discuss their pregnancy plans or broach the topic of leave accommodation, particularly with those in supervisory positions. Further data is required to better understand why graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows overwhelmingly choose not to discuss parenthood plans and whether these decisions are related to lack of knowledge about the guidelines, concern about an unsupportive response and/or belief that university culture would not support parental leave plans.

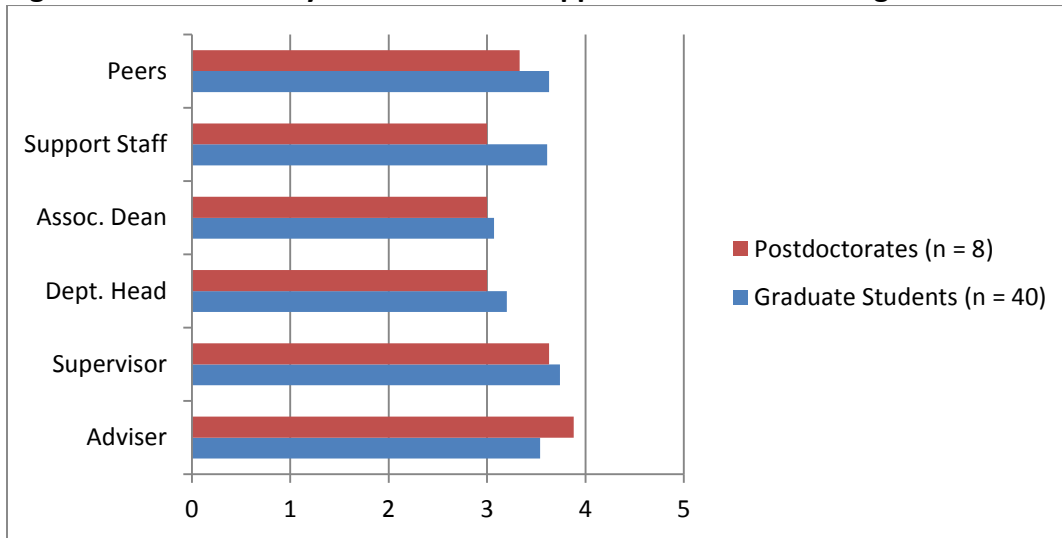
Concern About Discussing Pregnancy/Parenting Issues

Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows expecting to become parents were also asked to gauge their concern regarding raising the topic of pregnancy/parenting issues with their adviser, supervisor, department head, associate dean, support staff, and peers. Although 31.9 percent of those who responded to this question disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were concerned about bringing up these issues with their adviser, 36.9 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were concerned about bringing up these issues with their adviser.

Support for Accommodation Plan

Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows expecting to become parents were also asked to characterize the support they received from their adviser, supervisor, department head, associate dean, support staff, and peers for any pregnancy/parenting plans they had. Respondents were more likely to rate the support as good, very good or excellent than they were to rate the support as fair or poor. Nonetheless, 16.4 percent of those expecting to become parents characterized support from their adviser as fair or poor. Consistent with the above section of current parents' experiences of support, the data here represents an average across male and female respondents affiliated with a variety of departments. Individual experiences of (or lack of) support vary.

Figure 11. How would you characterize support from the following individuals?

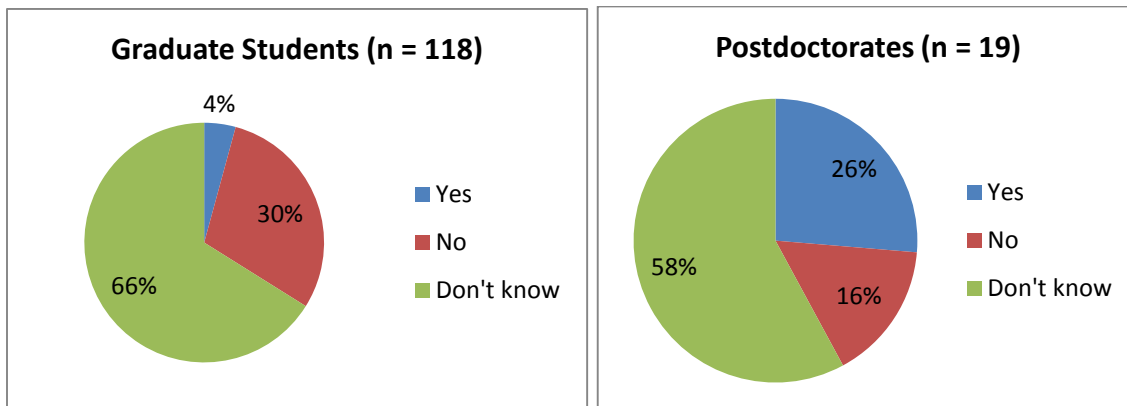


Note: 1 = Poor, 2 Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very good, 5 = Excellent
 Respondent numbers fluctuate slightly by category of support.

(Lack of) Awareness of Parenting Accommodation Guidelines

Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who expected to become parents were also asked about their knowledge of the existing parent accommodation guidelines. When asked whether there was any information about new parent accommodation in the graduate program’s student handbook or other student/postdoc orientation materials, most respondents who expected to become parents while at Penn State said that they “don’t know.”

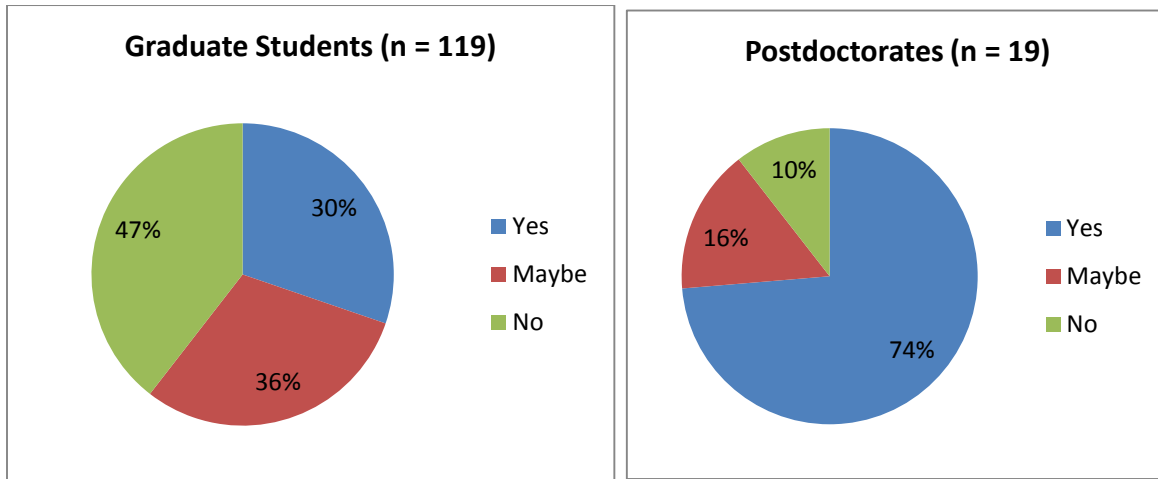
Figure 12. Was Parent Accommodation Information Available in Handbook/Orientation Materials?



Expectations Regarding Parenting Accommodation Policy

Of respondents who expected to become a parent while at Penn State, the majority of respondents indicated “yes” or “maybe” when asked if they expected there to be a new parent accommodation policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars at Penn State.

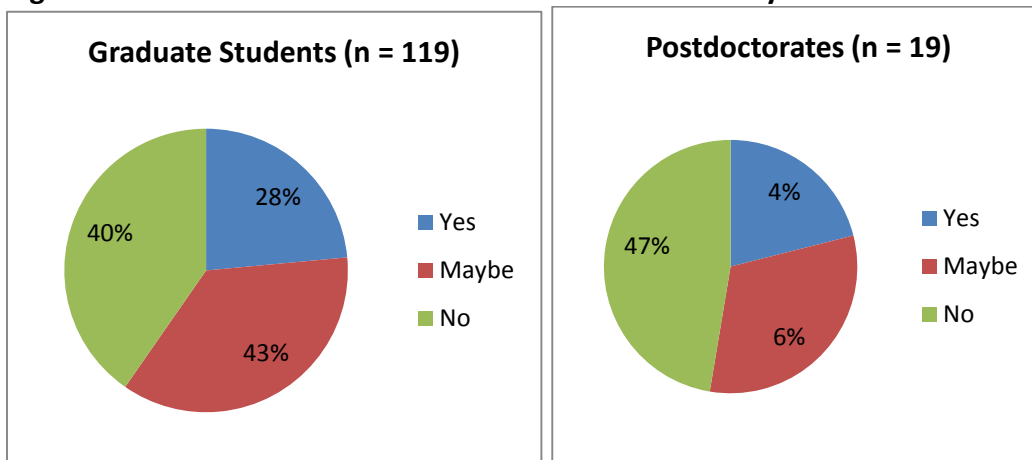
Figure 13. Whether Respondents Expected a New Parent Accommodation Policy at Penn State



Influence of Parental Leave Policy on Decision to Come to Penn State

When asked if knowledge of such a policy would have influenced their decision to come to Penn State, the majority of respondents who expected to become a parent said yes or maybe.

Figure 14. Influence of New Parent Accommodation Policy on Decision to Come to Penn State



Length of Leave Offered

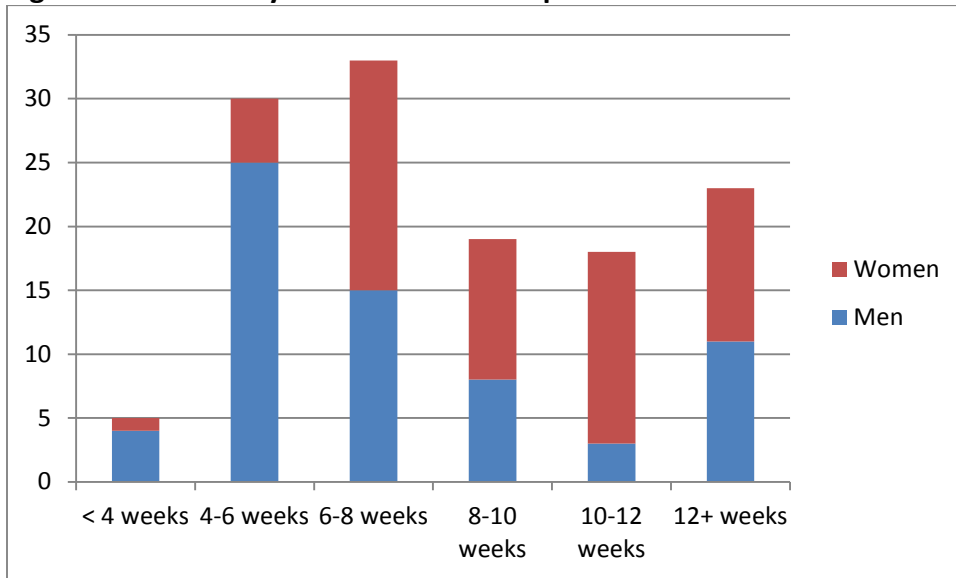
When asked how much time off has been offered to expectant parents, the majority (47 percent) who responded (n = 28) indicated no time off, followed by four to eight weeks (29 percent), one to three weeks (16 percent), and then twelve-plus weeks (8 percent).

Adequate Leave Length

However, when graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who expect a child were asked what they believed was an adequate amount of leave, the adequate amount of time off increased. As represented in Figure 15 below, women most often considered six to eight weeks

as adequate time off when the new child arrives, while expectant fathers most often indicated four to six weeks time off as adequate.

Figure 15. What do you consider an adequate amount of leave time?



Accommodations Offered

Survey respondents who expected to become parents were also asked to identify the types of accommodations that they had been offered. Very few graduate students ($n = 6-8$) and postdoctoral scholars/fellows ($n = 1-3$) who are expecting a child reported that they have been offered the following accommodations: reduced teaching load, delayed milestones, reduced research load, or some other accommodation.

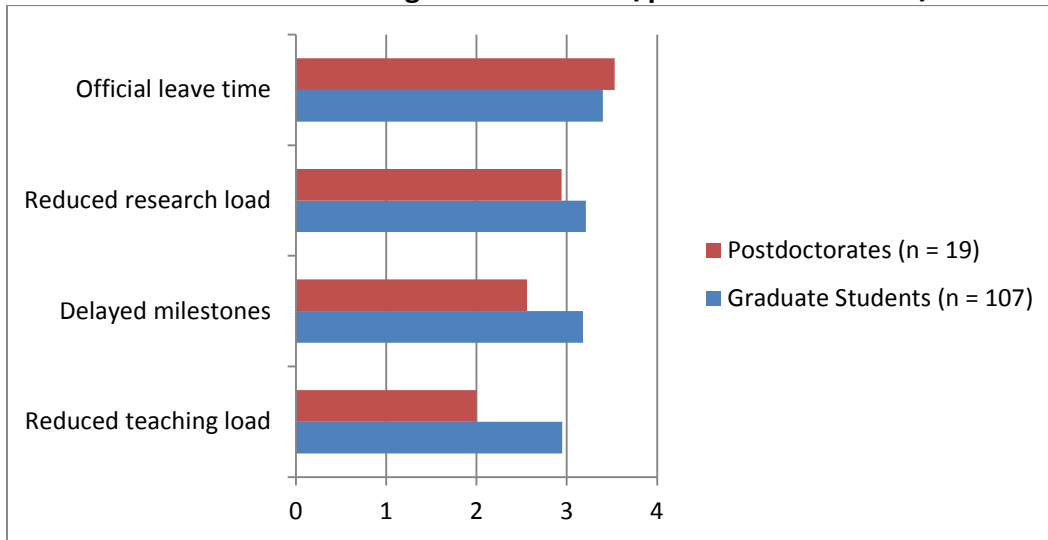
Type of Accommodations Considered Adequate

Penn State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars were also asked to identify the type of accommodation they thought would be adequate following the arrival of a new child. Of the 143 expectant graduate student parents, 39 indicated a reduced teaching load would be an adequate accommodation when the new child arrives, 59 indicated delayed milestones, and 58 indicated a reduced research load. Reduced research load was the most frequent accommodation considered adequate accommodation among postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

Impact of Accommodations on Decision-Making

Survey respondents were also asked how official leave time, reduced research load, delayed milestones, and reduced teaching would have affected their decision to have children while a graduate student or postdoctoral scholar/fellow while at Penn State. Participants rated official leave time as the accommodation that would have most affected their decision to have children as a graduate student/postdoctoral scholar ($M = 3.40$ and 3.53 , almost to $4 =$ quite a bit).

Figure 16. How much would each of the following accommodations have affected your decision to have children as a graduate student/postdoctoral scholar/fellow?



*Note: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Moderately, 4 = Quite a bit, 5 = Very much so
Respondent numbers fluctuate slightly by category of support.*

Limitations and Shortcomings of the Survey

Although these data represent a unique study, offering original data on the experiences and expectations of pregnant and parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at a premier university, we note two limitations to our report. First, only a subsample of postdoctoral scholar/fellows participated in the survey. Although the total number of participants was small and will therefore limit generalizability, the findings do reflect the experiences of current and expectant postdoctoral scholar/fellow parents. We do note that more information is needed to better understand the broader experiences of this important component of the University population. Second, and related, we believe the specific survey topic likely resulted in a higher number of participants responding to the survey who have vested interest in accommodations related to pregnancy and parenting. While we do not claim our findings generalize the experiences of all graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Penn State, they do illustrate experiences of students affected by parenting decisions and as such, we believe provide an important first step in understanding these issues and for moving forward.

Conclusion of the Survey Study

Study II offers some of the first base-line data for the experiences of current or expecting pregnant and or parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows to be collected within an institution of higher learning. Of particular note are the inconsistent experiences reported among graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in regards to the amount of time off they received, whether parental leave was paid or unpaid, and level of support they

received by key members within their department. In considering a formal parental leave policy, Penn State should take into account that the majority of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who responded to the survey expected Penn State to already have a formal parental leave policy in place, while also expecting a variety of accommodations to follow the arrival of a new child. Consistent with already established research (Smola and Sutton 2002), the data collected in Study II suggests that paid parental leave and accommodations are increasingly important to the millennial generation of employees. Penn State is currently positioned to meet or exceed its competitors in offering a formal parental leave policy that addresses the concerns of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

CONCLUSION

In Study I of this report, we offered analysis of where Penn State stands among its Big Ten competitors and two other notable research universities. The majority of universities analyzed in this portion of the report incorporate official parental leave policies for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, or consider graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows as employees covered under the Family Medical Leave Act. Although a direct comparison proved challenging due to the myriad ways universities classify graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows, Study I offers multiple opportunities to assess existing parental leave policies that Penn State might consider implementing in the future. Importantly, our comparison study demonstrates that trends in United States universities increasingly point toward more comprehensive parental leave policies not only for staff and faculty, but also for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

In Study II of this report, we presented the analysis compiled from a university-wide survey conducted in 2012–2013. Most basically, data from the survey provided baseline demographic information regarding the number of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows who are currently parents or who plan to become parents while at Penn State. Importantly, survey analysis points to a general lack of knowledge among respondents concerning the current University accommodations for parental leave. The survey also highlights inconsistent experiences among graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows concerning their pregnancy/leave plan and support for their pregnancy/leave plan. Moreover, survey respondents who expect to become parents provided consistent feedback regarding their expectations that Penn State should support a family leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows. Consistent with existing literature and trends among the millennial generation, survey respondents—including both men and women—identified multiple types of accommodations as important following the arrival of a new child.

The absence of formal University leave policy for pregnant and parenting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows creates risk for inconsistent experiences. Data gathered in this study's University-wide survey on this topic reinforces this concern. In the case of graduate students, the current Accommodation Guideline places decisions related to leave and accommodations in the hands of the department head. Such localized, internal decision-making fails to ensure that all Penn State graduate students will have knowledge about and access to the guidelines as well as an equitable and consistent experience. The absence of a formal leave policy also reinforces a power dynamic that places graduate students in a position contingent on the decision of an individual department head. Without formal policy in place, graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows rely on the decisions of individuals within the University as they make important personal decisions regarding family planning.

Finally, we also note the limitations when a formal policy is absent in regards to the potential for institutionalized discrimination. When a consistent, transparent policy on an issue such as parental leave is lacking, no oversight exists to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows at Penn State. Thus final

recommendations of this report indicate a strong need for Penn State to implement a comprehensive parental leave policy for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars/fellows.

Appendix A: Family Leave Policy Comparison

School	Websites
Illinois	http://policy.illinoisstate.edu/employee/3-1-12.shtml http://www.grad.illinois.edu/postdocs
Indiana	http://college.indiana.edu/graduate/office/leave.shtml http://college.indiana.edu/graduate/office/LeaveFAQS.pdf
Iowa	http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-student-life/graduate-student-parents http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/iii/22.htm#223 http://postdoc.grad.uiowa.edu/policies-and-benefits/family_leave
Maryland	http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/II-225.pdf http://www.smela.umd.edu/people/policies.html http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/catalog/other_academic_policies.htm http://www.smela.umd.edu/people/policies.html#postdocs
Michigan	http://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.30 http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/parental-accommodation-faq#q002 http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/GSA-resources-for-grad-student-parents.pdf http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/parental-accommodation-policy http://hr.umich.edu/tutorials/FMLA/eligibility.html http://hr.umich.edu/tutorials/FMLA/Pages%20from%20FMLA%20Tutorial%20Charts%20Research%20Fellows%20a q%2012-6-5.pdf
Michigan State	http://www.hr.msu.edu/timoffleave/supportstaff/FMLAEIq.htm http://www.hr.msu.edu/timoffleave/supportstaff/FMLAdefinitions.htm#def6 http://www.hr.msu.edu/timoffleave/supportstaff/sstimeoffleave_docs/FMLAPRESENT.pdf http://www.hr.msu.edu/timoffleave/supportstaff/sstimeoffleave_docs/FMLAPRESENT.pdf http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/complete_manuals_pdf/FacultyHandbook.pdf
Minnesota	http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Leaves/FMLA_FAQ.html http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Hiring/POSTDOCAPPOINT_APPC.html
Nebraska	http://hr.unl.edu/policies/familymedical-leave-absence http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/policies/maternity_medical_adoption.shtml
Northwestern	http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/leave/#family http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/leave/childbirth/ http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/disability-plans/claim-frequently-asked-questions.html http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/postdocs.html http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/disability-plans/extended-sick-time-faqs.html
Ohio State	http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/vii.-childbirthadoption-leave-of-absence.html https://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/empben/bluebook.pdf
Purdue	http://www.purdue.edu/policies/human-resources/vie3.html http://www.purdue.edu/hr/Benefits/benechart.html#Veterinary Interns and Post Doctoral Research Assoc./Assistant (1)
Rutgers	http://rutgersaaup.org/documents/guidelines-ta-gas-paid-family-leave-benefits http://www.rutgersaaup.org/our-rights-benefits/teaching-assistants-graduate-assistants http://rutgersaaup.org/sites/default/files/images/documents/TA-GA_Pregnancy_Parental_Leave_Guidelines_Sept2013.pdf http://rutgersaaup.org/sites/default/files/images/documents/tentative-agreement-post-doc-2012.pdf
Wisconsin	http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/gradstdntlife/familyresources.html https://grad.wisc.edu/postdocs/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2013/10/postdocs-benefits.pdf
Stanford	http://postdocs.stanford.edu/admin/how-to/leave.html http://gap.stanford.edu/5-3.html http://gap.stanford.edu/5-9.html http://postdocs.stanford.edu/admin/pdf-forms/LOA%20Form%20v2%202.pdf https://doresearch.stanford.edu/policies/research-policy-handbook/non-faculty-research-appointments/postdoctoral-scholars
MIT	http://odg.mit.edu/gpp/registration/changes/childbirth-accommodation-maternity-leave/ http://web.mit.edu/mitpostdocs/funding.html http://web.mit.edu/policies/7/7.5.html#sub4 http://hrweb.mit.edu/policy/4-5/

Appendix B: Family Leave Policy Coverage - Graduate Students

School	Policy or Guideline	Biol. Mother	Biol. Father	Adopt. Parent	Dom. Partner	Length	Stipulations	Notes
Illinois	When FMLA eligible	Y	Y	Y	N	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Need 12 months of service, at least 1250 hours worked in previous year Must use earned sick time first if it is available, when sick time is exhausted, can use compensatory or vacation time	While on unpaid FMLA leave, individual does not accrue credits. Individual accrues benefits while on earned sick leave or vacation.
Indiana	Family and Medical Leave	Y	Y	Y	Y	All: 6 weeks paid, if meeting minimum requirements Up to twelve months of unpaid leave of absence.	Minimum requirements: 37.5 FTE Student Academic Appointment in College and completion of 12 credit hours For paid leave, must maintain 6 credit hours of enrollment. For any leave for students past candidacy, must have at least one credit hour enrollment.	Extensions in milestones to be approved through university graduate school If both parents are graduate students, parents considered individually
Iowa	When FMLA eligible	Y	Y	Y	Y	All: 12 weeks, Paid and unpaid under FMLA	Must be FMLA qualifying	Advises students to work with adviser, contact their HR representative for paid and unpaid leave eligibility Requirements related to Graduate appointment. More specific information was not available.
Maryland	Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Policy	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 6 weeks unpaid after birth of the child Mothers: can	Need to be full-time enrolled student for one semester, Enrolled at time of application,	For Milestones, suggest working with adviser; policy enables to delay of coursework for 6 weeks and milestones by up to one semester.

						request 2 semesters unpaid leave of absence for those expecting	be making progress toward degree, be in good academic standing	Leave of absence stops the clock On leave of absence, student loses health insurance. If both parents are students, each student is treated individually.
Michigan	Graduate Student Parental Accommodation	Y	Y	Y	N	All: Up to 6 weeks paid, if receiving research or fellowship funds.	Full-time enrollment Must be making progress toward degree Paid if in teaching or staff position, contract stipulates pay Unpaid for students without financial assistance	Delays in degree and candidacy
Michigan State	FMLA, for employees	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Need 12 months of service, at least 1250 hours worked in previous year, per FMLA	Suggests working with adviser for Milestones and delays
Minnesota	Administrative Policy of Family and Medical Leave	Y	Y	Y	Yes, under different guidelines not related to FMLA	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Must have worked 1250 hours in the past 12 months per FMLA	Can use sick leave, compensatory time, or vacation for paid leave, which runs concurrently Graduate students do not frequently meet FMLA requirements, as stipulated by Administrative Policy of Family and Medical Leave
Nebraska	Maternity, Medical, and Adoption Leave	Y	Y	Y	Possible, if primary caregiver	All: Up to 12 weeks unpaid	Have worked 1,250 hours in the previous year	Offer extensions in teaching and milestones Can use vacation and sick time concurrently Also Policy for Faculty and staff

Northwestern	Childbirth Accommodation Policy, for mothers, Family Leave for others	Y	Y	Y	No Data	Mother: 6 weeks paid for mother Others: unpaid duration unclear	If under leave of absence, no stipend and student responsible for medical coverage.	Can delay course work and milestones
Ohio State	Childbirth/Adoption Leave of Absence	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mothers: 6 weeks paid; Fathers: 3 weeks paid Unclear for others	Must have completed two semesters of course work with 50% FTE, Progress toward degree	Available to each funded graduate student Number of children involved does not change length of leave
Purdue	Paid Parental Leave Policy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mothers: 240 Hours paid All others: 120 hours paid	12-month employment	Implemented in 2008 If both parents are eligible, leave time can be combined. Health insurance maintained Runs concurrent with FMLA leave Also for faculty and staff
Rutgers	AAUP-AFT Guidelines for the Implementation of Family Leave Benefits of the Collective Negotiations Agreement between Rutgers AAUP-AFT and Rutgers Administration	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mothers: 6 weeks paid recuperative leave and 8 weeks paid parental leave All others: 8 weeks paid parental leave	Must maintain full time credit status	Policy lists ways to maintain full student status through independent research credits Implemented in 2008 Union-implemented
Wisconsin								Suggests working with department. Each department has own policy

Stanford	Childbirth Accommodation	Y	Y	Y	No Data	Mothers: 6 weeks paid, up to two quarters unpaid Others: Eligible for leave of absence which is unpaid		Expected to be in residence Mothers can file for an automatic one-quarter extension to milestones
MIT	Childbirth Accommodation	Y	N	N	N	Mother: One month, one and one half months or two months paid	Full-time female graduate student	Clock stops Tuition and stipend available only to RAs and TAs

Appendix C: Family Leave Policy Coverage - Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows

School	Policy or Guideline	Biol. Mother	Biol. Father	Adopt. Parent	Dom. Partner	Length	Stipulations	Notes
Illinois	When FMLA eligible and considered a university employee	Y	Y	Y	N	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Need 12 months of service, at least 1250 hrs worked in previous year	<p>While on unpaid FMLA leave, individual does not accrue credits. Individual accrues benefits while on earned sick leave or vacation.</p> <p>Must use earned sick time first if it is available, when sick time is exhausted, can use compensatory or vacation time</p> <p>Differentiates between two kinds of Postdoctorates: Research Assistants (employees) and Fellows (not employees)</p> <p>The Postdoctoral website directs users to the Graduate Student Handbook and resources, so it is assumed that the same policies apply here.</p>
Indiana	Not eligible							
Iowa	FMLA eligible	Y	Y	Y	Y	All: Paid and unpaid under FMLA, 12 weeks	<p>Must be FMLA qualifying: 12 months employment</p> <p>1250 hours worked</p> <p>Can also combine with 15 paid leave and 18 days paid sick leave</p>	
Maryland	Research Assistants covered by Policy on Parental Leave and other Family Supports for Faculty	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 8 weeks paid	<p>Must have been employed in the last 12 months</p> <p>Must use accrued paid sick leave</p>	<p>Differentiates between two kinds of Postdoctorates: Research Assistants (employees) and Fellows (not employees)</p> <p>Implemented in June 2012</p>
Michigan	FMLA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	For FMLA	Must be a Salaried Fellow	Provision covers non-FMLA cases, but duration of leave is unclear

						eligible 12 weeks		Also suggests working with funding agencies if not Salaried Fellow Must use paid sick leave and vacation first
Michigan State	If considered employees, FMLA	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Need 12 months of service, at least 1250 hrs worked in previous year, per FMLA	
Minnesota	If FMLA eligible, Administrati ve Policy of Family and Medical Leave	Y	Y	Y	Yes, under different guidelin es not related to FMLA	All: 12 weeks unpaid	Must have worked 1250 hours in the past 12 months per FMLA	Can use sick leave, compensatory time, or vacation for paid leave, which runs concurrently Policy has existed in various forms since 1993
Nebraska	No information available							
Northwestern	FMLA	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 12 Weeks unpaid	12 months employment 1250 Hours worked in previous year.	Postdoctorates are considered staff
Ohio State	<u>Not eligible</u>							
Purdue	Paid Parental Leave Policy (also for Faculty Staff)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Mother: 240 Hours paid All others: 120 hours paid	12-month employment	Implemented in 2008 If both parents are eligible, leave time can be combined Health insurance maintained Runs concurrent with FMLA leave
Rutgers	AAUP-AFT Tentative Agreement for Post- docs 2012	Y	Y	Y	No Data	All: 12 weeks unpaid leave		Follows federal and New Jersey Law Suggests working with Supervisor for modifications
Wisconsin	Not Eligible							
Stanford	Maternity Leave and FMLA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	Mother: 6 Weeks Paid	Must have been employed for 12 months	Work reductions can also be applied

						Others: FMLA Eligible		
MIT	FMLA	Y	Y	Y	N	All: 12 weeks Unpaid	Must have one year's employment.	If Postdoctoral associate, considered staff Postdoctoral Fellows, not considered employees

Appendix D – Study II Survey Questions

Managing Work and Family: Views from PSU Grad Students and Postdocs

The purpose of this study is to better understand the issues around having a family while in graduate school and in a postdoctoral appointment. This survey is part of a research project being conducted by the Commission for Women at Penn State University and is being administered by the Penn State Survey Research Center.

The online survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. The Survey Research Center will keep your answers confidential and your name will never be connected to your answers. Your participation is voluntary; you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer and you may stop at any time. As part of our appreciation, you will have the opportunity to enter a drawing for a \$50 Visa gift card at the end of the survey.

Data from the survey will be used to help inform policies at Penn State and may be used for additional research purposes. By completing the survey, you are acknowledging that you are at least 18 years of age and consent to participate in this study. There are no known risks to participating and your responses will contribute to this research.

If you have questions or comments about this survey, please contact:

Dr. Kelly D. Davis, kdavis@psu.edu
Research Assistant Professor of Human Development & Family Studies

Thank you very much for helping with this important study!

Information about Yourself

We would like to ask some questions about you. Your responses will be completely confidential.

1. Only current degree-seeking grad students or postdocs at Penn State are eligible for this survey. What is your current status?
 - a. Full-time grad student (9+ credits per semester)
 - b. Part-time grad student (<9 credits per semester)
 - c. Postdoctoral scholar/fellow
 - d. Other _____

2. What is your gender identification?
 - a. Man
 - b. Woman
 - c. Other _____

3. Highest degree you had before enrolling in your current program:
 - a. Bachelor's
 - b. Master's
 - c. Ph.D. or other professional degree (e.g., M.D., Law)

4. What degree are you currently pursuing?
 - a. Master's
 - b. Ph.D.

5. What campus are you currently located at?
 - a. University Park
 - b. Great Valley
 - c. Harrisburg

6. What college/school are you in at Penn State? (select all that apply)
 - a. Agricultural Sciences
 - b. Arts and Architecture
 - c. Business
 - d. Communications
 - e. Earth and Mineral Sciences
 - f. Education
 - g. Engineering
 - h. Health and Human Development
 - i. Information Sciences and Technology
 - j. Liberal Arts
 - k. Nursing
 - l. Science
 - m. Interdepartmental Graduate Program
 - n. Other _____

7. How many years have you been in your current program/position at Penn State?

- a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-2 years
 - c. 3-4 years
 - d. 5+
8. Expected completion date for current degree/postdoc appointment?
Semester/Year_____
9. Which of these milestones have you completed in your current program? (select all that apply)
- a. Candidacy exam
 - b. Comprehensive exam
 - c. Required coursework
 - d. Thesis/dissertation proposal
 - e. Thesis/dissertation defense
 - f. None yet
10. Which best describes your next academic year?
- a. Continuing current grad program/postdoc appt.
 - b. Finishing current degree/postdoc appt, on the job market.
 - c. Will have completed Master's, begin working toward Ph.D. at Penn State.
 - d. Will have completed Master's, begin working toward Ph.D. elsewhere.
 - e. Starting new job.
 - f. Other_____
11. Are you supported by
- a. Graduate or Teaching Assistantship
 - b. Faculty research grant
 - c. Paying own way/loan
 - d. Other, please specify (e.g., fellowship)_____

The next few questions are about your current family life and expectations.

12. What is your current relationship status?
- a. Married
 - b. Not married, but living with partner
 - c. Single
 - d. Other_____
13. Is your spouse/partner affiliated with Penn State?
- a. Yes, grad student/postdoc
 - b. Yes, staff
 - c. Yes, faculty
 - d. No, not affiliated

- e. Yes, other _____
14. Are you currently a parent? Include biological, adopted, step, or foster child(ren).
 a. Yes
 b. No
15. Are you expecting a child (biological, adopted, step, foster, etc.) within the next year?
 a. Yes, I am expecting a biological child
 b. Yes, I am expecting to adopt a child
 c. Yes, I am expecting to foster a child
 d. Yes, I am expecting to become a step-parent
 e. No
16. What are your intentions about having or adopting a child in the future?
 a. Intend to have a(nother) child **during** your time as a grad student/postdoc
 b. Intend to have a(nother) child **after** your time as a grad student/postdoc
 c. Not planning on having a child in the future
17. If currently a parent, did you become a parent (through birth, adoption, marriage (step), fostering) while you were a grad student/postdoc at Penn State?
 a. Yes, I became a parent through birth
 b. Yes, I became a parent through adoption
 c. Yes, I became a parent through fostering
 d. Yes, I became a parent through marriage (step)
 e. No
18. What year did you become a parent while at Penn State? If multiple children, indicate most recent. _____

Personal/Family Medical Leave

In this section, we would like to ask about your experiences with personal or family medical leave while at Penn State as a graduate student/postdoctoral scholar or fellow.

1. Do you currently participate in any of the Penn State health insurance plans? This includes Accident and Sickness plan, GA/Fellow plan, or PPO Blue (postdocs).
 a. Yes
 b. No
2. Is your spouse/partner **currently** covered under **your** Penn State health insurance plan?
 a. Yes
 b. No
3. Is your child(ren) or other dependents **currently** covered under **your** Penn State health insurance plan?

- a. Yes
 - b. No
4. Are you covered solely or primarily under a different health insurance plan?
- a. Yes, my own policy
 - b. Yes, my spouse/partner's policy
 - c. No
5. While at Penn State, have you ever taken a personal leave of absence for a medical condition you had?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
6. Was this a leave of absence for pregnancy/childbirth?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
7. How long were you on this personal leave of absence?
- a. 1-4 weeks
 - b. 1-4 months
 - c. 5 months – 1 year
 - d. Over one year
8. Was the length of your leave adequate?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Did this personal leave require significant out-of-pocket expenses not covered by your health insurance?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
10. Select any of the following additional costs you incurred:
- a. Transportation
 - b. Child care
 - c. Medication
 - d. Long term care
 - e. Other _____
11. What accommodations did you receive for your medical leave? Select all that apply.
- a. Reduced teaching load
 - b. Delayed milestones
 - c. Reduced research load
 - d. None
 - e. Other _____

12. How would you characterize support from the following individuals during your leave of absence?

Supervisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Advisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Dept. Head	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Support Staff	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Peers/Colleagues	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A

13. Were you covered by any of the Penn State health insurance plans at the time of your medical leave? This includes Accident and Sickness plan, GA/Fellow plan, or PPO Blue (postdocs).

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. How satisfied were you with insurance coverage of your medical needs for that experience?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied

For the next few questions, we'd like to ask about any experiences you may have had providing care to others.

15. Are you currently a primary care-giver for any of the following people? A primary care-giver is the main person taking care of basic needs/day-to-day functions of living.

- a. Child
- b. Spouse/partner
- c. Parent
- d. Sibling
- e. Other _____
- f. No
- g. I share care-giver responsibilities equally with my spouse/partner.

16. How long do you expect to be in the role of primary caregiver?

- a. Less than 6 months
- b. 6 months -2 years
- c. More than 2 years

17. As a primary care-giver, how concerned are you about the possibility of taking an extended leave of absence?

Not at all concerned Slightly concerned Moderately concerned Quite a bit concerned Very concerned

18. While at Penn State, have you had to take a leave of absence to care for someone?
- Yes
 - No
19. What was the average time away from your student/postdoc responsibilities?
- 1-4 weeks
 - 1-4 months (i.e. a semester)
 - 5 months -1 year
 - Over 1 year
20. Was the length of your leave of absence adequate?
- Yes
 - No
21. Did you need to take more than one leave to care for this person(s)?
- Yes
 - No
22. Did this leave require significant out-of-pocket expenses not covered by health insurance?
- Yes
 - No
23. Select any of the following additional costs you incurred:
- Transportation
 - Child care
 - Medication
 - Long term care
 - Other _____
24. What accommodations did you receive for your medical leave? Select all that apply.
- Reduced teaching load
 - Delayed milestones
 - Reduced research load
 - None
 - Other _____
25. What accommodations would you have liked to have received for your medical leave? Select all that apply.
- Reduced teaching load
 - Delayed milestones
 - Reduced research load
 - None
 - Other _____

26. How would you characterize support from the following individuals during your leave of absence?

Supervisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Advisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Dept. Head	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Support Staff	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Peers/Colleagues	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A

27. Were you (and the person requiring care) covered by any of the Penn State health insurance plans at the time of your medical leave? This includes Accident and Sickness plan, GA/Fellow plan, or PPO Blue (postdocs).

- a. Yes
- b. No

28. How satisfied were you with the insurance coverage for that experience?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied

Expectant Parents

We'd like to know more about your experiences being an expectant parent at Penn State. By "expectant parent," we include having a biological child, formally adopting a child, and becoming a stepparent or a foster parent.

1. Are you intending to be the primary care-taker when the baby/child is born/adopted (include step or foster children not formally adopted)?
 - a. Yes, primary care-taker
 - b. No, my spouse/partner will be primary
 - c. I will share parenting responsibilities equally with someone
 - d. Other situation _____

2. Have you discussed your pregnancy/adoption plans and any leave accommodations with your advisor or supervisor?
 - a. No, not at all
 - b. Yes, worked out some of the details of the arrangement but not all
 - c. Yes, already worked out an arrangement

3. Have you discussed your pregnancy/adoption plans and any leave accommodations with anyone else here at Penn State? Select all that apply:
 - a. Fellow student/postdoc
 - b. Departmental staff
 - c. Department head
 - d. Other _____
 - e. No

4. What accommodations have been offered to you? Select all that apply.
- a. Reduced teaching load
 - b. Delayed milestones
 - c. Reduced research load
 - d. None
 - e. Other _____
5. What type of accommodations would you consider adequate when the new child arrives? Select all that apply.
- a. Reduced teaching load
 - b. Delayed milestones
 - c. Reduced research load
 - d. None
 - e. Other _____
6. How much time off would you consider adequate when the new child arrives?
- a. 4-6 weeks
 - b. 6-8 weeks
 - c. 8-10 weeks
 - d. 10-12 weeks
 - e. 12+ weeks
 - f. Other (e.g. a semester) _____

7. How much time off has been offered to you?

_____ days
 _____ weeks

8. Please indicate level of agreement with the following. I am/was concerned about bringing up pregnancy/parenting issues when I talked to my:

Advisor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Supervisor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Dept. Head	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Support Staff	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Peers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A

9. How would you characterize support from the following individuals for your pregnancy/leave accommodation plans?

Advisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Supervisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Dept. Head	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Support Staff	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Peers	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A

10. The University has a new Parent Accommodation Guideline for grad students and post docs implemented in 2008. How would you characterize your knowledge about this guideline?
 - a. I'm aware and have information about the guidelines
 - b. I'm aware there are guidelines but don't know what they are
 - c. I didn't know the University had such guidelines

11. Is there any information about new parent accommodation in your programs' student handbook or other student/postdoc orientation materials (e.g., on a website)?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know

12. Did you expect there to be a new parent accommodation policy for grad students/postdocs at Penn State?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No

13. Would knowledge of such a policy have influenced your decision to come to Penn State?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No

14. How much would each of the following accommodations have affected your decision to have children as a grad student/postdoc?

Reduced teaching load	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Delayed milestones	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Reduced research load	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Official leave time	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure

Current Parents

The next questions are about your experiences becoming parent of a child while a graduate student/postdoc at Penn State.

1. You indicated that you became a parent while you were a grad student/postdoc at Penn State. Did you discuss pregnancy and/or any leave accommodations with your advisor or supervisor during that time?
 - a. Did not discuss
 - b. Discussed somewhat, but no clear arrangement
 - c. Discussed, worked out a clear arrangement

2. Who else do you recall discussing your pregnancy/adoption plans and any leave accommodations with here at Penn State? Select all that apply:
- a. Fellow grad student/postdoc
 - b. Departmental staff
 - c. Department head
 - d. Other _____
 - e. Didn't talked to anyone else

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following: I was concerned about bringing up pregnancy/parenting issues when I talked to my:

Advisor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Supervisor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Dept. Head	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Support Staff	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Peers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A

4. How would you characterize support from the following individuals for any pregnancy/leave accommodation plans you had?

Advisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Supervisor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Dept. Head	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Assoc. Dean	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Support Staff	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Peers	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A

5. During your most recent pregnancy/adoption experience at Penn State, were you aware that there was a new parent accommodation guideline for grad students and postdocs?

- a. Last pregnancy/adoption was before 2008 (no guideline in place)
- b. Aware and had information about the guidelines
- c. Aware there were guidelines but don't know what they were
- d. I didn't know the University had such guidelines

6. During your most recent pregnancy/adoption experience at Penn State, did you request to use the parental accommodation guideline?

- a. Last pregnancy/adoption was before 2008 (no guideline in place)
- b. Yes
- c. No

7. There are many reasons why people may not request to the use the parental accommodation guideline. Please select the following reasons that best describe why you did not request to use the parental accommodation guideline.

- a. I did not know enough about the guidelines

- b. I felt uncomfortable requesting to use the guidelines
 - c. I did not need any of the accommodations suggested by the guidelines
 - d. I received accommodations that I felt were adequate without needing to request to use the guidelines
 - e. Other _____
8. During your last pregnancy/adoption experience (if at Penn State), was there any information about new parent accommodation in your programs' student/postdoc handbook or other orientation materials?
- a. Last pregnancy/adoption was before 2008 (no guideline in place)
 - b. Yes
 - c. No
 - d. Don't know, didn't receive materials
9. How much time did you take off when the child arrived?
- _____ days
_____ weeks
10. How much time off would you have liked to have had, if possible, when the child arrived?
- a. 4-6 weeks
 - b. 6-8 weeks
 - c. 8-10 weeks
 - d. 10-12 weeks
 - e. 12+ weeks
 - f. Other _____
11. Did you expect there to be a new parent/family leave policy for grad students/postdocs at Penn State?
- a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No
12. Would a new parent/family leave policy have influenced your decision to come to Penn State?
- a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No
13. How much would each of the following accommodations have affected your decision to have children as a grad student/postdoc?

Reduced teaching load	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Delayed milestones	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Reduced research load	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure
Official leave time	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so	I'm not sure

Childcare and Other Work-Family Resources

In this section, we would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences with childcare and other work-family resources at Penn State.

1. Which of the following resources do you use/have you used at Penn State? Check all that apply:
 - a. On-campus childcare
 - b. Student-parent childcare subsidy
 - c. Breastfeeding support program/campus lactation stations
 - d. Student family housing
 - e. Other: _____

2. If you have not yet used any Penn State campus resources, which do you think you might be likely to use in the future? Check all that apply:
 - a. On-campus childcare
 - b. Student-parent childcare subsidy
 - c. Breastfeeding support program/campus lactation stations
 - d. Student family housing
 - e. Other: _____

3. How satisfied were you with the campus resources you have used?

On-campus childcare	Not at all satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Quite a bit satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Childcare subsidy	Not at all satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Quite a bit satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Breastfeeding support	Not at all satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Quite a bit satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A
Student family housing	Not at all satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Quite a bit satisfied	Very satisfied	N/A

4. Please indicate any suggestions you have for improving the following campus resources: on-campus childcare, childcare subsidy, breastfeeding support, and/or student family housing. (Open-Ended)

5. If you do **not** use on-campus childcare, what do you use? Select all that apply:
 - a. Off campus child care center
 - b. Private home day care
 - c. Family/friend assistance
 - d. Stay-at-home spouse/partner
 - e. Other: _____
 - f. No children yet/currently expecting 1st child

6. If you do **not** use on-campus childcare, what are your reasons?
 - a. Too expensive

- b. Waiting list too long
 - c. Didn't know about on-campus options
 - d. Not available at my campus
 - e. Not convenient for me
 - f. Other _____
 - g. No children yet/currently expecting 1st child
7. If you do **not** use the student-parent childcare subsidy, what are your reasons?
- a. Didn't know about it
 - b. Not available at my campus
 - c. Ineligible when became parent (postdoc, or grad student no longer paying student activity fee)
 - d. Used previously but now ineligible (postdoc, or grad student no longer paying student activity fee)
 - e. Other _____
 - f. No children yet/currently expecting 1st child
8. If you do **not** use the breastfeeding support program/campus lactation stations, what are your reasons? Select all that apply.
- a. Didn't know about them
 - b. Prefer to pump in my own office/ personal space
 - c. Stations are too far away from my campus location (e.g., office or classroom)
 - d. Not at University Park campus
 - e. Not breastfeeding
 - f. Other _____
 - g. No children yet/expecting 1st child
9. If you do **not** use student family housing, what are your reasons?
- a. Didn't know about it
 - b. Prefer off campus housing
 - c. Waiting list too long
 - d. Not at University Park campus
 - e. Too expensive
 - f. Other _____

A Few More Questions for You

We have just a few more questions to better understand your background and current situation.

1. What is your age? _____
2. Which of these best represents your race/ethnic background? (Mark all that apply)
 - a. White
 - b. Black or African American
 - c. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - d. Asian
 - e. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

- f. Other (please specify)_____
3. Are you an international student/postdoc?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c.

 19. What is your annual household/family income?
 - a. Less than \$10,000
 - b. \$10,000 to \$14,999
 - c. \$15,000 to \$24,999
 - d. \$25,000 to \$49,999
 - e. \$50,000 to \$74,999
 - f. \$75,000 to \$99,999
 - g. \$100,000 to \$149,999
 - h. \$150,000 to \$199,999
 - i. \$200,000 or more

Remaining Thoughts (open ended for ALL respondents)

1. Please take a moment to let us know about any remaining thoughts, questions, or concerns you might have regarding your personal/family leave experiences here at Penn State.

GIFT CARD DRAWING

Thanks for agreeing to do the survey! As part of our appreciation, we are doing a drawing for a \$50 Visa Gift Card. You will need to enter your name and contact information to be in the drawing. Only the Survey Research Center will know your name and it will not be tied to any of your responses to this survey.

If you would like to be entered into our drawing, please check the box below:

Yes, enter me!

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