



## Best Practices for Female Faculty

Universities make a tremendous investment in faculty, often recruiting and hiring them at great expense. These faculty have highly specialized talents that are needlessly wasted when faculty spend time struggling in a bad environment, or leaving the university. Therefore, there is a great incentive to improve the working environment for female faculty. Strategies include -

1. Hire a critical mass of female faculty sufficient to impact the climate in your department, using the methods given below and any other approaches that are useful. (see section on Best Practices for Hiring the Most Qualified Faculty below)
2. The chair and other faculty leaders in the department should set a high standard in treating all faculty with respect, and promoting a positive environment for everyone. Get help if you cannot achieve this, either by appointing a chair's advisory committee that is made up from the faculty leadership whose task it would be to bring about change, or from within the university, or through a Site Visit or some other mechanism.
3. Communicate to everyone in the department why climate issues are important and how a welcoming and mutually supportive environment will help the department recruit and support the best students and faculty. The entire faculty and student body will play a part in determining the atmosphere in the department. Individuals need to be encouraged to take responsibility for their actions.
4. Develop explicit, clear and written policies for tenure and promotion, and make them available to all faculty.
5. Develop clear and reasonable policies for maternity leave and make them available to all faculty. We recommend, for example, that at a minimum a department should grant a semester leave from teaching when a female faculty has a child. In some cases, it may also be good to consider a "stop the clock" policy for untenured faculty.
6. Develop good mentoring practices for all faculty. Many women will benefit from formal mentoring because informal mentoring is often unavailable to them. Mentoring new female faculty can be done by both male and female faculty, and this may need to happen in order not to over-burden the existing female faculty.
7. Facilitate integration of new faculty, whether junior or senior. Establish an orientation program for new faculty, and advise senior faculty who will be their colleagues. Include new faculty in group grants and local collaborations, where appropriate. Follow up on new hires, including tenured faculty. Monitor satisfaction and progress of all faculty.
8. Create a welcoming environment for new faculty. Be aware that a woman is unlikely to feel awkward unless the other members of the department feels awkward about her. Strive for transparency in departmental governance by developing clear and written procedures for activities, by appointing an Chair's Advisory Committee to help understand faculty issues and to increase communication with the faculty, and by rotating faculty into leadership positions. Female faculty will do best in a well run department where all faculty are given opportunities to contribute to the department.
9. Include women faculty on key departmental committees and in leadership roles, to give them a voice in the department. Of course, such service should be rewarded appropriately. However, do not overburden a few female faculty by asking them to serve on too many committees. Either pick the committees strategically, or even better, hire more female faculty.
10. Be prepared for and welcome change. This is one of the great reasons to strive for diversity on the faculty. Different people with different backgrounds will have different styles. These different ideas will change your department for the better and make it more attractive to a diverse student body.
11. Make sure that your female faculty are being nominated for Fellowship in societies (e.g., the American Physical Society, as well as for internal and external awards.
12. Make sure that female faculty have access to the same space, matching funds, and hiring opportunities in

their efforts to grow their research programs as do the often better politically connected male faculty.

13. Recognize a job well done. Reward women faculty for formal and informal mentoring of faculty, postdocs and students. Use salary increases and/or relief from teaching as a reward for those who do contribute to the betterment of the department as a whole, and hence as an incentive for others to contribute their share.