Manage Your Career: Not Taking Time Off

From The Chronicle of Higher Education
By Ann E. Green
January 3, 2013

In May 2010, my 39-year-old spouse contracted a rare form of bacterial meningitis. After six days in an unresponsive state, 10 days in intensive care out of 19 total days in the hospital, four weeks of home care, and three months of additional physical therapy, he was able to return to work. As I look back on that ordeal, what strikes me about my own response is that I never considered taking advantage of the paid family medical leave offered by my university. I could have called my university's human-resources office and invoked the policy, but I didn't, even though I have spent much of my career advocating for a policy of paid family medical leaves on my campus. Instead, when my spouse needed my care, rather than take a leave I simply tried to do everything—be a full-time caregiver, college professor, and program director—while hoping for the best. During the period when Ted was unconscious, I had supportive colleagues bring me paperwork that I signed in the ICU waiting room. It didn't even occur to me that we had a paid-leave policy that would have enabled me to hand the work off to someone else. Apparently plenty of other faculty members don't take advantages of these policies, either. A recent article in The Chronicle on a survey of faculty members suggested that issues of work-life balance hampered their productivity and encouraged them to consider leaving the profession. The report, by Horizons Workforce Consulting, argued that faculty members are a valuable resource, and that programs such as emergency child care and family medical leave are crucial for a healthy and productive campus culture Read the full article.
Link to UNL faculty leave policies

Gender Equity and Rankings

From Inside Higher Education
By David Matthews for Times Higher Education
December 3, 2012

A university’s ranking in global evaluations should be based in part on measures of gender equality, according to a manifesto demanding equality of opportunity and pay for female academics. The manifesto, agreed on by 50 academics from Britain, Australia and Asian countries following a British Council workshop on the subject, also calls for institutions to declare how many of their professors, top researchers and students are female. In 2010, just 29 percent of researchers worldwide were female, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Katherine Forestier, a senior education consultant at the British Council in Hong Kong, said that this was due to discrimination and to family commitments thwarting women’s career ambitions. “Within their careers they have got to juggle teaching, research, administration and be productive at a time when they have family roles as well. [Juggling these roles] seems to be tougher in academia [than in other professions].” When deciding on promotions, universities looked at the “quantity ... rather than quality” of academic research, which made it difficult for female scholars who took time off to start families, Forestier said. The issue was something the British research excellence framework has tried to address by allowing women who have been on maternity leave to submit less research. Forestier said the next step would be to speak to ranking organizations and to present the proposals at upcoming events. It was a “very realistic” aim to get global rankings to incorporate measures such as the pay gap between men and women and the gender make-up of senior management, she added. A big problem was the lack of information on female representation and pay, and ranking organizations are in an ideal position to collect these data, she said. Read the full article.
Research-Based Practices for Evaluating and Retaining New STEM Faculty: A Workshop with Helen Moore

Join ADVANCE-Nebraska for lunch and a workshop with Helen Moore where she will present research-based opportunities to identify, debate and work to resolve subtle organizational practices that reinforce implicit biases in the sciences. We'll discuss how evaluation processes within academic organizations reproduce biases, consider whether STEM pedagogy is biased to such an extent that evaluations by students and peers are skewed and might need modification to best assess merit, and learn how implicit biases in science and its sub-fields influence our letters of reference and promotion and tenure reviews. Then, we'll examine some merit and research-based strategies for evaluating for excellence in STEM fields.

**Wednesday, January 23, 2013,**
**11:30-1:30**
**Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center Unity Room 212**
**Lunch will be provided. RSVP TO advance2@unl.edu**

Expert Scientist, Committed Mentor

**A Conversation with Dr. Jo Handelsman**

By Catherine Fontana, *Under the Microscope* (10/25/2012)

“Last year, Dr. Jo Handelsman, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor at Yale University, was selected by President Obama to receive the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring. To many, this might be the height of accomplishment. However, when asked about her greatest achievement, Dr. Handelsman energetically proclaims, "My students!" A renowned expert on the evolution of antibiotic resistance from bacteria, Dr. Handelsman has also made a career of helping others, particularly women and minorities, succeed in science.” (read more)