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Hey, That's Not Fair! A Comparison of Faculty and Department Head Fairness Perceptions of Pregnancy Leave Practices

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HEY, THAT'S NOT FAIR!
A COMPARISON OF FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT HEAD FAIRNESS PERCEPTIONS OF PREGNANCY LEAVE PRACTICES

A Thesis
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the Faculty of the Department of Psychology
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Master of Arts

By
Amy Rose Schirmer

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HEY, THAT'S NOT FAIR!
A COMPARISON OF FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT HEAD FAIRNESS PERCEPTIONS OF PREGNANCY LEAVE PRACTICES

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Hey, That's Not Fair!
A Comparison of Faculty and Department Head Fairness Perceptions of Pregnancy Leave Practices

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May 2005

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As more women enter the workforce, employers are increasingly faced with issues such as pregnancy leave. This study addresses perceptions of faculty pregnancy leave practices in a university setting. In part, this study is a replication/follow-up to a study conducted in 1995 on the perceptions of procedural justice when establishing a maternity leave policy. This study examined current pregnancy leave practices and faculty and department head perceptions of fairness of such leave to the pregnant faculty member and other faculty members.

Options used most frequently in 1995 are still the options most frequently used by department heads in 2005. Faculty and department heads were in agreement about the options they are most willing to use, option fairness to pregnant faculty, and option fairness to other faculty. Only one of the three options that required more effort from other faculty to cover pregnancy leave was perceived as less fair to other faculty by department heads and faculty members. That option was the one in which the faculty member received no compensation for covering classes. Department head ratings of willingness to use an option were related to their ratings of fairness to pregnant faculty and related to the perceived fairness of that option to other faculty members. Both department heads and faculty perceived the participative decision-making method to be
more appropriate for determining which option to use to cover pregnancy leave. The data from this research should prove useful to department heads, deans, and faculty members as they determine which options will be used to determine class coverage for pregnancy leave.
This study addresses perceptions of faculty pregnancy leave practices in a university setting. In part, this study is a replication/follow-up to a study conducted in 1995 on the perceptions of procedural justice when establishing a maternity leave policy. This study examines current pregnancy leave practices and perceptions of fairness of such leave to the pregnant faculty member and other faculty members.

The important distinction between pregnancy leave and maternity leave should be noted. Pregnancy leave is a medical leave associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions. Maternity (and paternity) leave is leave to attend to a newborn child. Furthermore, maternity leave is covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), which grants up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for family and medical purposes. Pregnancy leave by law is, at minimum, equivalent to leave granted for other medical conditions.

Pregnancy Leave as a Workplace Issue

More women are entering the workforce than ever before. The Department of Labor reported nearly 64 million women were employed in the labor force in the year 2002 (Chao & Utgoff, 2004). This number has more than doubled since 1970 when nearly 30 million women were employed in the labor force. With this continuing trend, new work issues related to women require the attention of employers and the subsequent development of new company policies.

One work environment that has witnessed a dramatic increase in women over the past two decades is academia. In college and university settings alone, nearly half
(42.7%) of the teachers are women (Chao & Utgoff, 2004). This increase in female employment highlights the need for policy development related to issues such as maternity and pregnancy leave. Moreover, academic policy development can be complicated due to unique factors found in academic settings (e.g., teaching for semester-long periods, tenure track). Women concerned with achieving tenure and professional respect in a university setting run the risk of losing both when they request time off for a pregnancy (Williams, 2004). Furthermore, faculty co-workers frequently are required to absorb the additional work burden resulting from pregnancy leave. The possibility of annoying colleagues due to additional workload upon pregnancy leave is nearly unavoidable. Although it is unfair to request women to schedule pregnancies during the summer months to cause less of a disruption, it is also unfair to expect colleagues of pregnant faculty to carry the burden while they are away.

Franco, Evans, Best, Zrull and Pizza (1983) conducted a study with clinical faculty and residents in a medical college and found pregnant faculty to be quite an inconvenience to their co-workers. Specifically, 80% of the respondents reported a pregnant faculty member as a cause of a personal inconvenience. Eight percent of the respondents reported this inconvenience as severe. Furthermore, 9% of the respondents reported a severe inconvenience to their department while 81% reported this department inconvenience to be minimal to moderate. Another important finding in the Franco et al. research was that 30% of the respondents perceived women in their childbearing age to be a hiring risk. With more women entering the workforce, this perception could become an illegal barrier to employment for young women.
The American Association of University Professors (AAUP, 2004) reported that the time that is the most demanding and intense in establishing an academic career coincides with a woman’s childbearing years. They also highlighted that even though many universities offer policies for leave for childbirth, the policies are underutilized due to the employees’ fear that use of such policies will be viewed as not professionally prudent (AAUP, 2003).

One suggestion the AAUP (2001) made to help accommodate pregnancy/maternity leave situations is to provide faculty with flexible policies. However, how do we achieve this flexibility while simultaneously providing fair circumstances for the co-workers of pregnant faculty? Although establishing a plan offering six weeks of paid leave may sound appealing to pregnant faculty, they may return to find different perceptions of their professionalism from their co-workers. Williams (2004) suggested the formation of an unusual attribution bias upon the return of a pregnant faculty member from leave. Specifically, she suggested that women, who before pregnancy were perceived as working on work-related activities while out of the office, may now be perceived as taking care of children regardless of their actual actions. This circumstance is one that may create a situation in which the pregnant faculty member feels she needs to prove herself and her professionalism in the academic setting.

Mason and Goulden (2002) found evidence illustrating the timing of childbirth as a critical issue in females’ success in academia. More specifically, they found a large gap in tenure achievement between men whose partners have babies early and women who have babies early. Mason and Goulden defined *early babies* as babies who join a household within five years after completion of his or her parents’ Ph.D. In contrast, *late
babies are defined as babies entering the household more than five years after the parents’ attainment of their Ph.D. Their findings showed that men whose partners have early babies are far more successful in tenure achievement than women who have early babies. This gap was not as dramatic for households with late babies. Mason and Goulden speculated that the findings regarding early babies are due to the state of early career advancement, and hence tenure achievement, women are faced with in this early stage of their career.

Halpert, Wilson and Hickman (1993) reported findings of negative stereotyping against pregnant employees and lower performance ratings for pregnant employees as compared to non-pregnant female employees. Reasons why such results are found can be contemplated. Is it because the woman is seen as more sensitive or delicate? Is it because the woman is seen as needy by requesting additional time away from work? Regardless of why pregnant women receive this discriminating stereotype, it creates a difficult obstacle for these women to overcome in addition to the tasks they already juggle.

Armour (2005) reported several factors that could be contributing to the increasing trend of discrimination against pregnant employees. These factors included: more pregnant women staying in the workplace, economic factors pushing for cheaper productivity, stereotypes about pregnant women, and employers’ concerns pertaining to special need requirements from pregnant employees. In combination, these factors create a new working environment requiring new considerations and alterations to make the workplace fair to all those who are employed.

Moreover, they reported that 55% of women who gave birth in 2002 were also employed in the workforce. With this large number of pregnant women in the workforce and growing amount of pregnancy discrimination claims, it is important that employees become familiar with established laws.

Congress has passed laws to help deter discriminating practices due to pregnancies in the workplace. In 1978, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) was amended to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This amendment addressed pregnancy discrimination, making it illegal for employers to discriminate against women due to pregnancy or childbirth. The PDA extended such discrimination to hiring, promotion, demoting, denial of benefits, and termination processes.

The Family & Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) grants employees 12 weeks of *unpaid* time off for family and medical purposes. Maternity and paternity leave, along with adoption are covered under this act. This law pertains to the time parents spend at home with their children either before or after a childbirth or adoption.

However, neither the PDA nor FMLA address the perceived fairness of these policies from the perspective of the pregnant employees' co-workers. There is no act or policy to ensure co-workers of pregnant faculty members will be considered when determining pregnancy leave policies. Co-workers experiencing an overload from a faculty members' pregnancy leave might feel their contributions are greater than that of the pregnant faculty; however, they likely do not receive additional rewards (i.e., they will experience inequity).

Shoenfelt (1995) studied faculty pregnancy leave practices and found that the five most favored options, as reported by department heads, for covering classes while
pregnant faculty were away included: hire a temporary instructor, have other faculty cover the course, leave without pay, team teach, and teach bi-term (course requiring half of the weeks a normal semester would entail). Hiring a temporary instructor was the option department heads were most willing to use, in addition to being perceived as the most fair to pregnant faculty and the most fair to other faculty. However, the most frequently used option was to have other faculty cover classes while the pregnant faculty was out on leave.

Leider (1996) examined perceptions of procedural justice when establishing a pregnancy leave policy in a university setting and found that pregnancy leave policies that involved the least amount of extra work for other faculty members were perceived as most fair to other faculty, while policies that involved the least amount of work for pregnant faculty was perceived as the most fair to her.

As discussed throughout this paper, the effects of such inequity and the lack of opportunity for employees to have voice in a decision-making process can greatly affect performance and group cohesion throughout organizational departments. Therefore, it is important to consider how co-workers might perceive actions taken to accommodate pregnant faculty members and what repercussions or additional work these co-workers might expect from these actions. Knowledge of faculty perceptions of fairness on various options for covering pregnancy leave could inform decision makers of acceptable avenues for policy development and, subsequently, result in decisions with greater perceived fairness. Considerations of distributive and procedural justice can enable us to effectively implement policies beneficial to both pregnant faculty and their co-workers.
Introduction to Organizational Justice

"...Justice is invisible until attention is focused on it by the experience or perception of injustice" (Sheppard, B., 1992, p. 2).

Justice concerns often arise in work environments. Justice creates a sense of predictability and control for individuals. Successful organizations in today’s business world have realized the importance of employee satisfaction. They realize satisfaction stems from more than the mere distribution of rewards. It may also hinge on the employees’ perception of fairness of organizational policies and practices. The construct of perceived fairness in the workplace is known as organizational justice. Perceived fairness is relevant to the treatment of employees, the allocation of rewards, and the opportunity for promotion and training, among other organizational outcomes. Regardless of the situation in which fairness is assessed, justice perceptions can have a large impact on many aspects of employee performance.

This paper addresses the construct of organizational justice, focusing on procedural justice and distributive justice. The primary objective of this project is to evaluate perceptions of justice related to faculty pregnancy leave practices for faculty members in a university setting.

Organizational justice is commonly described as consisting of two distinct types of justice: procedural justice and distributive justice. Procedural justice is concerned with the fairness of procedures that are used in determining outcome distributions (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng 2001). Distributive justice is concerned with the fairness of these outcome distributions (Colquitt, et al., 2001). Recently, it has been suggested that organizational justice is best conceptualized as four distinct dimensions: procedural and distributive justice (as previously mentioned), interpersonal justice, and informational
justice (Colquitt, 2001). Interpersonal justice refers to the extent to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect from those involved in implementing procedures or determining outcomes. Informational justice is concerned with the explanations provided to people that allow an individual to know why procedures and outcomes were utilized and distributed in a given manner. Colquitt suggested dividing organizational justice into these four components after finding evidence, in both a university setting and a manufacturing setting, that the addition of interpersonal and informational justice provide a better conceptualization of organizational justice than distributive and procedural justice alone. There is, however, debate among justice researchers regarding the independence of the four dimensions of justice. Some researchers have argued that interpersonal justice and informational justice are components of procedural justice (Colquitt, et al., 2001).

Distributive Justice

Perceptions of distributive justice, or a concern for the fairness of outcome distributions, can be found in a variety of social settings. All social groups must find acceptable ways to allocate group rewards. Bierhoff, Buck, and Klein (1986) identified three main principles for the allocation of rewards. The first principle, the equity or proportionality principle, refers to the allocation of rewards based on assurance of equal outcome-input ratios among individuals involved. In other words, this principle ensures people get out of a situation proportionately what they put into the situation. For example, if a faculty member covers a course load for a pregnant colleague on leave, this faculty member would expect to receive either recognition or compensation that is proportionate to their additional workload.
The second principle, ensuring allocations of rewards are distributed equally among group members regardless of the outcome-input ratio, is known as the equality principle (Bierhoff et al., 1986). Under this principle, everyone receives the same outcome regardless of his or her input. In other words, if one faculty member takes on an additional or a lesser workload, his or her outcomes will be equivalent to other faculty members’ outcomes.

Allocations made according to individual needs represent the third principle described by Bierhoff et al. (1986), the need principle. Rewards distributed according to this principle are based solely on an individual’s needs, regardless of his or her input.

The construct of distributive justice has been heavily grounded in Adams’ (1965) equity theory. The emphasis of Adams’ theory is on the importance of ratios that focus on individuals’ profits and investments in a given situation relative to the ratio of a comparison Other. These ratios stand in contrast to the common conceptualization of an absolute level of outcomes and assist in the determination of whether a given outcome is just. When the ratios are equal, the person is said to experience equity. When the ratios are unequal, the person is said to experience inequity. Adams’ (1965) theory suggests that individuals calculate this ratio as follows:

\[
\frac{\text{Person A’s rewards} - \text{Person A’s cost}}{\text{Person A’s investment}} = \frac{\text{Person B’s rewards} - \text{Person B’s cost}}{\text{Person B’s investment}}
\]

As Adam’s explains, an individual’s cost includes what that individual gives up in the exchange. For example, an individual might choose the exchange of a promotion in lieu of receiving an anticipated bonus. An individual’s investments are what that individual brings to the exchange. For example, an investment might include an individual’s education or experience. More specifically, individuals consider what they
receive or their outcomes proportionately to their inputs and compare that summation to another’s outcomes and inputs. For the sake of parsimony, we will refer to the individual experiencing either equity or inequity as “Person” and the individual to whom Person compares him or herself to as “Other” (Adams, 1965). If Person’s and Other’s input and outcome ratios are equal, Person feels equity, or justice, even if Person’s total outcome is less than Others’ total outcome (Adams). This rationale stems from the premise that an individual who has a higher input deserves a higher outcome than an individual contributing less input (Adams). However, if Person feels the ratio is not equal and that they are at a disadvantage, he or she will perceive an injustice and consequently experience dissatisfaction (Adams). For example, if two co-workers receive the same reward for completion of a project but co-worker one has spent more time and effort in completing the project, there would be an unequal ratio. Co-worker one would perceive an injustice. If, however, the injustice falls the other way and it was co-worker one who had contributed less, he or she would experience guilt (Adams).

Moreover, Adams (1965) noted the difficulty in resolving such “unjust” situations due to the complicating factor of Person’s perception of his or her own inputs and outcomes differing from Others’ perception of those same inputs and outcomes. In other words, justice is a social construct based on perceptions and does not necessarily mirror reality when individuals perceive either justice or injustice. One’s perception of an unjust act will elicit these feelings regardless of whether the situation was truly unjust. Bierhoff, Buck, and Klein (1986) noted many situations in which an individual can easily see a comparison Other’s outcomes without fully knowing the Other’s inputs. These situations leave the door open for the development of misperception and the appearance of unequal
ratios. We can only speculate what level of performance Others actually contribute to receive their given outcomes (Bierhoff, Buck and Klein, 1986).

When Adams’ (1965) theory is applied to a work context, we can view Person’s work input as including characteristics such as his or her education, experience, and training. Entities such as recognition, promotion, vacation time or a window office can be viewed as among Person’s outcomes. Unfortunately, when an employee feels he or she is at a disadvantage and experiences inequity not in his or her favor, employers might see a deficit in that individual’s motivation and performance. This decrement in motivation and performance may be an attempt for that individual to regain a balance in Person/Other ratios.

Walster, Walster, and Berscheid (1978) noted two ways in which individuals can restore equity in a situation. The first is described as altering inputs. This is evidenced in an employee’s lack of motivation and performance. Accordingly, individuals either increase or decrease their inputs to achieve equal ratios with their comparison Other. When Person perceives an inequity in favor of Other, Person’s attempt to equal the ratios could require Person to decrease inputs. In contrast, when Person experiences inequity in his or her own favor, he or she might experience guilt and increase performance to create justification for outcomes.

The second method that Walster et al. (1978) proposed individuals use to help establish equity in a given situation involves altering outcomes. They gave an example of when disgruntled workers organize a strike for higher pay. In this situation, employees are altering their outcomes through a behavioral approach. Walster et al. also suggested employees can alter their outcomes in a psychological way by distorting reality, which, as
discussed earlier, could be the source of the inequity in the first place. For an individual to distort reality to achieve equity, he or she might view the comparison Other’s inputs or outcomes as less or greater than he or she previously perceived them to be. This misperception allows the individual to create equal ratios and experience equity and felt justice.

Although well accepted, equity theory is not without its limitations. Leventhal (1980) highlighted three issues of concern regarding equity theory: the unidimensionality of equity theory, the consideration of only final distributions, and the exaggeration of fairness required in social relationships. Leventhal expressed concern for the unidimensionality of equity theory in that it utilizes only a merit principle. In other words, everything has a value and these values are weighed and measured to determine the feelings towards the given social situation. Equity theory suggests these values are the individuals’ only concern. Second, the focus on final allocations ignores the procedures leading up to these allocations (Leventhal, 1980). This focus can cause researchers and individuals to miss pertinent information regarding the given situation. Finally, Leventhal (1980) argued that the concern for justice is only one motivational force influencing individuals’ perceptions and behavior. To rely solely on fairness as individuals’ motivating influence would be an exaggeration of influence offered by fairness perceptions.

Consistent with the equity theory weaknesses identified by Leventhal, Greenberg (1990a) noted a change in research focus from what decisions were made to how those decisions were made. This refocused attention resulted in a more process-oriented theme in justice research and leads us to our next topic, procedural justice.
Procedural Justice

In the early 1980s, research in the area of organizational justice began to move from examining why outcome distributions were perceived as either just or unjust (i.e., distributive justice) to a concern for how the process of determining the outcome distributions might affect this perception, or procedural justice. Procedural justice differs from distributive justice in its focus on the fairness of procedures used to determine outcomes rather than the actual outcome distributions themselves.

Cropanzano and Ambrose (2001) offered two frameworks to help understand why individuals are concerned with procedural justice. The first framework, the instrumental model, suggests individuals are interested in procedural fairness out of concern for future outcomes rather than just short-term ones. The second model, the relational model, reveals that individuals are concerned with procedural fairness out of concern for socioemotional benefits such as dignity and self-esteem. Regardless of which model is used to explain perceptions of justice, the important point is that individuals do consider procedural justice as well as allocated rewards.

Leventhal (1980) presented the construct of procedural fairness as a two-step model. The first step of the model consists of identifying major procedural components found in an individual’s cognitive understanding of the allocative process (Leventhal, 1980). That is, the initial stage is to figure out what the individual views as determining factors for the given outcome distribution. The second step of the model consists of the consideration of six justice rules used to evaluate the procedural fairness of the given process (Leventhal, 1980). A justice rule is the belief that an outcome distribution procedure is fair if it satisfies particular criteria. The six justice rules determining whether
or not the procedure is perceived as fair are as follows: consistency, bias-suppression, accuracy, correctability, representativeness, and ethicality. Leventhal indicated certain rules are more important than others in a given situation. If one rule is thought to have a greater influence on an individual's judgment than the other rules, that rule is said to have more weight.

The first rule, the consistency rule, refers to the consistency of the application of procedures across individuals and over time (Leventhal, 1980). When a procedure is consistently applied, it ensures there has been no violation of set procedures. In addition, consistency enables employees to feel confident they will be treated the same as others in similar situations throughout the organization. In other words, consistency offers predictability for individuals that there will not be any sudden changes in established procedures.

The bias-suppression rule, the second rule listed by Leventhal (1980), is concerned with the prevention of personal self-interest and blind commitment in decision-making processes. This rule helps ensure individuals do not sway a procedural process to benefit themselves. Moreover, it allows individuals to avoid worrying about being wronged by others on a decision-making team as a gesture to even a personal score. This rule helps maintain procedural fairness by separating such decision-making roles from personal interests.

Accurate information is preferred over inaccurate information, for obvious reasons. The accuracy rule indicates the advantage of basing allocative processes on the best information and the most informed opinion one can gather (Leventhal, 1980). The perception of an unfair procedure is strengthened when one has reason to believe the
distribution of outcomes was based on inaccurate or wrong information. Leventhal highlighted the importance of accuracy in determining accountability. Accountability has two aspects, monitoring and sanctions. When violations of fair procedures are detected and properly punished, the perceived fairness of the procedure can be expected to increase.

The basis for the correctability rule is that when a mistake is made, it is important an acceptable mechanism for correction is available. This rule establishes that opportunities exist to modify or reverse previous decisions when necessary (Leventhal, 1980). Leventhal indicated that the perceived level of fairness of a given procedure will increase when there is an appeals process.

The representativeness rule holds that all phases of the decision-making process take into consideration the basic concerns, values, and outlook of the important subgroups affected by the outcome (Leventhal, 1980). Leventhal pointed out that a perceiver's judgment of the importance of a given subgroup might depend on a variety of factors such as the subgroup's size or prestige. This is important to note, considering different individuals might view groups differently. One individual may perceive a procedure as fair as regards his or her subgroup. However, another might perceive the procedure as unfair as regards the same subgroup. If the perceiver does not view the inclusion of the additional subgroup as important, the overall process may be perceived as unfair. Therefore, the perceived fairness of a procedure may vary from subgroup to subgroup. For example, if females do not think the inclusion or consideration of males is important for representative decision-making in determining how to cover pregnancy leave, the inclusion of males may cause females to perceive the whole decision-making
process as unfair. Operationally the meaning is that decision-making bodies need to ensure they include representatives from any relevant subgroups that might be affected by the procedural process. In this manner, procedures are more likely to be perceived as fair and to be more readily accepted by employees.

The sixth and final rule, the compatibility of procedures with the moral and ethical values of the perceiver, is known as the ethicality rule (Leventhal, 1980). If a procedural process is compatible with an individual's moral values, it is more likely that process will be seen as fair. Although Leventhal's six rules are general, they provide a framework for attempting to facilitate a fair procedural process.

Another important factor in the decision-making process is determining the method for decision-making and who will make the final decisions. In addition to the rules identified by Leventhal (1980), Vroom and Yetton (1973) identified a continuum of participation and five decision methods for groups and individual problems. Four decision processes for procedural justice have been adapted from this model: authoritarian, consultative, participative, and group. These processes indicate different methods that may be utilized when working in groups to arrive at a decision. The fifth process, delegation, is relevant only to individual decisions. The four group processes enable individuals to either have no say in the decision-making process (authoritarian), an opportunity to state their opinion about the decision-making process (consultative), an opportunity to participate in the decision-making (participative), or the opportunity to make the decision independently as a group (group).

The common factor varying across these decision processes is voice. Voice has been defined as a way in which employees attempt to influence organizational decisions
by communicating their opinions to their supervisors (Greenberg & Folger, 1983). People are likely to respond to procedures more favorably when they are able to express their views and opinions (Lind & Tyler, 1988); that is, people will view a procedure that allows two-way communication between decision makers and the individuals affected by the decisions as more fair. This two-way communication allows individuals to be a part of the decision process and could make them more accepting of the outcome distributions. Folger, Rosenfield, Grove, and Corkran (1979) referred to the fair process effect as a situation in which individuals experience greater satisfaction when they are able to have voice in the decision making process. In a work environment, this effect implies that, if they are concerned with procedural fairness, employers should allow the involvement of employees in the decision-making process. Even if the employees do not receive exactly what they want, they are more likely to accept the outcome if they have been given the opportunity to voice their opinion.

*Empirical Evidence for Distributive and Procedural Justice*

Researchers such as Van den Bos, Vermunt, and Wilke (1997) have provided empirical evidence that individuals rely on procedural justice to make inferences about distributive justice and rely on distributive justice to make inferences about procedural justice. Van den Bos et al. found support for a fairness heuristic in which the perceived fairness of a procedure and outcome depend more on the order information is presented than the actual fairness of the procedure or outcome distribution. Moreover, Van den Bos et al. found a correlation between distributive fairness and procedural fairness of .73. Colquitt et al. (2001) also found a strong relationship between procedural and distributive justice ($r=.56$). However, despite research indicating a correlation between distributive
and procedural justice, other research provides empirical support for the independent benefits of both procedural justice and distributive justice.

Both procedural and distributive justice correlate highly with beneficial organizational outcomes. Colquitt et al. (2001) found distributive justice to be highly correlated with outcome satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, and withdrawal (this relationship was negative). In addition, moderate correlations were found between distributive justice and system-referenced evaluation of authority and negative reactions (negative relationship). Colquitt et al. found procedural justice to be highly correlated with outcome satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust, and agent-referenced evaluation of authority. Moderate correlations with procedural justice were found for system-referenced evaluation of authority, organizational citizenship behaviors, withdrawal (negative relationship), and negative reactions (negative relationship). The more extensive research findings concerning procedural and distributive justice will now be discussed.

**Distributive Justice.** Lawler and O’Gara (1967) found support for equity theory in instances of underpayment in terms of effects on employees’ job performance and attitudes. Participants decreased their inputs in order to proportionately increase their outputs when they faced an underpayment situation. Specifically, participants increased their productivity while at the same time reducing their work quality.

Distributive justice has been found to correlate significantly with outcome satisfaction, rule compliance, and leader evaluations in a university setting (Colquitt, 2001). Colquitt also found distributive justice to be significantly correlated with instrumentality in a manufacturing setting. In this situation, instrumentality referred to the
ability to see a clear relationship between an individual’s outcomes and the desired reward.

Greenberg (1990b) found empirical support for equity theory in employees’ attempts to correct for inequity of underpayment by increasing their inputs in the form of stealing from the employer. When employees suffered a 15% pay reduction, they reported feeling underpaid, and they stole twice as much or more as compared to when they felt they had been equitably compensated.

Procedural Justice. Greenberg’s (1990b) research supporting distributive justice also found support for procedural justice. Specifically, an adequate explanation for a pay cut was found to moderate the tendency for employees to steal in order to restore equity; that is, employees did not experience as much distress from inequity when a reason for underpayment was carefully and thoughtfully explained. Moreover, as Greenberg pointed out, employers did not suffer as much from the pay cut as regards employee theft and turnover.

Similar results for explanations were found by Shaw, Wild, and Colquitt (2003). They found explanation provision to be significantly related to procedural justice and distributive justice, as well as with cooperation and retaliation (negative relationship). Furthermore, their research found adequate explanations decreased the likelihood of employee retaliation by 43%. Other findings suggested inadequate explanations could actually be perceived as more unfair than the provision of no explanation at all.

Research conducted in global markets has examined the effects of top management compliance with multinational corporate decisions. Kim and Mauborgne (1993) found top management to be more complacent with corporate decisions when
procedural justice rules were followed. Their findings, however, were contingent on the type of industry. Findings were stronger for companies operating in a global business market compared to those operating in a multi-domestic market.

Colquitt, Noe, and Jackson (2002) extended procedural justice research to team-based situations and found support for a relationship between a procedural justice climate and team effectiveness, as defined by team absenteeism and performance. This finding suggests that team leaders can foster team effectiveness by creating a favorable justice climate.

In sum, there is an abundance of empirical support for both distributive and procedural justice constructs and their benefits to the work environment. However, how do we apply these concepts to today’s organizations? Moreover, what can we expect in today’s changing work environment? Specifically this study focuses on an issue that has received increased attention as women become more prevalent in the workforce, that is, pregnancy leave.

*Present Study*

The present study investigates the perceived fairness of pregnancy leave in a university setting. In particular, the study focuses on two main concerns: what practices are currently being used within university departments and how department heads and their faculty differ in their perceptions of perceived fairness and willingness to use different policies for covering classes for pregnancy leave. As department heads are ultimately the decision makers in the development of policies within their department, it is important to consider what they believe to be fair processes. The perceptions of faculty, who will be the participants in the policies, are likewise relevant. This study will assess
both department head and faculty perceptions of fairness regarding various options for covering pregnancy leave. A questionnaire was administered to department heads and faculty members addressing perceptions of fairness to the pregnant faculty member and to other faculty members of options used for covering classes for the pregnant faculty member.

Department heads and faculty were asked to rate the appropriateness of the method used to determine which options to use to cover pregnancy leave. Five methods were adapted from Vroom and Yettons’ (1973) model. These methods were: autocratic, consultative, participative, delegated to individual, and delegated to group.

The preceding review of literature has outlined the importance of utilizing distributive and procedural justice in policy development and work allocations. In addition, the benefits and positive outcomes associated with the utilization of such concepts were discussed.

The following hypotheses will be tested:

Aside from the addition of web-based courses, alternatives for covering classes have remained relatively constant from 1995 to present. Therefore, rationally it is likely the options reportedly used to cover classes in 1995 will be similar to those reported in 2005.

Hypothesis 1: Options, in terms of most frequently used, for covering pregnant faculty classes 10 years ago will be similar to the current options most frequently used as reported by department heads in 2005.

According to Adam’s (1965) equity theory and distributive justice, unequal input/outcome ratios result in inequity and dissatisfaction. Therefore, ratios that warrant a
minimal payoff for other faculty’s significant assistance to pregnant faculty should be viewed as less fair. Rather, greater perceived fairness to other faculty is expected for options requiring less from other faculty. This perception would create a balance of input/outcome ratios, or equity, for all faculty members involved.

Hypothesis 2: Faculty and department heads will perceive options that require more from other faculty to be less fair to other faculty.

If faculty and department heads’ perceived fairness follow concepts of fairness in the literature, both faculty and department heads should have similar perceptions.

Hypothesis 3a: Faculty and department heads will be in agreement about the options they are most willing to use.

Hypothesis 3b: Faculty and department heads will be in agreement with regard to the options’ fairness to pregnant faculty.

Hypothesis 3c: Faculty and department heads will be in agreement with regard to the options’ fairness to other faculty.

If department heads are concerned with the overall satisfaction of faculty and well being of their department, they should be eager to use policies they perceive as fair.

Hypothesis 4a: Department heads will be more willing to use options that are perceived as fair to pregnant faculty.

Hypothesis 4b: Department heads will be more willing to use options that are perceived as fair to other faculty members.

Decision processes that allow for voice are perceived as more fair (Folger, et al., 1979; Lind & Tyler, 1988).
Hypothesis 5: Both department heads and faculty will perceive participative and consultative decision making methods to be more appropriate than either autocratic or delegated methods.
Method

Two, different questionnaires were administered to department heads and faculty. The department head questionnaire was administered to the population of department heads on a university campus. Logistically, both surveys could not be administered at the same time. The department head survey, which replicated the study conducted in 1995 (Shoenfelt, 1995), was administered first. Additional comments were made by the department heads and incorporated in the faculty questionnaire. The faculty questionnaire was administered to all faculty members at the university and was anonymous.

Department Head Questionnaire

Participants. A list of 47 department heads was identified by the office of the Provost. All 47 department heads responded to the survey. Of this sample, 18 were female and 29 were male.

Questionnaire Development. A questionnaire regarding current practices and opinions related to covering classes for female faculty during a pregnancy leave was administered to all 47 department heads. The Pregnancy Leave Practice Questionnaire, similar to a questionnaire developed in 1995 (Shoenfelt, 1995), was developed for this research. The options for covering class listed on the questionnaire were originally developed for the 1995 study from a focus group consisting of six female faculty members who had given birth (a total of 10 times) while employed as faculty members. For purposes of the current study, two additional options were added to the original 15 options (i.e., “other faculty cover classes as an ‘off load’ (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out” and “pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy”). In addition, an item was included asking the department...
heads what they considered to be a reasonable period of time off for pregnant faculty during pregnancy leave. They were also asked to rate the appropriateness of five decision-making strategies for determining pregnancy leave options.

Department heads rated 17 options for covering classes in terms of their willingness to use each option and the perceived fairness of the option to both the pregnant faculty member and other faculty members. Department heads indicated the frequency with which an option had been used in their department to cover pregnancy leave during the time period from January 1996 through December 2004. The department head Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Questionnaire Administration. The questionnaire, along with a letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and the current policy for pregnancy leave, was administered to the department heads through the Provost’s office. The questionnaire was administered in mid-November and the final completed questionnaire was returned the last week of January 2005. The department heads received the questionnaire in their personal mailboxes through campus mail and were asked to return the completed questionnaire to the Provost office through campus mail. Follow-up was continued until all department heads had returned a completed questionnaire.

Faculty Questionnaire

Participants. All 678 faculty members received the faculty questionnaire via campus email. Two hundred and twenty-one faculty members responded to the survey, for a response rate of 33%. One hundred and three respondents (47%) identified themselves as male and 117 identified themselves as females (53%); 114 (52%) respondents had received tenure; 106 (48%) respondents had not received tenure; 82
(37%) respondents had been professors for less than five years, 48 (22%) for five to 10 years, 32 (15%) for 10 to 15 years, and 58 (26%) had been professors for more than 15 years. One person did not respond to the demographic items. Sixteen percent had participated in covering or helping to cover a class for a colleague while she was on pregnancy leave; 40% of faculty who responded had no children; 26% had children before coming to the university; and 5% had children before coming to the university and had one or more children during her career at the university. Only 17% had one child during her career at the university, and 12% had two or more children during her career at the university.

*Questionnaire Development.* Faculty were asked to rate the same options for covering class as the department heads in terms of willingness to use and fairness to both the pregnant faculty member and other faculty member. Two additional options identified through responses generated by department heads were added to the faculty questionnaire, for a total of 19 options. The two new options included “Pregnant faculty member delivers when classes are in recess (e.g., summer, winter break)” and “Pregnant faculty member teaches summer school without pay to bank course loading for pregnancy leave.” The faculty Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

*Questionnaire Administration.* Administration of the faculty questionnaire was conducted online. The questionnaire was sent to all faculty members on campus via campus email. The questionnaire was sent out February 17th, 2005 and all faculty members were requested to complete the questionnaire by March 4th, 2005. Data were compiled electronically.
Results

Table 1 contains a summary of the faculty member ratings of the options for covering classes for pregnant faculty members before and after delivery. The options are listed in rank order of faculty member reported willingness to use.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTION</th>
<th>WILLING TO USE¹</th>
<th>FAIR-PREG FAC²</th>
<th>FAIR-OTHER FAC³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Faculty Cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offload (paid)</td>
<td>3.79 (1.02) 219 1</td>
<td>3.97 (1.04) 215 1</td>
<td>3.82 (1.06) 211 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Web Course</td>
<td>3.64 (1.10) 216 2</td>
<td>3.72 (1.08) 216 3</td>
<td>3.74 (0.99) 208 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire Temp. Instructor</td>
<td>3.64 (1.10) 218 3</td>
<td>3.83 (1.02) 216 2</td>
<td>3.71 (1.03) 211 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Teach</td>
<td>3.55 (1.07) 217 4</td>
<td>3.64 (1.02) 215 4</td>
<td>3.29 (1.06) 208 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Bi-Term</td>
<td>3.53 (1.07) 216 5</td>
<td>3.56 (1.13) 215 5</td>
<td>3.78 (0.92) 210 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Overload Pre-</td>
<td>3.01 (1.16) 217 6</td>
<td>2.81 (1.32) 216 13</td>
<td>3.55 (1.09) 213 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire Graduate Student</td>
<td>2.92 (1.17) 215 7</td>
<td>3.40 (1.16) 211 6</td>
<td>3.27 (1.14) 210 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Summer School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Pay to Compensate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise Indep. Study</td>
<td>2.86 (1.17) 215 9</td>
<td>3.10 (1.21) 213 7</td>
<td>2.80 (1.13) 210 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leave Without Pay</td>
<td>2.86 (1.32) 218 10</td>
<td>2.55 (1.26) 213 18</td>
<td>3.11 (1.12) 210 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical Leave</td>
<td>2.81 (1.28) 216 11</td>
<td>2.74 (1.28) 212 14</td>
<td>2.87 (1.23) 206 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Overload Post-</td>
<td>2.75 (1.14) 216 12</td>
<td>2.60 (1.28) 216 16</td>
<td>3.43 (1.11) 212 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise Intern/Pract</td>
<td>2.71 (1.14) 214 13</td>
<td>3.01 (1.19) 211 9</td>
<td>2.73 (1.12) 206 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theses Supervision</td>
<td>2.67 (1.14) 214 14</td>
<td>2.99 (1.16) 210 10</td>
<td>2.71 (1.14) 208 16</td>
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<td>Administrative Duties</td>
<td>2.65 (1.16) 214 15</td>
<td>2.94 (1.17) 212 12</td>
<td>2.67 (1.15) 209 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Reduction</td>
<td>2.63 (1.26) 216 16</td>
<td>2.95 (1.23) 213 11</td>
<td>2.60 (1.17) 209 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Work &amp; Pay</td>
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<td>2.57 (1.19) 216 17</td>
<td>3.12 (1.07) 208 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Faculty Cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Pay</td>
<td>2.55 (1.22) 219 18</td>
<td>2.69 (1.32) 214 15</td>
<td>1.94 (1.04) 212 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver During Recess</td>
<td>2.55 (1.38) 204 19</td>
<td>2.39 (1.35) 209 19</td>
<td>3.17 (1.11) 201 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Each option was rated on the following scale in terms of the department head's willingness to actually use this option to cover classes for a pregnant female faculty member in his/her department.

5 = Very willing to use. This would be included among my most preferred options.
4 = Willing to use. I would have no reservations about using this option.
3 = Willing with reservations. I see some problems with this option but would still use it.
2 = Not willing to use. I would object to using this option.
1 = Refuse to use. I would refuse to use this option under any circumstance.

² Each option was rated on the following scale in terms of perceived fairness to the pregnant faculty member:

1 = Extremely Unfair  2 = Unfair  3 = Fair  4 = Extremely Fair

³ Each option was also rated on the same fairness scale in terms of how fair the faculty member perceived the option to be to other faculty members in his/her department.
Table 2 contains reported use and a summary of the department head ratings of the options for covering classes for pregnant faculty members before and after delivery.

The options are listed in rank order of department head reported willingness to use.

Table 2

Summary of Department Head Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTION</th>
<th>#TIMES USED</th>
<th>WILLING TO USE</th>
<th>FAIR-PREG FAC</th>
<th>FAIR-OTHER FAC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
<td>MEAN (SD) N RANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire Temp. Instructor</td>
<td>63.73 (0.91)</td>
<td>46 1</td>
<td>4.22 (0.86) 47 1</td>
<td>4.11 (0.77) 46 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Faculty Cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offload (paid)</td>
<td>23.60 (1.03)</td>
<td>46 2</td>
<td>4.14 (0.97) 47 2</td>
<td>4.00 (1.00) 46 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Web Course</td>
<td>13.50 (1.09)</td>
<td>46 3</td>
<td>3.96 (0.98) 47 3</td>
<td>3.97 (1.02) 46 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Bi-Term</td>
<td>43.49 (1.10)</td>
<td>46 4</td>
<td>3.85 (1.00) 46 5</td>
<td>3.89 (0.98) 45 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Teach</td>
<td>63.30 (0.92)</td>
<td>46 5</td>
<td>3.61 (0.96) 47 7</td>
<td>3.09 (0.98) 46 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Overload Pre-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.27 (1.22) 46 6</td>
<td>3.25 (1.33) 47 12</td>
<td>3.64 (1.04) 45 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Overload Post-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.07 (1.12) 45 7</td>
<td>3.12 (1.27) 47 14</td>
<td>3.60 (1.05) 45 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave Without Pay</td>
<td>23.07 (1.42)</td>
<td>46 8</td>
<td>2.70 (1.37) 47 16</td>
<td>3.27 (1.32) 44 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Faculty Cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Pay</td>
<td>242.99 (1.14)</td>
<td>46 9</td>
<td>3.76 (1.28) 47 6</td>
<td>2.09 (0.98) 46 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbatical Leave</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.87 (1.38) 46 10</td>
<td>2.97 (1.42) 46 15</td>
<td>3.24 (1.39) 43 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Reduction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.79 (1.10) 45 11</td>
<td>3.28 (1.24) 46 9</td>
<td>2.60 (1.12) 45 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire Graduate Student</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.72 (1.08) 45 12</td>
<td>3.85 (1.08) 44 4</td>
<td>3.64 (1.14) 42 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise Indep. Study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.69 (1.09) 46 13</td>
<td>3.33 (1.20) 45 8</td>
<td>2.63 (1.19) 44 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.64 (0.93) 45 14</td>
<td>3.24 (1.21) 46 13</td>
<td>2.51 (1.04) 45 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise Intern/Pract</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.57 (1.12) 45 15</td>
<td>3.27 (1.23) 45 10</td>
<td>2.59 (1.17) 44 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theses Supervision</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.43 (1.02) 44 16</td>
<td>3.25 (1.22) 44 11</td>
<td>2.49 (1.10) 43 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Work &amp; Pay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.41 (1.11) 44 17</td>
<td>2.59 (1.28) 47 17</td>
<td>3.08 (1.22) 44 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deliver During Recess 2 not rated
Teach Summer School 2 not rated
Without Pay to Compensate for Pregnancy Leave

Each option was rated on the following scale in terms of the department head's willingness to actually use this option to cover classes for a pregnant female faculty member in his/her department:

5 = Very willing to use. This would be included among my most preferred options.
4 = Willing to use. I would have no reservations about using this option.
3 = Willing with reservations. I see some problems with this option but would still use it.
2 = Not willing to use. I would object to using this option.
1 = Refuse to use. I would refuse to use this option under any circumstance.

Each option was rated on the following scale in terms of perceived fairness to the pregnant faculty member:

1 = Extremely Unfair
2 = Unfair
3 = Fair
4 = Extremely Fair

Each option was also rated on the same fairness scale in terms of how fair the department head perceived the option to be to other faculty members in his/her department.
Hypothesis 1, that the most frequently used options for covering pregnant faculty classes 10 years ago will be similar to the current options reported as most frequently used by department heads in 2005, was addressed by correlating frequency of reported use of each option in 1995 with frequency of reported use in 2005. Hypothesis 1 was supported, as there was a significant correlation between the frequency with which an option was used in 1995 and the frequency with which it was used in 2005 \( (r = .90, p < .01) \).

Hypothesis 2, which states faculty and department heads will perceive options that require more from other faculty to be less fair to other faculty, was addressed by first identifying options as either high-demand (i.e., requires effort from other faculty) or low-demand (i.e., does not impact other faculty) for other faculty. Three of the 19 options were found to require effort from other faculty when used as an option for covering classes for pregnant faculty on leave. These three options were: (a) Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery, (b) Other faculty members cover classes, as an ‘off load’ (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out, and (c) Other faculty members cover classes while the pregnant faculty member is out (i.e., no payment). As we were interested in assessing the perceived fairness to other faculty of each option individually, Hypothesis 2 was tested by conducting \( t \)-tests between the mean ratings for each of the three high-demand options and the mean rating across all low-demand options (Faculty M = 3.16, SD = .39; Department head M = 3.23, SD = .57). This procedure was followed separately for faculty ratings and for department head ratings.
The test for faculty ratings for the option other faculty cover without pay (M = 1.94, SD = 1.04) supported Hypothesis 2 (t (211) = -17.04, p < .001). The faculty ratings for the option team teaching (M = 3.29, SD = 1.06) failed to support Hypothesis 2 (t (207) = 1.78, p < .09). The test for faculty ratings of the option other faculty cover with pay (M = 3.82, SD = 1.06) was significant, but in the direction opposite to that stated in Hypothesis 2 (t (210) = 9.09, p < .001).

The department head ratings for the perceived fairness of the options demanding more from other faculty followed the same pattern as the faculty ratings. The department head ratings for the option other faculty cover without pay (M = 2.09, SD = .98) supported Hypothesis 2 (t (45) = -7.87, p < .001). The ratings for the option team teaching (M = 3.09, SD = .98) failed to support Hypothesis 2 (t (45) = -.99, p < .33). The test for ratings of the option other faculty cover with pay (M = 4.00, SD = 1.01) was significant, but in the direction opposite to that stated in Hypothesis 2 (t (45) = 5.19, p < .001). In sum, we found only partial support for Hypothesis 2; that is, faculty and department heads rated only one of the three options requiring effort from other faculty as less fair to other faculty.

Hypothesis 3a, which states faculty and department heads will be in agreement about the options they are most willing to use, was tested by correlating faculty willing to use ratings with department head willing to use ratings. This correlation was significant (r = .79, p < .01), supporting Hypothesis 3a.

Hypothesis 3b, which states faculty and department heads will be in agreement with regard to option fairness to pregnant faculty, was tested by correlating faculty
fairness to pregnant faculty ratings with department head fairness to pregnant faculty ratings. This correlation was significant ($r = .88, p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 3b.

Hypothesis 3c, which states faculty and department heads will be in agreement as regards option fairness to other faculty, was tested by correlating faculty fairness to other faculty ratings with department head fairness to other faculty ratings. This correlation was significant ($r = .93, p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 3c.

Hypothesis 4a, which states department head ratings of willingness to use an option will be related to their ratings of perceived fairness to pregnant faculty, was addressed by correlating department head fairness to pregnant faculty ratings with department head willingness to use ratings. This correlation was significant ($r = .60, p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 4a.

Hypothesis 4b, which states department heads willingness to use an option will be related to the perceived fairness of that option to other faculty members, was addressed by correlating department head fairness to other faculty ratings with department head willingness to use ratings. This correlation was significant ($r = .80, p < .01$), supporting Hypothesis 4b.

Hypothesis 5, which states both department heads and faculty will perceive participative and consultative decision making methods to be more appropriate than either autocratic or delegated methods, was tested by one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). The ratings were made on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (completely inappropriate) to 4 (very appropriate).

For faculty member ratings, the effect for decision-making method was significant ($F (4, 864) = 209.31, p < .001, Eta^2 = .49$). Inspection of the lower and upper
bound of the 95% confidence interval for each mean indicated that the mean ratings for each of the five decision-making methods were significantly different from every other mean. For faculty members, the department head and pregnant faculty member working together to decide options (i.e., participative) was perceived as the most appropriate method ($M = 3.31, SD = .77$), followed by the department faculty making the decision as a group (i.e., delegated group) ($M = 2.54, SD = .99$). The department head making the decision after consulting with the pregnant faculty member (i.e., consultative) was rated as the next most appropriate method ($M = 2.13, SD = .72$). The pregnant faculty member independently deciding the options (i.e., delegated individual) was rated as the next to least appropriate method ($M = 1.74, SD = .77$). The department head independently deciding the options (i.e., autocratic) was rated as the least appropriate method ($M = 1.32, SD = .60$). Thus, the faculty member ratings of decision-making methods provided only partial support for Hypothesis 5.

The ANOVA for department head ratings likewise indicated a significant main effect for decision-making method ($F(4, 184) = 54.97, p < .001, \eta^2 = .54$). Inspection of the confidence intervals for the means indicated that the department heads and faculty member working together (i.e., participative) to decide options ($M = 3.29, SD = .79$) and the department head making the decision after consulting with the pregnant faculty member (i.e., consultative; $M = 3.12, SD = .75$) were perceived as the most appropriate methods. The department faculty as a group making the decision (i.e., delegated group) was rated as the next most appropriate method ($M = 2.21, SD = 1.04$). The department head independently deciding the options (i.e., autocratic; $M = 1.61, SD = .87$) and the pregnant faculty member independently deciding the options (i.e., delegated individual)
were rated as the least appropriate methods (M = 1.25, SD = .45). The department head rank order of appropriateness for the decision-making methods (participative, consultative, delegated group, autocratic, delegated individual) supported Hypothesis 5.

Both department heads and faculty members were asked what they considered to be a "reasonable length of time" for a female faculty member to be absent due to pregnancy and childbirth. Forty-four department heads responded to this item and reported a mean of 12.23 weeks (SD = 8.75) to be what they considered a reasonable period of time before returning to work. Department head responses ranged from 3.5 weeks to 52 weeks. There were a number of comments indicating that the exact amount of time should be decided on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the individual situation. One hundred and sixty-eight faculty responded to this item and reported a mean of 9.44 weeks (SD = 5.62) to be what they considered a reasonable period of time before returning to work. Faculty responses ranged from two weeks to 52 weeks.

Department heads and faculty members had the opportunity to write in comments on the questionnaire. Several comments made by the department heads indicated that each case needed to be considered on an individual basis to determine the best option(s) for covering the pregnancy leave. Several comments indicated that the university should acknowledge that within the university community in any given year there will likely be faculty members taking pregnancy leave and that funds should be budgeted for the costs of covering pregnancy leave. The department heads also noted the difficulty in finding qualified people to teach courses. Several comments inquired about adoptions. However, as pregnancy leave is related to the medical conditions associated with pregnancy, it does not include time off to be with a newly adopted child. Maternity leave, not pregnancy
leave, is appropriate for adoption. Finally, there were several comments that indicated consideration should be given to stopping the tenure clock during absences due to pregnancy. To the extent that this practice procedure policy is followed for other leave for medical reasons, it would be equally appropriate for pregnancy leave. The comments made by department heads may be found in Appendix C.

Comments submitted by faculty members were entered verbatim and may be found in Appendix D. A Q-sort to categorize faculty comments into meaningful clusters was completed by five master’s degree candidates in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Faculty member comments were grouped into two main categories: comments concerned with policy and procedure issues and comments concerned with value-based issues. The majority of faculty comments fell into the category concerned with pregnancy policy and procedure issues (40 comments). The most frequent comment concerned the availability or need for various options to cover classes for a faculty member on pregnancy leave (14 comments). Other subgroups that fell under the category of policy and procedure issue concerns included the concern for the decision method used to determine leave (6 comments), and whether or not pregnancy leave should be treated like other illnesses (8 comments). The comment category of value-based issues included issues with planning pregnancy (10 comments), faculty comments concerning student needs (3 comments), concern for the mother-child bond (2 comments), concern for the father (5 comments), and one comment regarding ill feelings towards faculty pregnancy and pregnancy leave.
Discussion

The present study investigated the perceived fairness of pregnancy leave in a university setting. In particular, the study focused on two main issues: what practices are currently being used within university departments to cover pregnancy leave for faculty and how department heads and their faculty differ in their perceptions of perceived fairness and willingness to use different practices for covering classes for pregnancy leave.

Hypothesis 1 addressed the similarity of options used by department heads in 1995 and current usage in 2005. Even though additional options such as web-based courses have become available for departments heads to utilize during a faculty members’ pregnancy leave, options that were available and used most frequently in 1995 are still the options most frequently used by department heads in today’s university setting.

Distributive justice research (e.g., Bierhoff, Buck, & Klein, 1986) and Adams’ (1965) equity research have indicated the organizational benefits of equivalent input/outcome ratios in the workplace as well as potential problems that may arise from inequity or unequal ratios (e.g., dissatisfaction, guilt). However, as Bierhoff, Buck, and Klein pointed out, one can never be sure of what another has contributed to receive a given outcome. Accordingly, the development of organizational policies that consider additional work requirements and perceptions of fairness of the employee, colleagues, and co-workers should to result in beneficial outcomes for the organization. Three options identified in our research require more effort from other faculty when used as an option for covering classes while a pregnant faculty member is on leave (i.e., 1) pregnant
faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during
delivery and recovery; 2) other faculty members cover classes, as an ‘off load’ (i.e., paid)
while the pregnant faculty member is out; and 3) other faculty members cover classes
while the pregnant faculty member is out without pay). Hypothesis 2 addressed whether
or not faculty and department heads found such options for covering pregnant faculty
leave to be less fair to other faculty. Both department heads and faculty rated the fairness
of these options in a similar pattern. Team teaching was rated as equivalent in fairness to
other faculty as the options that do not impact other faculty. This finding is inconsistent
with much of the distributive justice research. Team teaching requires more effort from
other faculty (more input) with little additional outcome. Perhaps the partial course
loading for team teaching was perceived as fair compensation for the other faculty
member’s effort or it was perceived that the additional course load would otherwise be
compensated.

Both department heads and faculty perceived the option for other faculty to cover
classes with no additional pay as less fair to other faculty. This finding is consistent with
equity theory and distributive justice research (e.g., Adams, 1965; Colquitt et al., 2001).
Other faculty members are being asked to contribute additional input with no additional
outcome.

The option for other faculty to cover with pay was not perceived as less fair by
department heads and faculty members. This finding is consistent with equity theory and
distributive justice research (e.g., Adams, 1965; Colquitt et al., 2001), as the additional
compensation was likely perceived as a fair outcome for the additional effort by the other
faculty member. This additional outcome for additional input should balance the equity ratio.

Hypothesis 3a, 3b, and 3c provided evidence that both faculty members and department heads are in agreement regarding their willingness to use options, the fairness of the option to pregnant faculty, and the fairness of the option to other faculty. These results make it apparent that faculty and department heads perceived fairness are consistent with conceptualizations of fairness and equity in the literature (e.g., Kim & Mauborgne, 1993; Bierhoff, Buck, & Klein, 1986).

Folger et al. (1979) and Lind and Tyler (1988) emphasized that employees perceive decision processes that allow for voice as more fair than decision processes with no consideration for employee input. Hypothesis 5 examined faculty member and department head perceptions of the perceived appropriateness of various decision-making methods. Specifically, decision-making methods that allowed for voice from the pregnant faculty member (i.e., participative and consultative) were compared to decision-making methods that did not allow voice (i.e., autocratic or delegated methods). Department heads were found to favor participative and consultative decision-making methods over delegated and autocratic methods. However, findings were different for faculty members. Faculty members favored participative and delegated decision-making methods over consultative and autocratic methods. Both groups rated the participative method, where the department head and pregnant faculty member decide together, as the most appropriate method for determining leave, providing support for the importance of voice in decision-making methods. Furthermore, faculty found the delegated decision-making method to be more appropriate than the consultative. One explanation for that viewpoint
might be the self-interest of faculty members. The delegated method allows for the voice of the department rather than the voice of the pregnant faculty member. Perceptions of fairness of affirmative action programs have been explained largely in terms of self-interest. Self-interest explains more of the variance in affirmative action perceptions than does racism or political ideology (Kravitz, 1995; Kravitz, et al., 1997). A delegated decision-making method provides faculty members with more influence in determining how a pregnancy leave would be covered and the ability to better protect their self-interests. Moreover, through their comments, faculty expressed concern about the options available to cover classes. Delegated decision-making methods allow faculty members greater opportunity to have an influence on the options utilized for covering classes.

Leventhal (1980) identified six justice rules that in themselves are an evaluation of procedural fairness. The consistency rule refers to the consistency of the application of procedures across individuals and over time (Leventhal, 1980). This rule was violated when department head comments stressed the importance of considering each individual pregnancy when determining which option should be used to cover classes. However, consideration of individual situations is very consistent with the construct of interpersonal justice (Colquitt, et al., 2001).

Comments suggest faculty members are divided on the issue of whether or not pregnancy should be treated as other illnesses. Some faculty raised the issue of women being pregnant by choice, and, consequently, the university should provide the same benefits and accommodations they would for a faculty member receiving optional surgery. However pregnancy leave, legally, must be treated in the same manner as other faculty sick leave.
Although several accommodations for covering pregnancy leave were examined throughout this survey, faculty members and department heads expressed their concern for either not having the resources required to cover pregnancy leave in the manner perceived as most appropriate or they expressed their concern for needing to evaluate each individual pregnancy leave situation to determine the most appropriate option. This research provides information on which options are most commonly used, which options are perceived as the most fair to pregnant faculty and to other faculty, and which options faculty and department heads are most willing to use. Comments suggest that both faculty and department heads appreciate the flexibility of determining which option to utilize on an individual basis.

**Implications**

The results of this study extend distributive and procedural justice theories by addressing the fairness of pregnancy leave practices in a university setting. Support was found for the importance of allowing voice from faculty in decision-making processes and for considering the additional workload of pregnancy leave on other faculty. Not only do administrators and department heads need to consider the fairness of pregnancy leave policies to the pregnant faculty member but also to other faculty that are involved in covering for the pregnant faculty member. Consideration of other faculty members in the decision-making process and allowing them voice in deciding the appropriate option to cover classes can help create the perception of a procedurally just climate and enables departmental effectiveness.

Academic department heads are at least somewhat analogous to managers in a business setting. Managers should be concerned with employee satisfaction, as
satisfaction can impact employee behavior, and, consequently, the overall effectiveness
of the organization. The same dynamic likely holds true in academic settings. Concern
for faculty satisfaction should prompt department heads to use policies that are likely to
be perceived as fair to the faculty in the department. Procedural justice climates in
organizations can foster team effectiveness (Colquitt, Noe, & Jackson, 2002) and
employee compliance (Kim & Mauborgne, 1993). Department head willingness to use an
option was significantly correlated with perceptions of fairness to other faculty and to the
pregnant faculty member. These results suggest department heads consider fairness to all
faculty members when implementing pregnancy leave practices.

This study provides data for informing effective coverage of faculty pregnancy
leave. Both faculty members and department heads perceived a participative decision-
making method to be the most fair method when deciding what options to use to cover
classes for pregnancy leave. Department heads and faculty members are most willing to
hire a temporary instructor to cover pregnancy leave, although a lack of department
resources might preclude this. Department heads reported using other faculty to cover
classes without pay as the most frequently used option. The indication is that pregnancy
leave cannot always be covered as department heads and faculty prefer or by the option
perceived to be the most fair. Therefore, although the results of this study indicate that
department heads consider the fairness perceptions of both pregnant faculty members and
other faculty members, they may not be able to implement an option that pleases
everyone.
Concerns and Future Directions

Survey research provides many logistical advantages that other research methods do not, such as reaching a larger and broader population. However, there are some disadvantages to survey research. Researchers cannot guarantee that the participant understands the questions being asked and correctly completes the questionnaire. In addition, researchers cannot guarantee the participant has directed his or her full attention to the questionnaire and is able to complete it without interruptions.

Many of the comments made by the faculty made it clear that they did not have a correct understanding of pregnancy leave. Many faculty confused pregnancy leave with maternity leave and wondered why men were not considered throughout the questionnaire. However, as mentioned previously, such leave for the father of a newborn child is covered under maternity leave, not pregnancy leave.

An additional concern for online questionnaire administration and participation is the perceived anonymity of the participant in such research. No matter how much the researcher stresses that the name of the respondent will be kept anonymous, some participants remain concerned about whether their responses will be revealed and what implications this could have for their job. Moreover, when dealing with a topic concerning policy changes and administration, participants can be even more hesitant to respond honestly for fear it may affect their job. Although this study was not conducted to create a new pregnancy leave policy, participants may be reluctant to believe that is the case. All of these factors can have an effect on the responses given by survey participants.
Moreover, with research pertaining to organizational justice, some researchers have emphasized the importance of participants being intuitively aware of the distinction between distributive and procedural justice (Greenberg, 1990). Greenberg (1990) suggested that not only is the theoretical distinction between the two concepts important but the participants’ perspective of the two concepts can also have a strong influence on the outcome of research in this area. Although the present study addressed both forms of justice, no attempt was made to distinguish the constructs to survey respondents.

The distinction between pregnancy leave and maternity leave is often confused. As previously stated, pregnancy leave is a medical leave associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions. Maternity (and paternity) leave is leave to attend to a newborn child. Maternity leave is covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), which grants up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for family and medical purposes. Throughout this survey, some of the comments made by the faculty and department heads made it clear that they were unaware of what confused this distinction. This problem can influence responses to the questionnaire items and the perceived fairness of options for covering pregnancy leave.

Future research conducted in the area of pregnancy leave in a university setting should be sure to clearly define and distinguish the difference between maternity and paternity leave. Also, specific information why such research is being conducted and the purpose for which the data will be used should be emphasized. Finally, it should be reinforced to respondents that their answers will be kept anonymous.
Conclusion

Academic departments have used a variety of options to cover classes for pregnant faculty members while they are out on pregnancy leave. As the academic workforce continues to become more diverse, it is likely there will be increasing instances requiring the need to cover pregnancy leave. The data from this research should prove useful to department heads, deans, and faculty members as they determine which options will be used to determine class coverage for pregnancy leave. Department heads can take into consideration data concerning willingness to use, fairness to the pregnant faculty member, and fairness to other faculty members of various options as they work to determine appropriate options to cover faculty pregnancy leave. Although each option found within this research is not equally viable for every department (for reasons such as financial and personnel availability), a basis for how to determine the most appropriate option for a given situation has been formed. Moreover, decision-making for determining how to cover pregnancy leave has been provided. The findings in this study suggest that there is no one best way to cover classes for pregnancy leave. Rather, the perceptions of pregnant faculty and other faculty should be considered in addition to faculty involvement in the decision-making process. We hope the data provided in this research will help departments make decisions that will be perceived as fair by all those involved.
References


Appendix A: Department Head Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire
Department: ________________________________________________

1. How many pregnancies have female faculty members in your department had during the time period of January 1996 through December 2004? (Include faculty pregnancies of individuals no longer in your department if they were pregnant during their time in your department and steps were taken to cover their classes.)

____ Number of female faculty who were pregnant, for a total of number of _____ pregnancies from January 1996 through December 2004.

2. Below are listed a number of options for covering classes for female faculty members before and/or after delivery. Please indicate, by each option, the number of times it has been used in your department from 1/1996 to 12/2004. If more than one option was used to cover a single pregnancy, please indicate all options used. If there have been no births to female faculty members in your department, please go to item 3.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester before delivery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester following delivery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches bi-term course(s) during the half of the semester in which she does not deliver.

_____ Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy.

_____ Other faculty members cover classes, as an “off load” (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out.

_____ Other faculty members cover classes, while the pregnant faculty member is out (i.e., no payment).

_____ Hire a temporary instructor to cover classes.

_____ Hire a graduate student to cover classes.

_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for research.

_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for administrative duties.

_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for theses supervision.

_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising practicum or internship.

_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.

_____ Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.

_____ Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.

_____ Maintain pregnant faculty member’s tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.
3. Below are listed the same options for covering classes. Using the following scale, please rate each option in terms of your willingness as department head to actually use this option to cover classes for a pregnant female faculty member in your department.

5 = Very willing to use. This would be included among my most preferred options.

4 = Willing to use. I would have no reservations about using this option.

3 = Willing with reservations. I see some problems with this option but would still use it.

2 = Not willing to use. I would object to using this option.

1 = Refuse to use. I would refuse to use this option under any circumstance.

____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester before delivery.

____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester following delivery.

____ Pregnant faculty member teaches bi-term course(s) during the half of the semester in which she does not deliver.

____ Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery.

____ Pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy.

____ Other faculty members cover classes, as an “off load” (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out.

____ Other faculty members cover classes while the pregnant faculty member is out (i.e., no payment).

____ Hire a temporary instructor to cover classes.

____ Hire a graduate student to cover classes.

____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for research.

____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for administrative duties.

_______ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for theses supervision.

____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising practicum or internship.

____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.

____ Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.

____ Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.

____ Maintain pregnant faculty member's tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.
4. Below are listed the same options for covering classes. Please rate each option with regard to both (a) how fair you think that option is to the pregnant faculty member and (b) how fair you think that option is to other faculty members in your department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairness to Pregnant Faculty</th>
<th>Fairness to Other Faculty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1---------------- 2--------- 3-------- 4-------- 5--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Unfair</td>
<td>Unfair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester before delivery.
- Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester following delivery.
- Pregnant faculty member teaches bi-term course(s) during the half of the semester in which she does not deliver.
- Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery.
- Pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy.
- Other faculty members cover classes, as an “off load” (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out.
- Other faculty members cover classes while the pregnant faculty member is out (i.e., no payment).
- Hire a temporary instructor to cover classes.
- Hire a graduate student to cover classes.
- Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for research.
- Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for administrative duties.
- Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for theses supervision.
- Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising practicum or internship.
- Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.
- Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.
- Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.
- Maintain pregnant faculty member's tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.
The Faculty Handbook states that "All faculty members are expected to meet their classes regularly and promptly at the scheduled time. The department head should be notified immediately of illness, death in the family, or other emergencies necessitating absence from the campus. Sick leave and annual leave are not provided for nine-month faculty appointments."

In addition, the Explanation of Academic Administrative Procedures for Sick/Medical Leave for Regular, Full-Time Instructional Faculty Members, which is included in its entirety in the cover letter, states that "Units and departments are encouraged to develop responses that address each faculty member's situation to insure that program needs are met, the welfare of the individual faculty member is considered, that undue burden is not placed upon other faculty and staff within the unit or department and that university and state regulations or requirements are fulfilled. The Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and Faculty Personnel must be informed of and included in the development and approval of these planned responses."

5. What length of time do you consider to be a "reasonable length of time" for a female faculty member to be absent due to pregnancy and childbirth? ________________

6. Please list any additional options for covering classes that you have utilized and were not identified by this questionnaire.

7. Please rate from 1 to 4 in terms of appropriateness the following five methods for determining which option to use to cover classes for a given faculty member on pregnancy leave. Please use the following scale: 1= Completely Inappropriate 2=Somewhat Inappropriate 3=Appropriate 4=Very Appropriate.

Rating

_____ The department head determines which option(s) to utilize to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member without consulting the faculty member.

_____ The department head consults with the pregnant faculty member, but the department head determines which option(s) to use to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.

_____ The department head and the pregnant faculty member decide together which option(s) to use to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.

____ The pregnant faculty member independently decides which option(s) to use to cover her classes while she is on pregnancy leave.

_____ The department faculty as a group decides the option(s) to be used to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.

8. Comments: We are interested in your comments concerning options for covering classes for pregnant female faculty members. Please list any addition comments you have in the space provided or on an additional sheet.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this important questionnaire! Your responses are critical to the success of this survey. Please return your completed questionnaire to Lois Hall in the Provost's Office, WAB 239, by December 1, 2004. Dr. Betsy Shoenfelt, Department of Psychology, will be analyzing the data from this survey. If you have any questions while completing this survey she may be reached at 745-4418 or by email at betsy.shoenfelt@wku.edu.
Appendix B: Faculty Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire
FACULTY PREGNANCY LEAVE PRACTICES QUESTIONNAIRE

Each full-time faculty member at Western Kentucky University is being asked to complete The Pregnancy Leave Practices Questionnaire. This questionnaire asks for your opinions related to covering classes for pregnant female faculty during the period of time they are away from work before and/or after delivery. As both male and female faculty are likely to be involved in covering classes for a pregnant colleague, it is important that BOTH MALE and FEMALE faculty respond to this questionnaire. Responses will be aggregated to obtain a description of faculty opinion on Pregnancy Leave Practices. Results from this survey will be combined with results from a similar survey completed February 2005 by department heads. Combined results will be made available to department heads, deans, and faculty to inform decisions regarding faculty pregnancy leave.

All individual responses are anonymous; individual respondents cannot be identified. Data are directly entered into an aggregate database in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences Computer Technology Center.

It will likely take you 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Please complete this questionnaire no later than Friday, March 4, 2005.

Please click on the following link to respond to the questionnaire:

FACULTY PREGNANCY LEAVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Your response to this questionnaire implies voluntary consent for participation in this survey.
Thank you for taking the time to respond to this important questionnaire! Your responses are critical to the success of this survey.

Dr. Betsy Shoenfelt, a professor in the Psychology Department, will compile the responses to this questionnaire. Dr. Shoenfelt is a licensed psychologist with more than two decades of experience analyzing questionnaire data. If you have any questions concerning this questionnaire, please contact Dr. Shoenfelt (745-4418 or betsy.shoenfelt@wku.edu).

Please respond to this questionnaire no later than March 4, 2005.

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY
THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW BOARD
Dr. Phillip E. Myers, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-4652

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
FACULTY PREGNANCY LEAVE PRACTICES QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following 5 demographic items. This information is requested because it is of interest to determine whether responses differ by demographic categories (e.g., do opinions of males differ from those of females; do opinions of those with experience differ from those without experience, etc.).

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Tenured: Yes No

3. Years at Western: <5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years >15 years

4. Have you participated in covering or helping to cover a class for a colleague while she was on Pregnancy Leave? Yes No
5. If you are female, which of the following best describes you during your career at WKU:
   a. Have no children
   b. Had child(ren) before coming to WKU
   c. Had children before coming to WKU and had 1 or more children during career at WKU
   d. Had 1 child during career at WKU
   e. Had 2 or more children during career at WKU

Options for Covering Class for a Pregnant Faculty Member

This questionnaire refers to 19 options for covering class while a female faculty member is on pregnancy leave. These options were generated by focus groups of faculty who have been pregnant while at WKU and from actual practices utilized to cover classes. Any “reduction” refers to an earned reduction, not a pretext for granting leave. Not all options are equally viable in every department (e.g., hiring a graduate student to cover class). Please rate each option based on its merit in departments where it would be viable. Also bear in mind that more than one option may be used to cover a given pregnancy.

Willingness to Use Ratings

1. Using the following scale, please rate each option in terms of your willingness to actually use that option to cover classes for a pregnant female faculty member in your department.

   5 = Very willing to use. This would be included among my most preferred options.
   4 = Willing to use. I would have no reservations about using this option.
   3 = Willing with reservations. I see some problems with this option but would still use it.
   2 = Not willing to use. I would object to using this option.
   1 = Refuse to use. I would refuse to use this option under any circumstance.

   _____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester before delivery.
   _____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester following delivery.
   _____ Pregnant faculty member teaches bi-term course(s) during the half of the semester in which she does not deliver.
   _____ Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery.
   _____ Pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy.
Other faculty members cover classes, as an “off load” (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out.

Other faculty members cover classes while the pregnant faculty member is out (i.e., no payment).

Hire a temporary instructor to cover classes.

Hire a graduate student to cover classes.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for research.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for administrative duties.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for theses supervision.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising practicum or internship.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.

Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.

Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.

Maintain pregnant faculty member's tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.

Pregnant faculty member delivers when classes are in recess (e.g., summer, winter break).

Pregnant faculty member teaches summer school without pay to “bank” course loading for pregnancy leave.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairness to the Pregnant Faculty Member Ratings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Below are listed the same options for covering classes. Please rate each option with regard to how <strong>fair</strong> you think that option is <strong>to the pregnant faculty member</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-----------------2-----------------3-----------------4-----------------5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Unfair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairness to <strong>Pregnant</strong> Faculty:</td>
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Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for theses supervision.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising practicum or internship.

Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.

Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.

Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.

Maintain pregnant faculty member's tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.

Pregnant faculty member delivers when classes are in recess (e.g., summer, winter break).

Pregnant faculty member teaches summer school without pay to “bank” course loading for pregnancy leave.

**Fairness to Other Faculty Ratings**

3. Below are listed the same options for covering classes. Please rate each option with regard to both how fair you think that option is to other faculty members in your department.

1-----------2-------------3--------------4--------------5

Extremely Unfair    Unfair    Neutral    Fair    Extremely Fair
Fairness to Other Faculty:

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester before delivery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches an overload the semester following delivery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches bi-term course(s) during the half of the semester in which she does not deliver.

_____ Pregnant faculty member team teaches with another faculty member who covers classes during delivery and recovery.

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches internet/web-based course the semester of the pregnancy.

_____ Other faculty members cover classes, as an “off load” (i.e., paid) while the pregnant faculty member is out.

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_____ Provide the pregnant faculty member with a course load reduction for supervising independent study/readings course.
_____ Grant the pregnant faculty member a leave of absence without pay.

_____ Have the pregnant faculty member take a planned sabbatical leave.

_____ Maintain pregnant faculty member's tenure track position but at reduced pay and workload.

_____ Pregnant faculty member delivers when classes are in recess (e.g., summer, winter break).

_____ Pregnant faculty member teaches summer school without pay to “bank” course loading for pregnancy leave.

**Logistical Concerns Ratings**

4. What length of time do you consider to be a "reasonable length of time" for a female faculty member to be absent due to pregnancy and childbirth? ______ Weeks

5. Please rate the following five methods from 1 to 4 in terms of their appropriateness for determining which option to use to cover classes for a given faculty member on pregnancy leave. Please use the following scale:

1= Completely Inappropriate 2=Somewhat Inappropriate 3=Appropriate 4=Very Appropriate

Rating:

_____ The department head determines which option(s) to utilize to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member without consulting the faculty member.

_____ The department head consults with the pregnant faculty member, but the department head determines which option(s) to use to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.
The department head and the pregnant faculty member decide together which option(s) to use to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.

The pregnant faculty member independently decides which option(s) to use to cover her classes while she is on pregnancy leave.

The department faculty as a group decides the option(s) to be used to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member.

6. Comments: We are interested in any additional comments concerning options for covering classes for pregnant female faculty members. Please list any additional comments you have in the space provided.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this important questionnaire! Your responses are critical to the success of this survey.
Appendix C: Department Head Comments to Open Ended Questionnaire Items
**Question:** Comments: We are interested in any additional comments concerning options for covering classes for pregnant female faculty members. Please list any additional comments you have in the space provided.

How to cover classes in a pregnancy situation must be worked out on an individual basis: due date, female faculty wishes, health, faculty situation in the department, what's considered "fair" by the faculty and others who might take over some of the classes is hard to predict and needs to be worked out when the situation arises. e.g. I wanted to take a leave without pay for my 1st child.

In some circumstances, the dean needs to be drawn into the discussion as well. In addition, complications during or after the pregnancy should be acknowledged as further elements to be considered as necessary although perhaps they would be considered under existing sick leave or family care leave policy.

Raising a family is a normal part of life-any university should have a plan based upon % female faculty in need or any year and budget for replacements. The faculty member should not be negatively impacted in any way for...

We need to consider fairness to students in the mix.

Small faculty size, lots of classes, finding external people qualified to teach courses is difficult. Need a visiting professor.

Also need to consider stopping the tenure clock during absences due to pregnancy/delivery.

Um...why do you use the phrase "pregnant female faculty members"? Do you know something I don't?

To use j-term or summer term before or after the childbirth as means to bank courses.

I have not experienced this situation, however, in general I believe fairness and compliance with legal requirements should guide decisions.

I think that adoption should be covered, as well as pregnancy.

How does adoption fit into this process?
Appendix D: Faculty Member Comments to Open Ended Questionnaire Items
Question: Comments: We are interested in any additional comments concerning options for covering classes for pregnant female faculty members. Please list any additional comments you have in the space provided.

I. Policy and Procedural Issue Comments

A. The importance of the pregnancy topic or policy/need for policy change

I think that this is a big issue. Women have to plot and plan and calculate their pregnancies around summer or winter break and it's just not fair. There are good options and I think the female faculty should have a role in deciding how she will cover her classes or make up work. But, she should never be asked to lose pay or rank to have a child. If the people in the department complain -- tough! Get rid of them!

Without a clear policy, there is the potential for great abuse within departments, especially among those who do not recognize the importance of the perinatal period on infant health and development. I also believe that WKU should go a step farther and declare through policies that we are family friendly. Examples include a policy on breast milk collection and storage, job-sharing, etc. Also, I think a woman (or man) should never have to apologize or be made to feel inadequate professionally for putting their family responsibilities first. Thank you for conducting this survey.

I have heard many grumblings from various female faculty members about the current state of maternity leave at Western, so I am very grateful that there is some research being done in this area that will hopefully remedy the situation.

WKU needs a pregnancy policy, but most of the ideas expressed in this survey are ludicrous.

Parental leave for both men and women should be regarded as a universal human right, as it is in most other affluent Western societies. The 12 weeks of unpaid leave currently allowed under the Family and Medical Leave Act is woefully inadequate. I would favor at least 12 weeks of paid leave with the possibility of additional unpaid leave of one year. I think the University needs to take significant steps to make Western a more family friendly working environment, including a policy that outlines for maternity leave.

This is an important issues. I planned my pregnancy to deliver during summer and prayed for no complications and preterm labor. Other countries allow leave for new fathers and mothers negotiated based upon a policy and whether mother breast feeds. Definitely do not leave up to department heads alone. I know of a faculty member who actually had to quit and then hope a position would reappear to allow her to rejoin the faculty in her department! Your survey wouldn't allow my actual answer in number of
weeks - we should have a range available dependent upon birth of a healthy baby, support services available etc.

We should have paid pregnancy leave as a right on a European model or that of more progressive companies in the United States.

This might sound idealistic, but I think health insurance companies should pick up the tab associated with pregnancy and delivery. A pregnant faculty member should not feel "punished" for being pregnant. Moreover, she should not feel that her pregnancy is a "curse" for the whole university community. I think she should be helped both financially and work load wise. It would be nice if the university had a pool of money set aside to help a faculty member's pregnancy and delivery without putting a burden on fellow faculty members or the department. Finding "excuses" (such as "banking summer teaching," "team teaching," "giving her research time") to help her out is really not the solution and will lead to tensions between the pregnant faculty member and other faculty eventually. Having the department head to decide the "fate" of the pregnant faculty member is extremely authoritarian, and in mind this should be a democratic decision. There should be some university system in place that helps out with pregnancies and deliveries.

It appears that paid leave for a period was not an option among the 19 we rated, nor was the option to take the semester at full pay with a half load. Some of our benchmarks do the latter (see App. State). I think it is embarrassing that WKU has no policy for faculty, neither pregnancy nor maternity. It says we are very old-fashioned. I would like to know how we measure up to our benchmarks on this issue.

I do not have any children but in a few years I may decide to have some so this issue is very important to me. I teach at the community college and the options for taking time off for "research" or "thesis" work is not applicable for us.

**B. Concern for the decision method used to determine leave**

I don't think policies should refer to "the pregnant female." Rather I think there should be a general bottom line policy for all full time tenure tract faculty who become pregnant and deliver during the Fall or Spring term.

Appropriateness of Methods for Determining Options should be covered by university HR policy and not governed AT ALL at the department level.

Faculty member should be allowed as much input as possible

As with other such contingencies faculty peers and students are impacted most directly and bear the burden. It is important that they be heard but also that they influence the decision. In my experience faculty peers are very understanding and generous at such times.
All affected parties (the pregnant faculty member, the department head, and any other faculty who would be asked to cover classes for the pregnant faculty member) should be fully involved in the decision of the appropriate option for covering classes.

The individual departments should not be making decisions independently. The university should have a policy that would apply to ALL university employees.

C. Whether or not pregnancy leave should be treated like other illnesses

Having never been pregnant - and glad of it - I really can't speak for pregnant faculty, but I am of the opinion that pregnancy should be treated the same way as any other illness, injury, or surgery for which any male or female faculty would need to be off from work.

Same procedure should apply to other faculty illnesses

Perhaps pregnancy is, but this survey makes me wonder why pregnancy --especially delivery and post delivery--isn't treated like other "long term" recovery medical procedures. Do we not have some basic policy/procedure for folks who, for example, have heart surgery and then have a considerable recovery time--why doesn't pregnancy fall under these types of guidelines?

I have no problem with departments working with pregnant faculty members, just as they work with faculty members needing sick leave/surgical leave, to re-arrange load in a manner that is fair both to the pregnant faculty member and to her departmental colleagues. There have been more sick members of my department (usually surgical cases requiring significant recovery time or chemotherapy patients) than pregnant women (in fact, I'm the only one), but overloading and off-loading to colleagues who are then compensated for helping out seems to work fairly for everyone and promotes collegial solutions/departmental harmony.

I treat this much as I would any other illness. It is a temporary disability, albeit a voluntary one, so I would expect that we are ethically and legally required to provide a female member who is pregnant with the same policies/procedures as a colleague who has had an elective surgery or accident with limited time frames.

How do we cover for other "sick" time for faculty? The issues are much the same as addressed in this survey. This MUST be addressed in the interest of fairness to ALL FACULTY--not just those needing pregnancy leave.

Since childbirth is strictly related to being a woman, I feel it is very unfair to the male faculty to have to cover a pregnant females classes without some form of compensation. Perhaps female faculty would agree to cover each other during these times, then it would be fair to the male faculty. Pregnancy is not like any other illness that could effect either gender. In my humble opinion no one minds filling in for a sick colleague, because at some time we all could be in the position of needing help ourselves. However, it is unjust to the male faculty (without compensation of some kind) to expect them to cover a pregnant female faculty members duties in addition to their own.
Ideally, faculty would work through the pregnancies of their colleagues in the same way that they would work through a sickness. Hopefully they would be as supportive and helpful. Unlike a sickness, they should have months to plan and think through the options and needs of the department and worker so that they can reach a mutually accepted solution in advance. It shouldn't be that hard.

D. Concern with available or needed options to cover pregnancy leave

Having the entire department decide as a group how to cover classes for a pregnant faculty member seems like overkill.

Most of the options for covering a pregnant faculty member's absence have nothing to do with other faculty, in terms of fairness to them.

Much is going to depend upon the size of the department and the level of classes taught. It may be very difficult to find substitutes for faculty teaching upper level and graduate courses in smaller departments, which are typically overextended under normal circumstances.

I delivered in the fall of 2003. I was only given 4 weeks before returning to work.

I don't think that other faculty members should be asked to teach classes for the pregnant faculty. Faculty are overloaded already. I think that this should be treated as any other sickness.

I am unhappy with the options provided. Why does the semester where teaching is made

When untenured female faculty members are pregnant - they should be taken off the tenure clock for 1 semester. I do feel each faculty member can work out an arrangement with her department head to cover her teaching load in some way (before or after the pregnancy - banking some teaching in the summer, teaching an 8-week bi-term, etc). However, I think it is unrealistic (and unfair) for us to think a new mother can maintain an active research agenda, teach, give birth, and start caring for the newborn all in one year. Since we have a big teaching load here at WKU, and since most of our tenure review is based on our teaching - the department head and faculty member can work out an informal policy to handle the teaching loads during the pregnancy and in the months following the birth. In such instances where a department head is un-accommodating, the faculty member should be able to discuss the issue with the associate dean of their college.

As I don't plan on having anymore children, this topic does not apply to me other than the fact that I may have to cover classes of those on maternity leave. I do however feel that the option mentioned of having a child during a school recess is extremely unrealistic: most are not lucky enough to plan a birth at an exact time of the year. I would have no problem covering for someone on maternity leave if it did not interfere with my other teaching load. The option of teaching a web based class would be good for some, however it is not leave time if one continues to work.
It is customary for faculty to cover class of colleagues at no pay (within a reasonable time frame) who are:

The best situation would be for a reasonable amount of time (at least 2 weeks) to be afforded for maternity leave without a reduction in pay. The university should then pay for a grad student, an adjunct, or a regular faculty member to cover those two weeks of classes.

As a female faculty member such policies/practices are likely to impact me. I prefer to work out the arrangements for coverage of my responsibilities with my department chair. Such arrangements may involve other faculty in order to maintain my position/tenure status/pay. Fortunately, the team concept is gaining a foothold in employment culture, if higher authorities allow its emergence.

As a Community College faculty member, I felt that many of the options presented did not apply to us which is why I left those questions blank. I have had to make use of the ‘policy’; such as it is twice while working at WKU and nothing worked really well. I have been lucky to work with very understanding and giving colleagues who covered my classes for free while I was off for about 4 weeks of class each time. Even though they volunteered to do this, I felt bad for having to ask them. It seems unfair to burden colleagues for this type of thing. Many would not be as open to it as mine were. I also have covered for a colleague during her maternity leave of app. 6 weeks. The students do not always respond well to this situation and no matter how willing to help initially, everyone is always more than ready for you to come back and you end up feeling pressure to come back even if the ‘customary’ 6 weeks is not up. I do not see why faculty members do not accrue sick leave like every other employee. This was the case at another university where I worked. Faculty members cannot plan when they are going to be ill or need a major surgery and not all of us are successful at planning our pregnancy for a break. If we at least accrued sick time we could use that as part of a paid maternity leave just as staff members do.

Maintaining a proper balance between what is fair from the employment aspect and providing the proper support for faculty families is a difficult issue. It is a balancing act for the faculty member and the university administration. Achieving the proper balance requires a recognition that any faculty member could find himself or herself in need of additional help and understanding at a time when family situations call for it while also recognizing that it is unfair to other faculty members to have them cover classes for any extended period of time (more than one week) without additional pay. Short term absences can be covered by others, but long term absences need to be covered in ways that do not unduly impose upon the other faculty members.

My children were born in 1988 and 1990 and it seemed that during those years pregnancy was not even recognized by the University. I had complications with both pregnancies, but worked until the day of delivery with one child. I was told by my department head that some women return to teaching the week after delivery. I was pressured to return to work earlier than 6 weeks, even though my children were delivered
by C-section. My department head was at my hospital bedside 2 hours after delivery
telling me what problems my absence was causing in the department. I changed my
teaching schedule those semesters to bi-term classes to provide coverage, but was
made to feel by my department head that I was posing a burden on the rest of my
colleagues. On two occasions, I willingly provided class coverage for a colleague who
was out for several weeks due to unanticipated medical reasons. I really do not see any
difference in these situations since pregnancy should be treated like any other medical
condition.

II. Value-Based Comments

A. Concern for students

There are no questions about what is fair to the students, and I think that's an important
consideration.

Most of the questions do not take into account the student's response to the options. I
thought for certain there would be one more page of responses related to the students.

All decisions need to be based on the students! IF a student must have a particular
course to matriculate in a timely manner, the department should not have the option to
push off offering the course until the baby is born. Small departments sometimes do this
because the pregnant faculty member may be the only person who has the expertise to
teach the course. I also feel the faculty who are doing the overloads must be
compensated.

B. Concern for the mother-child bond

The US has one of the least "family friendly" parental leave programs among the
industrialized nations. Few people can afford to relinquish 12 weeks of pay, so many
individuals choose not to take advantage of FEMLA. A MINIMUM three-month
"bonding period" is important both in terms of immediate mother/baby (or even
parent/baby) physical well-being and for the solidifying of healthy attachments that have
life-long effects. This is a genuine opportunity for WKU to nurture faculty families.

Every effort should be made to accommodate a pregnant female faculty member as it is
an important event in the life of the Mother and Child and it is a small amount of time in
the long run.

C. Concern for the father/male

This survey addresses only the concerns of the female. The male part has been omitted.
There are situations, such as pre-mature birth, fetal abnormalities detected before birth,
birth defects, complications during birth, etc., that could cause a male faculty member to
request leave time. I feel that the survey is incomplete without some attention being paid
to this situation.

My goodness? What about for the men? Nothing about leave for them?
This is an equity issue. If females take off for leave, then new fathers deserve the leave, as well.

Only comment is that there is no discussion here of male faculty members gaining leave after childbirth (with some if not all of same options above). I think at least leave without pay needs to be an option.

I am a male respondent.

D. Negative feelings/view toward faculty pregnancy or pregnancy leave

Pregnant faculty members need to be aware that they cannot after delivery come back in a faculty position if they have to have a playpen in their office or take the baby to work with them while they work in their office or teach in a classroom.

E. Issues with planning pregnancy

Pregnancy cannot be planned so precisely as to assure delivery during time off of the academic calendar (summers, etc.), nor can it be counted upon to go perfectly. Many times the last couple of weeks of a full term pregnancy would better protect the health of the mother by resting than by working. Further, each recovery period is unique, from my limited experience. For example, 8-10 weeks was needed after a difficult delivery, but my easier delivery had me functioning normally within 3-4 weeks. It just all depends.

I can think of no other options. You seem to have covered everything. However, I think it important to note that my responses may have differed if the hypothetical baby were due Oct 1 versus December 1. It's not as simple as the baby is due "during the semester." For example, team teaching a course for a colleague whose baby is not likely to be born until the last week of class is clearly a more viable option than granting that professor course reductions for research when she will likely be very able to teach almost all of the semester.

Bearing children is very different from other paid medical leave in that there is not only the choice of whether or not to have children, but also in determining fairly accurate due dates for a majority of women. I understand that there are cases where women do not have this choice of timing. I hate to have different rules for different people, but women who have the ability to time the delivery date for scheduled WKU breaks (i.e. summer) put students, faculty, and departments at a disadvantage if they choose to take maternity leave during a Fall or Spring semester.

I recently had a baby. I was told I couldn't have maternity leave, because it would be "too disrupting to the students" when I came back. I was told I would have to take the entire semester off, and since I couldn't afford to do that, had no option other than to come back 4 WEEKS after giving birth. The only reason I had the 4 weeks was because I delivered over a break. I was told that 'next time you decide to get pregnant, plan better so you can deliver in the summer and have time off.' I found this to be completely
inappropriate, especially since we didn't think we could even get pregnant, and the pregnancy was a surprise.

I am horrified by the suggestion that female faculty members breed so as to produce a child in the two months of summer. It is both naive, insensitive and reflects poorly on WKU that such a suggestion would even appear in this questionnaire. We are not animals, slaves or a harvest; nor are our children.

The nature, location and class size of courses plays a huge part in the feasibility of teaching immediately before, the semester of, and after delivery. I had a miserable experience because I was "scared" of not meeting my teaching responsibilities after an unexpected c-section. Department heads must be very realistic about the timeliness of a new mother's return to work.

Faculty members need to plan their lives and deal with the issues involved without burdening other faculty.

Faculty wishing to become pregnant should plan their delivery date for early summer, or wait to begin employment after they complete their child bearing years.

While, I think it is the optimal choice for a woman to deliver during a summer break (I was able to do this missing just one day of class at the end of the spring and completing all the grading on time, etc.), I realize that timing pregnancies is not an easy thing, and this should not be "expected" of female faculty. It's just serendipity when it does happen.

III. Comments about Questionnaire

A. Critique of the study or the questionnaire

I hope that this survey has been approved by Human Subject committee prior to administration. Otherwise it should NOT be used in any sort of a publication. There will probably be a number of faculty members who will not even fill it out because there is no HSR attachment.

The one item is absurd if it means what I think it means: "Pregnant faculty member delivers when classes are in recess (e.g., summer, winter break)."

I do not believe the distinction between pregnancy and maternity leave is made clear enough when interpreting these results. Some will understand, others will not. Also, how do you comment on fairness to other faculty of options which have little effect on them? Do you take into consideration "fairness" in terms of when they would become pregnant and see this occurring. Just a thought.

It appears to me this questionnaire is focused solely on teaching when our contracts are more broad than that including service. I would also point out that most faculty go well beyond the state work week of 37.5 hours so it seems to me that the key is reasonability
with some guidelines.

I think this survey of faculty is an important compliment to the survey of dept. heads. Through this survey, we might better understand repercussions a pregnant faculty might face for utilizing particular options.

Your survey is unnecessarily long.

This form was too repetitive.

This is a terrible questionnaire. The following is a list of problems with this questionnaire.

A timely and important study. Thanks!