

# From A to Z: Transforming the Campus for Flexibility in Faculty Careers

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# What is Faculty Career Flexibility (FCF)?

- Faculty Career Flexibility is a term coined by the American Council on Education (ACE) to describe policies, programs, or practices that provide flexibility during the faculty life cycle (i.e., pre-tenure, tenure, and retirement) that encourages recruitment and retention
- First discussed in the ACE publication *An Agenda For Excellence: Promoting Flexibility in Tenure-Track Careers*



# Why are we focused on faculty?

- In 2003, the Sloan Foundation approached ACE to run an awards program similar to the one Sloan was running for business
- This awards program is housed in Sloan's Economic Performance and the Quality of Life Division, Workplace, Work Force and Working Families
- Focus on “Structural Mismatch” between academic careers and families



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# What are some examples of FCF?

For the purposes of the Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Faculty Career Flexibility, these policies have been suggested as examples of best practices in career flexibility:

- › On- and off-ramps, through leave policies.
- › Extended time to tenure (tenure clock adjustment).
- › Shortened time to tenure, with prorated standard of productivity.
- › Active Service, Modified Duties (full-time service, with selected reduced duties).
- › Part-time appointments (allowing mobility between full-time and part-time work).
- › Phased retirement (partial appointments for finite periods of time).
- › Delayed entry or re-entry opportunities (including practices that foster later-than-usual career starts).



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# Faculty Career Flexibility: A Provost's Perspective

Sona Karentz Andrews, PhD,  
Provost and VP for Academic Affairs  
Boise State University



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# What is a Provost?

- **Senior academic officer for a university campus.**
- **The President of the University charges the Provost with a variety of specific duties, including:**
  - › **Overseeing all academic activities, including academic personnel, budgets, programs and priorities**
  - › **Ensuring academic quality and student success**
  - › **Ensuring a positive learning and working environment**
  - › **Implementing the University's Strategic Plan**
  - › **Overseeing institutional accreditation and accountability**
  - › **Recruiting and retaining top-quality faculty**



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# Challenges for Provosts as they relate to career flexibility

- Working within institutional processes and culture
- Garnering allies
- Promoting change
- Linking resources to initiatives
- Demonstrating impact/value of change
- Establishing credibility for policies



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# Creating the conditions for policy change and implementation

- **Make the case**
- **Identify champions**
- **Create a Vision and Definitions**
- **Link to the University Strategic Plan**
- **Propose policy changes**
- **Communicate**
- **Demonstrate value and impact**



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# Make the Case and Identify Champions

- Powerful use of data
- Be armed with best practices and the results they yield
- Create awareness with faculty
- Garner Presidential/Provostial leadership



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# Vision

- What will it look like?
- What are the agreed on shared values?
- How will progress be measured?



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# Definitions

- What does it mean on your campus when you say work/life balance?
- What does it mean when you talk about career flexibility?
- For who, when...?



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# Link to Strategic Plan

## Boise State University's Strategic Plan



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Develop network and outreach opportunities with the community

Respond to the educational needs of the region

Provide development opportunities for faculty to integrate research and teaching

CULTURE

Promote diverse communities that foster faculty, staff, and student interaction

CONNECTIONS

GOALS

Provide student-centered services

Build and maintain facilities to support programs and create an attractive and accessible environment

Recruit and retain an academically-prepared and diverse student body

Create an organization that is responsive to change

INFRASTRUCTURE

Recruit and retain faculty and staff to support the vision

Obtain fiscal resources necessary to support the vision

PEOPLE

RESOURCES

# How can a provost help in making ideas and policies visible?

- Communication
- Working with Deans and Department Chairs
- Taking actions
- Ensuring accountability



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# Improving academic vision through faculty career flexibility

- Demonstrate how policies impact faculty recruitment and retention
- How faculty quality impacts student success
- Assess satisfaction of faculty
- Measure progress



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# How do you convince a Provost?

- Do not be antagonistic
- Assess your present work-life campus environment
- Share ideas
- Volunteer to help with the work
- Be supportive when plans are established
- Continue to advocate
- Frame the conversation as needing to build a comprehensive work-life portfolio



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# Flexibility in Faculty Careers – Framework from San José State University’s Transformation

Joan Merdinger, DSW, Associate Vice  
President, Faculty Affairs

Amy Strage, PhD, Professor and ACE-  
Sloan Faculty-in-Residence for Faculty  
Career Flexibility



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# Overarching Themes

1. Create a more holistic approach by viewing an “academic career life-cycle,” from recruitment through retirement
2. Begin by educating and securing the support of key members of our University community, most notably Deans and Chairs
3. Aim to create a new university culture that recognizes the value of career flexibility



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# Workscope: 14 initiatives, capitalizing on existing programs & resources

- › Re: Recruitment:
  - › Train faculty recruitment committees about outreach to increase diversity; reinforce connections with doctoral programs; work with Career Center to expand services for spouses/partners of prospective hires; track effectiveness of advertising
- › Re: Retention
  - › Train Deans & Chairs about leave options; hold focus groups for non-US citizen probationary faculty, faculty of color & women faculty; partner on Health & Wellness initiatives; create informational resources re: childcare
- › Re: Mid-career faculty
  - › Implement post-tenure professional renewal program
- › Re: Late-career
  - › Create on-line pre-retirement and early retirement comparison calculator; create “Bridges to Community” & “Last Lecture” programs



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# Questions for Break 1

- Who are the stakeholders on your campus that need to be involved?
- What are the cultural norms on your campus that allow or impede establishing policies for flexibility?
- How might you have conversations about faculty career flexibility with your provost, deans, department chairs, or faculty?



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# Best Practices Examples

- Boise State University
- San José State University
- University of Washington
- Other Sloan Winners



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# Boise State Example: Creating processes and tools for communication

Sona Karentz Andrews, PhD,  
Provost and VP for Academic Affairs  
Boise State University



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# The Problem

- How do faculty learn about career flexibility options?
- How are options communicated to the campus as a whole?
- How can you make sure evaluation processes take career flexibility options into account?



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# Boise State Solutions

- Established policies as opposed to practices
- Published policies
- Provide policies to all prospective faculty candidates
- Send information each semester to all faculty regarding policies
- Provide department chair training
- Developing a toolkit for departments and P&T committees to understand policies and apply fair evaluations



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# San José State University

## Example: Post-tenure renewal

Joan Merdinger, DSW, Associate Vice  
President, Faculty Affairs

Amy Strage, PhD, Professor and ACE-  
Sloan Faculty-in-Residence for Faculty  
Career Flexibility



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# Post-tenure Professional Renewal Retreat: Our theoretical framework

## Erikson's stage of "generativity" vs. "stagnation" (1964/1993)

- › Generative individuals see themselves as productive; they see themselves as guiding the next generation; they see themselves as making meaningful contributions.
- › Stagnant individuals see themselves as stalled and irrelevant; they have difficulty defining or pursuing goals.

## Dweck's notion of "growth" vs. "fixed" mindset (2006)

- › Individuals with a "growth" mindset see effort as the key to success; they see failures as learning experiences. Given a choice between an easy task, where they are likely to succeed but not likely to learn anything new, or a hard task where they may fail, but they would certainly learn something, they opt for the harder task.
- › Individuals with "fixed" mindsets are easily deterred and discouraged; they opt for the easier task.



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# Post-tenure Professional Renewal Retreat: Our theoretical framework

## Key sources of mid-career faculty satisfaction

- › Opportunities to take on new challenges
- › Flexibility and balance (both at work, and between work and home)
- › Fulfilling and sustained professional relationships
- › “Facilitative environments” - opportunities to experiment with new and varied roles, choices that may lead to meaningful achievement; time for reflection and retrospection (Widick, Parker & Knefelkamp, 1978)

## Key sources of mid-career faculty dissatisfaction

- › Too little time for scholarship: difficulty staying current in their fields (Camblin & Steger, 2000)
- › Too little time for students (Baldwin, 2000)
- › Too little authentic connection with the campus & its mission: Disconnectedness & domestication (Boyce, 1993, Clegg, 2003)



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# Post-tenure Faculty Professional Renewal Program (25 full Professors)

- **Structure:**
  - › Pre-retreat group meeting (late March)
    - › program explained
    - › “homework” assigned
  - › Retreat (early April)
    - › Full day; large-group and small-group conversation
    - › Close with written reflection/plan
  - › First follow-up – one month after the retreat (early/mid-May)
    - › Individual meetings, grounded in reflection/plan
  - › Second follow-up – four months later (September)
    - › Individual meetings, progress-report and long-term plan



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# Pre-retreat meeting/homework

1. Re: Carol Dweck's *Mindset* book. Would you say you are more of a "growth" or "fixed" mindset sort of person? Describe one or two instances where your approach to a challenge or an opportunity reflected this/these mindset(s). If you feel you are "both", what are the characteristics of situations that bring out each of these mindsets. Think of specific examples – they can be drawn from your professional life or from your personal life. Are you satisfied with your mindset? If not, what might you want to tweak? And how might you go about tweaking it? Consider specific examples from your professional or personal life.
2. Re: Rath's *Strengthfinder* book. Go to the website and take the test. (I know that some of the questions and pairings of questions seem odd, but persevere!) Read the report you get. Then answer the following questions. Is your Strengthfinder profile accurate? Do you tend to find yourself attracted to situations that draw on your strengths? What happens when you are faced with situations where what you are called upon to do does not draw on these strengths? Discuss actual examples from your work-life.



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# At the retreat itself

- **Agenda:**
  - › 9:00 to 9:30 *Check-in/breakfast*
  - › 9:30 to 11:00 *Introductions and Overview : **What makes us tick?***
  - › 11:00 to 11:15 *Break*
  - › 11:15 to 12:00 *Panel conversation: Personal journeys of perseverance and resilience*
  - › 12:00 to 1:00 *Lunch and conversation*
  - › 1:00 to 2:00 *Group work (all sleeves rolled up) Find a partner or two or three or more*
  - › 2:00 to 3:00 *Preparation for “re-entry” Crafting goals, creating a meaningful to-do-list*
  - › 3:00 to 4:00 *Regrouping Provost’s comments, closure*



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# At the retreat itself

- Discussion quotes:

- › If a man does not know what port he is steering for, no wind is favorable. (Seneca)
- › Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. (Seneca)
- › It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that things are difficult. (Seneca)
- › Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work. (Hall of Fame NFL Coach Vince Lombardi)
- › Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count, and everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted. (Albert Einstein)



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# At the retreat itself

- **Closing Reflection**
  - › 1. As our day together draws to a close, please identify and elaborate upon one or two key insights you have gleaned about yourself and/or ways you can support your own personal or professional renewal.
  - › 2a) Please identify and elaborate upon one or two specific professional goals that you plan to pursue during the year following the retreat.
  - › 2b) Identify the resources or skills you feel you need to acquire to achieve that/those goals.
  - › 2c) Please enumerate some specific activities you will undertake along with a timeline.
- **Reflections were returned to faculty approximately 2 weeks later, a week before our first follow-up meetings**



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# First follow-up meetings

- **Tasks:**
  - › Revisit goals they had written at the close of the retreat (some stuck with goals as written; some revised them)
  - › Discuss plans for the upcoming summer, as well as for the longer term
  - › Consider strategies/resources they might need to move forward
  - › Discuss how they want to “give back” (an unexpected outcome!)
- **Comments about the impact of the retreat:**
  - › Value opportunity to (re)connect and share with colleagues
  - › Value opportunity to focus on themselves and their own needs
  - › Some felt the impact immediately; most realized the impact a week or more after the retreat
  - › Appreciated the follow-up as it made them come continue to think about the issues they raised at the retreat



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# UW Examples: Inclusiveness and Data

Kate Quinn, PhD,  
(Former) Project Director, Balance@UW



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# Inclusiveness

- “Life” should not be restricted to new moms
- Balance@UW – Parental Teaching Release for any new parent
- Tenure Clock Extension – eldercare, partner care, birth/adoption, extraordinary dependent care, personal medical needs, etc.
- Part-time tenure track – no restrictions



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# Need for Data

- For internal assessments of policy or program effectiveness
- For external benchmarking analysis



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# Analyzing Policy Effectiveness

- Without accessible policy use data, challenging to perform policy analysis
- Balance@UW explored faculty use of Tenure Clock Extension
  - › All tenure-line faculty hired into assistant faculty positions between 1995 and 2001, excluding School of Medicine
  - › Explored rate of policy use, reasons, and career outcomes by gender, race, and field



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# Summary of Findings

- 111 of 465 (24%) received at least 1 TCE
  - › Higher % of women than men receive extensions
  - › Higher % of AHSS fields than other fields
- 73% of recipients rec'd 1 extension
- Women tend to have personal or family reasons; men tend to have professional reasons
- TCE use (esp. multiple) increases separation, esp. pre-tenure



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# Recommendations

- Maintain a database so that policy use, years to tenure, tenure outcomes, and separation statistics can be easily obtained by gender, race/ethnicity, policy use, etc.
- Useful fields: demographics, hire date and rank, policy use and reason, costs (if applicable) of policy use, date of tenure review, tenure decision, separation date and reason



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# Benchmarking Study (n=20)

- Collected data from websites and emailed questions to university representatives
- Asked about policy availability, eligibility for use, and if use is tracked
- Focus areas:
  - › University housing for faculty
  - › Assistance for dual career couples
  - › Flexible options across life- and career-stages
  - › Paid leave for caregiving



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# Resource/Policy Availability

- **University housing for faculty**
  - › 10 institutions (50%) provide housing for faculty
- **Assistance for dual career couples**
  - › 16 institutions (80%) have some form of formal (13, 65%) or informal (3, 15%) assistance
  - › 3 institutions (15%) participate in regional HERCs
- **Flexible options across life- and career-stages**
  - › TCE most common (all 20 have some form)
  - › ASMD of some form at 11 institutions (55%)
- **Paid leave for caregiving**
  - › All offer paid sick leave for maternity, but only 11 (55%) offer paid family leave



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# Recommendations

- **Context counts**
  - › Be mindful of peer definitions (size, finances, mission, etc.)
  - › Explore packages of policies and programs
  - › Is a “better” program *really* better if fewer employees are eligible to use it?



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# Other Sloan Winners

Jean McLaughlin  
American Council on Education



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# FCF @ Santa Clara University

- **Tying FCF back to the Jesuit mission**
  - › Mission is to “educate the whole person”
  - › Is tied to their Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation
  - › Developing an undergraduate curriculum that focuses on work-life balance



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# FCF @ University of Baltimore

- Aging of the Professoriate
  - › Three workgroups dealing with faculty “life-cycle”
    - › WG I: Attracting & Transiting New Hires
    - › WG II: Work/Life Balance
    - › WG III: Engaged/Phased Retirement
  - › Stop-the Clock policy that may be used system-wide
  - › Retirement Planning Timeline/website that links all of the retirement pieces together:  
<http://www.ubalt.edu/template.cfm?page=3257>



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# FCF @ Iowa State University

- Looked at tenure/promotion outcomes associated with tenure clock extensions (TCE)
- Men and women took TCEs equally, with women taking them mostly for childbirth (55%) and men taking them for child care (37%) and their own illness (30%)
- More women than men were granted tenure, but several men left for another institution



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# Questions for Break 2

- Where would the conversation begin (or if it has begun, need to go) in order for your campus to adopt a similar practice?
- Who would need to be involved?
- What is the first step you might take on your return to campus to get this moving?



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