

# Initial Rationale for Increasing Family-Friendly Benefits at UNCG

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This document contains a brief justification for the need for consideration of increasing family-friendly benefits at UNCG. In this document, for illustrative purposes, the needs of UNCG faculty are highlighted. These issues, however, are just as relevant for staff members and students, particularly graduate students. The specific benefits considered are: (1) child care facilities for children of UNCG faculty, staff, and students; (2) lactation facilities for nursing mothers who return to work or school; and (3) healthcare and other benefits for same-sex domestic partners of UNCG employees.

## **Part One: Rationale for improving family-friendly benefits for faculty members**

Family-friendly benefits are critical for faculty job satisfaction and productivity, as well as important tools for the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel. Due to the numerous challenges associated with managing the demands of tenure-track faculty positions alongside raising children, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) issued a 2001 Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work. One of the major conclusions in this statement was that “the development and implementation of institutional policies that enable the healthy integration of work responsibilities with family life in academe require renewed attention.” At UNCG, these benefits are consistent with the University’s mission to be a family-friendly work environment, as well as the University’s commitment to recruiting, retaining, and supporting the career development of junior faculty.

Family responsibilities are encountered by both male and female faculty members, and family-friendly benefits promote positive career and family outcomes for both genders. However, researchers suggest that women’s academic careers are impacted more by parenting than those of men (Marcus, 2007). For example, compared with their male counterparts, female faculty members who become parents within five years after completing their doctorates are less likely to achieve tenure and are more likely to consider leaving their academic positions (Mason & Goulden, 2002).

The particular family-friendly benefits referenced above are important for the following reasons:

1. **Child care facilities:** According to the AAUP’s 2001 Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work, “Some of the benefits that accrue for faculty parents from child-care arrangements on campus include the ability to be reached easily in an emergency, the time and money saved in transportation, and the opportunity to share an occasional lunch or other daytime activity with their children. Faculty members derive peace of mind from knowing that their children are receiving quality

care and that the facility has long-term stability.” For mothers who are nursing young infants, child care that is on-site or close to campus also can facilitate continued breastfeeding by allowing convenient access for feedings.

2. *Lactation facilities*: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP, 2005) “believes that breastfeeding is the optimal source of nutrition through the first year of life” (p. 105). Due to the numerous benefits of breastfeeding for both the baby and the mother, the AAP recommends that mothers breastfeed their babies exclusively for four to six months, and then continue to breastfeed while adding solid foods until the baby turns one year old. Thus, it is important that mothers who return to work within this timeframe have access to facilities that promote continued breastfeeding if they choose to do so. Lactation facilities generally offer a private, hygienic facility (in compliance with food safety standards because breast milk is a food), a sink for cleaning pumping supplies, and a refrigerator. Some university-operated lactation facilities also provide hospital-grade pumps for convenience and rapid pumping.

3. *Healthcare and other benefits for same-sex domestic partners*: Based on data from the 2000 Census ([www.gaydemographics.org](http://www.gaydemographics.org)), there are currently over 600,000 same-sex couples living together in the United States. Of these, approximately 34% of lesbian couples and 22% of gay male couples are raising children. The Greensboro area is home to a relatively large population of same-sex couples; among the more heavily populated zip codes in NC, two vicinities in Greensboro (27403 and 27401) are in the top-ten in the state of zip codes with the highest percentages of same-sex couples. UNCG includes sexual orientation in its policy on discriminatory conduct ([http://its.uncg.edu/Policy\\_Manual/Discriminatory\\_Conduct/](http://its.uncg.edu/Policy_Manual/Discriminatory_Conduct/)), stating, “UNCG is committed to equal opportunity in education and employment for all persons regardless of...sexual orientation.” Family-friendly benefits—such as the above resources, as well as other benefits currently available to married heterosexual partners (i.e., health insurance and group life insurance)—are just as important for same-sex couples as they are for heterosexual couples, particularly for those who are raising children.

## **Part Two: Changing demographics of faculty members at UNCG**

Since 1995, UNCG has experienced a steady growth in the percentage of faculty who are in the age range corresponding most frequently with the “childbearing years,” which is defined in this document as being under the age of 40 (with acknowledgement that some faculty members have children when they are age 40 and over, and some faculty members under the age of 40 do not have children). According to the UNCG Office of Institutional Research, the current percentage of faculty in this age range is between 20 to 25%.

As stated above, researchers have reported that female faculty members with children are more likely than their male counterparts to experience negative career consequences related to the challenges associated with managing career and family demands. Based on additional information from the UNCG Office of Institutional Research, for all but one (1996) of the years between 1995 and 2006 (the most recent year for which data are available at UNCG), females represented higher percentages of faculty under the age of 40 and lower percentages of faculty aged 40 and over, as compared to males.

### **Part Three: Current family-friendly benefits for UNCG faculty**

#### **Current Benefits**

For first-year care of a child due to birth, adoption, or foster care placement, UNCG offers female and male faculty members the choice of taking 60 days of salary continuation under the “Policy on extended illness, disability, and family leave for faculty”

(<http://provost.uncg.edu/documents/personnel/extillness.pdf>). This policy states, “Female faculty shall not be penalized in their condition of employment because they require time away from work caused by or contributed to by pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, childbirth or recovery.”

Tenure-track faculty members who become parents may request a one-year extension of their tenure probationary period; this request is to be made at the same time the request for the leave is made. For example, a female faculty member requesting a one-year extension for her tenure review must make this request prior to the birth of her child.

UNCG also offers a Spousal Hiring Program through the Provost’s Office ([http://provost.uncg.edu/documents/personnel/Spousal\\_Hiring\\_Program.pdf](http://provost.uncg.edu/documents/personnel/Spousal_Hiring_Program.pdf)) to provide employment assistance to spouses or domestic partners of incoming UNCG faculty members.

#### **Status of Benefits Referenced Above**

##### ***(1) Child care facilities for children of UNCG faculty, staff, and students:***

UNCG has a high-quality (5 out of 5 stars in the state rating/licensing system) on-site child care facility, the Child Care Education Program (CCEP; <http://ccep.uncg.edu/>). This program enrolls approximately 80 children between the ages of 4 months and 5 years. At the present time, the school is located in three separate facilities on campus: the Curry Building, North Drive, and the Carter Center. According to the program’s web-site, the primary purposes of the facility are to (1) provide a laboratory setting for university students with practical experiences and facilitation of research projects, (2) provide a year round high quality child care and education setting for young children, and (3) provide a model child care and education facility for the community.

These stated purposes make clear that the current UNCG child care facilities are not designed to serve as a benefit for UNCG faculty, staff, and/or students, and the capacity of current facilities is quite limited. The CCEP has a very long waiting list—for a new infant, the waiting period is often 2-1/2 to 3 years. According to CCEP program materials, factors that may be considered in enrollment decisions for new children in the program include “age, gender, ethnic background, and ability levels;” UNCG affiliation is not included on this list.

##### ***(2) Lactation facilities for nursing mothers who return to work or school:***

There are no lactation facilities on the UNCG campus.

##### ***(3) Healthcare and other benefits for same-sex domestic partners of UNCG employees:***

UNCG does not offer benefits for domestic partners, according to Melissa Barnes, Benefits Supervisor in Human Resource Services, and Angela Montgomery, Benefits and Systems Manager in Human Resource

Services. According to Ms. Montgomery, “The only place any domestic partnership can have a 'perk' is allowing them to have membership to the student rec center.”

#### **Part Four: Family-friendly benefits offered at other institutions**

Information about family-friendly benefits at the 15 other institutions within the UNC system was sought by contacting Benefits Officers in Human Resources offices, as well as through searching institution web-sites. Detailed information about the offerings at each institution can be found in the Appendix.

The institutions in the UNC system vary widely in the extent to which they offer family-friendly benefits, with some institutions offering minimal benefits and other institutions providing numerous benefits. UNC-Chapel Hill currently has the most offerings, including on-site child care, multiple lactation facilities, and university-sponsored benefits for domestic partners (the latter benefit was scheduled to begin in January 2008). N.C. State also has a number of offerings, which include child care discounts for university employees, a spousal hiring program, and employee discounts for family-friendly activities.

The family-friendly benefits at the following three comparison universities outside of the UNC system were also examined: The University of Virginia, The University of Georgia, and The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. (Note: These universities were examined based on the recommendation of Dr. Dale Schunk, Dean of the UNCG School of Education.) The benefits offered at these universities, which are also detailed in the Appendix, vary. However, all three universities have on-site child care facilities that either serve exclusively or prioritize university-affiliated families.

#### **Part Five: Recommendations/Requests**

Based on a survey of 255 colleges and universities, Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, and Hamilton (2005) provided the following general recommendations for universities committed to addressing work/family policies:

- Use data to promote a work/family balance agenda.

- Foster collaboration between individual policy champions and institutional committees to ensure successful policy development.

- Formalize policies and make them entitlements.

- Educate faculty and administrators about the policies on a continuous basis.

- Address climate issues that discourage faculty from using work/family policies. (p. 56)

Based on these recommendations and in response to (a) the importance of offering family-friendly benefits for recruiting, retaining, and supporting the career development and personal wellbeing of faculty, staff, and students, (b) the changing demographics at UNCG, and (c) the current limited availability of family-friendly benefits for UNCG, particularly relative to some other institutions within the UNC system, the following recommendations are submitted to administrative bodies within the UNCG community:

1. Charge an existing or newly-created committee or task force to study these issues more extensively and determine whether further action is warranted to increase the availability of family-friendly benefits at UNCG.

- The committee membership should be diverse and reflect the stakeholders in decisions regarding family-friendly policies, such as male and female faculty with young children, departmental administrators (i.e., Chairs), University administrators, and Human Resources Services personnel.
- This committee may need to conduct a needs assessment of UNCG faculty, staff, and students to determine the actual needs related to the benefits referenced above.
- This committee also should explore the feasibility, costs, and benefits associated with offering the above-referenced family-friendly benefits.
  - Consider alternative means for offering child care benefits, which may include the following:
    - Revising the policies of the UNCG CCEP to make serving UNCG-affiliated families a priority (if this could be achieved without disrupting the program's function as a training facility).
    - Developing a new child care facility (not affiliated with the CCEP) designed to serve UNCG-affiliated families.
      - University- operated vs. Contractor-operated
    - Providing child care subsidies.
    - Developing a network of Greensboro-area child care providers who will offer discounts to UNCG-affiliated families.

2. Implement professional development workshops to educate faculty, staff, and administrative personnel about the importance of family-friendly benefits and effective strategies for supporting employees who are managing career and family demands.

### **References**

American Academy of Pediatrics (2005). *Your baby's first year* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). New York: Bantam Books.

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Marcus, J. (2007). Helping academics have families and tenure too: Universities discover their self-interest. *Change*, March/April, 26-32.

Mason, M. A., & Goulden, M. (2002). Do babies matter? The effect of family formation on the lifelong careers of academic men and women. *Academe*, November/December. Retrieved October 15, 2007, from <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2002/ND/Feat/Maso.htm>.

## Appendix

### Family-Friendly Benefits at Other Institutions

*Note: The information in this Appendix was gathered through e-mail contacts with University Human Resources personnel and through searching the institutional web-sites. The e-mail inquiries addressed on-site or other child care facilities that serve the university community, lactation facilities for mothers who return to work or school, spousal hiring programs, tuition benefits for children of university faculty, and benefits for same-sex partners. Additional benefits that were not described or located through these sources may be available at each of the universities. The table below presents a summary of the information obtained about benefits at each institution. See the below the table for additional details about the offerings at each institution. An "X" represents that the institution does offer the referenced benefit in some form. An "\*" represents that a benefit is being considered.*

	Child Care	Lactation Facilities	Spousal Hiring	Tuition Benefit	Same-Sex Partner Benefits
<b><u>Universities within the UNC System</u></b>					
Appalachian State University	X		X		
East Carolina University	*				
Elizabeth City State University					
Fayetteville State University	X				
North Carolina A & T					
NC Central University					
NC School of the Arts					
NC State University:	X		X		*
UNC at Asheville					
UNC at Chapel Hill:	X	X			X
UNC at Charlotte			X		
UNC at Pembroke					
UNC at Wilmington					X
Western Carolina University	X				
Winston-Salem State University	X				
<b><u>Universities outside the UNC System</u></b>					
The University of Georgia	X				
The University of Tennessee—Knoxville	X			X	
The University of Virginia	X		X		

## **Additional Information**

### **Universities within the UNC System**

Efforts to contact the Human Resources offices at the following universities were unsuccessful, and it was not possible to determine the availability of family-friendly benefits from their web-sites:

*Elizabeth City State University*

*NC Central University*

*UNC at Asheville*

### **Appalachian State University**

ASU has two on-site day care facilities that are designed primarily to serve the University community. (<http://childdevelopment.appstate.edu/index.php>)

ASU's Hubbard Center for Faculty Development provides assistance to spouses of newly hired faculty members to find work. (<http://www.hubbard.appstate.edu/>)

### **East Carolina University**

ECU conducted a thorough study in 2006 to examine the child care needs of its campus community. The final report can be found at [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/ipre/upload/Child\\_Care\\_Prelim\\_Final\\_10.pdf](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/ipre/upload/Child_Care_Prelim_Final_10.pdf). The official resulting opinion of the group conducting this study was that: "Child care for the university community merits considered attention and a positive response." The report details the financial implications of various options for meeting the child care needs of the ECU campus community.

### **Fayetteville State University**

Fayetteville State University has an on-site child care facility that serves the university community, but it is not limited to the university community.

### **North Carolina A & T**

North Carolina A & T has an on-site child care facility, the Child Development Laboratory, which holds a five-star license and serves children between the ages of 2-1/2 and 5 years old. Approximately 40 families are served annually. The facility is open to the university and greater Greensboro communities, with no indication that priority is given based on university affiliation status. The facility's web-site is [http://www.ag.ncat.edu/facilities/research/price\\_hall.htm#](http://www.ag.ncat.edu/facilities/research/price_hall.htm#).

### **NC School of the Arts**

NCSA does not offer any of the benefits referenced in this report.

### **NC State University:**

NCSU, in lieu of having an on-site child care facility, offers a child care benefit (sliding scale tuition discounts based on family income) through a partnership with a corporate child care provider located near the campus (NCState "Wolfpup" Childcare Program). NCSU also has an extensive child care web resource that lists over 100 child care providers in the area which offer employee discounts. The web-

site for this resource is:

[http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/benefits/child\\_care/discount\\_providers/providersForm.asp](http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/benefits/child_care/discount_providers/providersForm.asp)

NCSU has a resource through its Provost's office for assisting new faculty spouses with employment.

NCSU is working on including same-sex domestic partners in their group term life insurance policy eligibility.

NCSU offers many discounts for employees that include family-type outings/businesses as well as discount tickets for many family-friendly sports and cultural events on campus.

#### UNC at Chapel Hill:

UNC-CH has the University Child Care Center. Located near the Friday Center on campus, this center can serve about 120 children aged 6 weeks to 5 years. Eligibility to use the center is based on employment/student status with either the University or the Hospital. The center's web-site is:

<http://victoryvillage.home.mindspring.com/index.html>

UNC-CH has 4 lactation facilities on campus to accommodate mothers returning to work and school. One of these facilities (the "Mother's Room" in the School of Public Health) has two hospital grade breast pumps available. The university is hoping to add additional spaces, according to Bob Eatman in the UNC-CH Human Resources office.

Beginning 1/1/08 UNC-CH will begin offering benefits for domestic partners in university-sponsored programs such as Assurant Dental, MetLife, and Reliance Standard AD&D.

#### UNC at Charlotte

UNC-C offers resources for assisting spouses of newly hired faculty members to find work either on campus or in the surrounding area.

#### UNC at Pembroke

UNC-P has no on-site child care facilities, lactation facilities, spousal hiring program, or benefits for same-sex domestic partners, according to Paula Cummings in the Human Resources/Benefits office.

#### UNC at Wilmington

UNCW does not have tuition discounts, but they do have application fee waivers and orientation fee waivers for family members of faculty and staff.

As part of the State Health Plan, UNCW does not offer medical benefits to domestic partners. However, UNCW does provide after-tax benefits with NC Flex vendors for dental, vision, etc. UNCW also has an after-tax life insurance plan open to domestic partners.

#### Western Carolina University

WCU offers the Kneeder Child Development Center, which has the mission of "providing high quality child care for the students, faculty and staff of WCU. (The Center is) dedicated to providing affordable and accessible child care for families within a diverse community. In addition, the center (serves) as a teaching site for observations, practicum experiences, research and internships for students at WCU.

While supporting the academic programs of the university, (the Center encourages) opportunities for personal, social and intellectual development.” The Center’s web-site is <http://www.wcu.edu/studentd/kneedler/cost.htm>.

#### Winston-Salem State University

WSSU has an on-site child care facility for its employees and the community.

#### **Universities outside the UNC System**

##### The University of Georgia

The University of Georgia has The Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center (<http://www.fcs.uga.edu/cfd/mcphaul/index.html>), which gives priority to families who are affiliated with the University. The Lab serves over 90 children ages 8 weeks to 5 years old.

##### The University of Tennessee at Knoxville

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville has the Early Learning Center (<http://elc.utk.edu/families/index.html>), where families of faculty and staff are given top priority in admissions decisions. The programs range from infants and toddlers to kindergarten.

UT Human Resources promotes the accommodation of nursing mothers. Individual departments have been encouraged to provide areas acceptable to the mother for this. Specific arrangements are left up to each department.

The University’s Employment Office attempts to offer as much assistance to spouses as possible, but there is no formal program for spousal hiring at UT.

Spouses and dependent children of employees are eligible for a 50% discount of tuition fees.

##### The University of Virginia

The University of Virginia has the UVA Child Care Center (<http://www.virginia.edu/childdevelopmentcenter/facts.htm>) that serves only the university community. This Center, which was established in 1991, provides programming for infants through five-year-olds.

The University of Virginia has a resource for assisting spouses of newly hired faculty members to find employment.