FLEXIBILITY AT WORK

UT’s family-friendly options have made a key impact on their family say Shirley Thompson and Stephen Marshall, both faculty in UT’s Departments of American Studies and the Warfield Center for African and African American Studies. “We are thousands of miles away from our families and the support system they provide,” says Shirley. “These policies and resources provided an important security net as we became parents and attempted at the same time to maintain our place in our professions.”

Shirley opted to take Modified Instructional Duties (MID), scaling her teaching schedule back while she cared for Solomon, born in 2005. She applied for an extension of her tenure-track probationary period at the same time. Stephen then used MID to continue caring for their son. He was also granted an extension of the tenure-track probationary period.

Mary Rose, associate professor of sociology and law, and Marc Musick, associate professor of sociology and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, say that UT’s family-friendly policies benefit their family in multiple ways, every day. After the birth of their second child, Mary took advantage of Modified Instructional Duties (MID) for a semester. During that time, she worked on research and continued to advise students (even bringing the new baby to meetings). “It was great to have the choice to spend time with my son when he was so young.”

Being able to send their children to the University’s Child Development Center is the biggest benefit of all. “Both Marc and I can be more productive and feel more comfortable knowing that our children are so well taken care of.”

Lili Qiu, an assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science, learned of the University’s Modified Instructional Duties (MID) policy through her department. “They gave me the information, encouraged me to use the policy and were very helpful throughout the entire process,” says Lili, who specializes in Internet and wireless networking. “MID is a great program and has tremendously benefited me and my family.” Lili used the University’s MID policy after her daughter was born allowing her to care for her newborn and returned to her regular teaching schedule the next fall. With her daughter now at the University Child Development Center, she enjoys watching her thrive in an environment that’s close, convenient and caring.

www.utexas.edu/provost/policies/family
The University of Texas at Austin believes an environment of excellence is synonymous with an environment of wellness, and that wellness starts with balance. We are deeply committed to creating a supportive and productive environment that allows our faculty opportunities to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives.

The University has numerous policies, services and resources to support our faculty and their families. Whether you need time to care for an infant or child, help to find a job for a spouse or partner, flexibility to meet the ever changing needs of your family or resources that connect and inspire you, you can know that we are here to help. While no one policy can meet every individual need, there are multiple ways to address different situations.

As President and Provost, we fully endorse family friendly policies, and we assure you that their use in no way compromises opportunities for advancement. We encourage you to review our new Web site, www.utexas.edu/provost/policies/family, to familiarize yourself with our work-life policies, the benefits they provide and how they can help you—and your family.

William Powers, Jr., President
Gregory L. Fenves, Provost

WORKING IN BALANCE

The University of Texas at Austin provides opportunities for you to attain work-life balance while advancing excellence in teaching, research and service. Listed below are some examples of the policies and resources available to faculty. Contact the Office of the Provost, your college/school or your department chair for more information about these and other opportunities.

MODIFIED INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES (MID)

If you are full-time faculty and have a family member who is healthy, but needs your help, Modified Instructional Duties (MID) may offer a solution. MID enables you to take a semester off from teaching responsibilities, while focusing on other academic and research responsibilities, and offers the flexibility you need without putting a burden on your family or your department.

Tips: Apply to your department chair or dean during the semester prior to the one in which the modification is needed. MID does not affect the tenure clock.

EXTENSION OF TENURE-TRACK PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Whether childbirth, adoption, disability, illness or other personal circumstances, life sometimes takes a turn to keep you from achieving normal levels of productivity during your tenure-track probationary period. Fortunately, you can apply for a probationary period extension. All professional accomplishments achieved during the extension of the tenure track probationary period will be included in your promotion packet, and no distinction is made during the promotion review between those who have and have not had an extension.

Tips: Extensions are automatically granted for the reasons of childbirth and adoption.

SICK LEAVE

Many benefits-eligible faculty are unaware that they accrue eight hours of sick leave each month. We want you to stay well—physically and financially. You can take paid time off if you have a medical condition that makes work hard or painful, need physical therapy or need to take care of an ill or injured family member.

Tips: Unused sick leave hours carry forward every month.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The University of Texas at Austin provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid family and medical leave during a rolling 12-month period in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act. This leave applies to those who have been employed by the State of Texas for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during that period. Full-time, intermittent leave and reduced schedule leave is also available. Use of this leave protects employment and provides institutional payment of your insurance benefits.

Family Medical Leave is available to deal with your serious health condition, the birth and care of your child, adoption or foster care placement, or your serious health condition. It also benefits those in military service and their families (26 weeks of coverage).

Tips: When possible, give your department chair/supervisor 30 days advance notice; if this is not possible, give notice within two days after you learn of the need for leave.

DUAL CAREER HIRING

We realize that in many cases your job brought not only you to The University of Texas at Austin, but also your significant other. Whether your partner is in academia or not, we will help him or her find on-campus or local employment. This service is not only for your partner’s and your benefit, but also for ours.

Tips: Contact your department chair or school/college to initiate the process.

CHILD CARE

Finding a place for your children while you’re at work can be a burden. To lighten your load, the University has two campus child care centers with 374 spaces that serve children between 6 weeks to 5 years of age. A limited number of spaces reserved for faculty recruitment and retention are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and are endorsed by your dean/department chair to the Provost Office.

Tips: Because of the special nature of infant care, these spaces are in high demand. You should apply for the waiting list as soon as your doctor ascertains your due date, or you begin the adoption process. There is often a waiting list so apply as early as possible. The knowledgeable staff at the University’s Child Development Center can assist you in finding other child care arrangements while you are on the waiting list.

Visit www.utexas.edu/provost/policies/family for more details about these and other policies, or ask your department chair for more information about opportunities for you and your family.