COVID-19 Impacts

Preliminary information raising concerns that COVID-19 will exacerbate gender divide in academia

• Shift to online classes: women tend to have higher teaching loads
• Traditional role of women as the caregivers (child, elder, family, etc.)
• The “ideal worker” perceptions when and struggles with work-life balance
• Related mental health concerns
• Impact on early career women
• Impact on “Gig academy”
• Gender-neutral tenure clock stops ineffective (Antecol et al. 2018)
COVID-19 Impacts

What have preliminary studies shown:

• Fewer than expected papers from women during COVID, especially solo-authored papers by women

• Compounding impacts of increased care demands, lower productivity, decreased ability to write grant proposals/obtain grants

• Biggest factor is having young children: “All else being equal, female scientists reported a 5% larger decline in research time. But the most important variable of all appears to be having a young dependent: scientists with at least one child 5 years old or younger experienced a 17% larger decline in research time, all else being equal.” (Myers et al. 2020, Nature Human Behaviour)
Recommendations based on preliminary studies:

- Consider changes to decision making structures:
  - Utilize DEI staff; create new structures; include more voices
- Repurposing funds to support caretakers
- Accommodate flexible working arrangements
- Waiving non-essential service and providing teaching relief
- Suspending standards for research productivity
COVID-19: Blip or longer-lasting effects?

What are your institutions doing?
• Policies and mitigation strategies?
• Tracking impact on women and diverse students and faculty?
• What metrics will you use to determine success?

What can/should the academic ocean science community do together?