

Issues in Work: Work-Life Balance

37:575:392:01 (one credit)

Spring, 2015

Hours: Tuesday, 1:00-3:00PM (February 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10)

Location:

Instructor: Teresa M. (Terri) Boyer

terri.boyer@rutgers.edu

Office: Janice Levin Building, 232A. **Hours are available by appointment.**

Course Overview

This course introduces students to the issues of work-life balance and integration from the perspectives of an individual psychological construct to a negotiated social construct. Students will explore perspectives of different generations, managerial/professional vs. low-wage workers, international approaches, and policy solutions. The course adopts a broad definition of work-life, which goes beyond work-family to include broader care-giving responsibilities and life interests.

Course materials: All materials (outlined below) are available on Sakai. **No textbook is required** for this course.

Class Grade

Your grade will be based on the following distribution:

Class participation and attendance	20 pts
Personal Work-life Plan	20 pts
Presentation of Policy Proposal	20 pts
Final Exam/Quiz	40 pts

Attendance/Participation:

As the course only meets five times, you are expected to attend every session. The nature of this topic is one which is best explored through group discussion. As a result, you are expected to actively participate and contribute to discussions in some form. If you are not one to be the most verbal in class discussions, you are encouraged to bring in items to share with the class, including video clips, current news articles, or other artifacts related to current or preceding class readings. Other options for participation include facilitating in small group work, posing questions or topics on discussion boards. **NOTE:** the use of electronic devices (including phones, tablets and laptops) is strongly prohibited in this class outside of group assignment tasks—it is a distraction you, me and your classmates, and will adversely affect your classwork grade.

Personal Work-life Plan:

Students will complete a work-life “balance sheet” **and** write a one-page statement addressing their plans for integrating their career and life aspirations. Specifically, this should address where the two fit well together and where there might be potential conflicts. (Distributed on the first day of class).

Policy proposal (Group Project):

This in-class assignment will ask students to address work-life issues in the creation of policies from one of two perspectives: public policy or employer policy. More information will be provided in class.

Final quiz:

This will be administered on the last day of class, consisting of fill-in and short answer questions from course readings and discussions.

Course Schedule

Week and date	Readings	Assignments
1. Introduction February 10	Syllabus and introductions Overview of Work-life terms and theoretical approaches	
2. Work-life and Changing trends February 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parker, K., and Wang, W. (March 14, 2013) "Modern Parenthood: Roles of Moms and Dads converge as They Balance Work and Family." Pew Research: Social and Demographic Trends. • Bianchi, S. (2010). "Family Change and Time Allocation in American Families." Workplace Flexibility, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. (selected pages) • Abrams, Rachel. "On Wall Street, a Generation Gap in Work-Life Issues". <i>The New York Times</i>, January 15, 2014. 	Personal work-life plan due
3. Work-life and worker perspectives: Low-wage vs. professional/managerial February 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Williams, J. C. and Boushey, H. (January 2010). The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict. Introduction and Summary, 1-10. Center for American Progress and Center for WorkLife Law. http://www.worklifelaw.org/pubs/ThreeFacesofWork-FamilyConflict.pdf • Borenstein, Stephanie. (June, 2011). "Poor, Pregnant, and Fired: Caregiver Discrimination Against Low-Wage Workers" Issue Brief: Center for Work-Life Law. • Slaughter, Anne Marie. (2012). Why Women Still Can't Have it All. <i>The Atlantic</i> (July/August): http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/ • Joyner, James. (2012). Men Can't Have It All Either. <i>The Atlantic</i> (June). • Alcorn, Katrina. (2013). <i>Maxed Out: American Moms on the Brink</i>. Seal Press: Berkley, CA. pp 197-228 & 253-263. 	Readings will be assigned by group
4. Exploring solutions: Public and workplace policies March 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gornick, J.C., and Meyers, M.K. (2004). "More Alike Than Different: Re-Assessing the Long-Term Prospects for Developing 'European-Style' Work-Family Policy in the United States." <i>Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice</i> 6(3):251-273. • Williams, J.C. and Yuang, P. (2011). Improving Work-life Fit in Hourly Jobs: An underutilized cost-cutting strategy in a globalized world. Center for WorkLife Law. SUMMARY PAGES 1-23 • Kelly, E. L., Ammons, S. K., Chermack, K., & Moen, P. (2010). Gendered Challenge, Gendered Response: Confronting the Ideal Worker Norm in a White-Collar Organization. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 24(3), 281-303. • Benko, C. and Weisberg, A (2008). "Mass Career Customization: Building the corporate lattice organization." <i>Deloitte Review</i>, (3), 50-61. 	In-Class Policy Exercise
5. Final class presentations March 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional readings 	FINAL QUIZ