

Soc 4441: *Work – Family Links*

Spring 2004

8:15 – 9:30 T Th

Room: 110 Blegen Hall

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Course Description:

Americans are experiencing radical transformations in the nature of work, families, gender roles, careers and the contemporary life course. In most households, all “working-age” adults are employed. There are growing numbers of singles and single-parents in the workforce. Most couples are in dual-earner households. Most children have working mothers as well as working fathers. Almost half of the workforce is now female. Many workers, men and women, are providing care to aging or infirm relatives. A globalizing economy is making even “good” jobs insecure. How do people manage job uncertainty, along with the multiple responsibilities of work and family? What are the consequences of different arrangements? How can employers, communities, and governments make work life and personal lives more compatible?

This course addresses these questions. The goal is to familiarize students with the dynamic and complicated relations between three institutions – the family, the economy, and gender – as they play out in the lives of men, women, and children at all ages and stages of the life course, and as they are embedded in particular historical, cultural and social contexts. It serves to provide students with the tools of *critical thinking*, a *sociological imagination*, and ways of *obtaining evidence* on the transformations of (1) the workforce and family, (2) the economy, and (3) temporal and spatial boundaries.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance and participation in discussions
- 3 1-page reviews of articles on a related topic
- Students will complete 4 life history reviews of how people manage work and family roles at different points in their lives, and write a 7-page paper drawing implications from them.
- One midterm (short answer questions, in class)
- One final (Short answer essays, in class)

Required Texts:

Working Families: the Transformation of the American Home
edited by Rosanna Hertz

The Package Deal: Marriage, Work and Fatherhood in Men's Lives, by Nicolas Townsend

It's about Time: Couples and Careers, edited by Phyllis Moen

A Few Words About Participation:

In order to participate in class discussions, you will need to have read and thought about the assigned material and topic for the day. A good way to get into a thinking mode is to approach the reading with some questions in mind. You will see that each daily topic is usually phrased as a question, and these are meant to give direction to your reading.

(In order to raise issues or questions about a chapter or article, it will also help to have a system of condensing and keeping track of the main ideas it presents. If you would like some recommended techniques for doing this, please feel free to bring it up in class or during office hours.)

Classroom discussions *can* be exasperating when the ‘discussion’ turns into a “bull session” – where comments are not relevant to either the readings or the topic at hand. For this reason, we all need to make sure that our contributions are relevant to the main issue being discussed. Discussions can *also* be exasperating when they turn into a collection of unconnected comments. By listening to each other and responding to each other’s comments, we can build a coherent conversation that can provide new insights for all of us.

And don’t forget that it is entirely appropriate bring up anything you did not understand in the readings.

Grading:

Class discussion	5%
3 Article reviews	15% (5% each)
4 Life histories	28% (7% each)
Life history paper	25%
Midterm exam	12%
Final exam	15%

	A = 95-100%	A- = 90-94%
B+ = 87-89%	B = 84-86%	B- = 80-83%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 74-76%	C- = 70-73%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 60-66%	
F = less than 60%		

Late assignments: Students who miss an assignment due date because of a verifiable illness or family emergency may make alternative arrangements with the instructor. In all other cases, assignments are due on the date indicated on the syllabus.

Make-up exams: Students who miss exams due to verifiable illnesses, family emergencies, religious observances, or University-sponsored events may take make-up exams.

Incompletes: Only in extreme cases and with prior permission will students be allowed to receive an incomplete.

University Support Services:

For assistance with writing:

Student Writing Center, 306B Lind Hall, 612-625-1893; <http://swc.umn.edu>

Skill-building, test-anxiety, counseling, etc.:

Learning & Academic Skills Center, 109 Eddy Hall, 612-624-3323

For assistance with physical or learning disabilities:

Disability Services, 30 Nicholson Hall, 612-626-1333. In addition, please contact the instructor so that we can discuss your needs.

Semester Reading and Topic Schedule:

January 20th: Introduction to course – hand out syllabus which includes reading/topic schedule and assignment schedule.

In-class exercise & discussion

Section I: Breadwinner-Homemaker to Dual-Earner: the Family-Work Responsibilities of Women and Men

January 22nd: What are the current transformations of the workforce, of the economy, and of the spatial and temporal boundaries between work and non-work?

Handouts: Guidelines for Life History Review; Guidelines for Article Review; Guidelines for Paper on Life Histories

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 1 “The Rise of the Dual-Earner Family, 1963-1997”

It’s About Time: Ch 1 “Introduction”

January 27th: What responsibilities at home and at work characterize “breadwinner” and “homemaker”? How have “breadwinner” *and* “homemaker” been defined through *both* paid work and family life?

DUE: bring to class definitions of breadwinner, homemaker, and employee from published sources or the WWW

Read for today:

The Packaged Deal: Ch 1 “Contradictions and Complications”

January 29th: how do we participate in defining ourselves as “earners,” and in deciding how our work lives and our family lives will fit together?

Read for today:

The Packaged Deal: Ch 2 “Package Deals and Scripts”

February 3rd: Does the shift from “breadwinner-homemaker” to “dual-earner” apply equally to all couples? To all workers?

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 2 “Gendered Careers: A Lifecourse Perspective”

Working Families: Ch 5 “Family-Responsive Benefits and the Two-Tiered Labor Market”

February 5th: In what ways is fatherhood being redefined? What social forces might be preventing it from changing even more?

DUE: First Article Review

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 4 “Men’s Family Work: Child-Centered Fathering and the Sharing of Domestic Labor”

The Packaged Deal: Ch 3 “The Four Facets of Fatherhood”

Section II. How Individuals, Couples, and Families Manage Work, Home, and the Boundaries Between

February 10th: How can the structure of careers dictate the establishment of families?

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 4 “Family Clocks: Timing Parenthood”

February 12th: The increasing importance of work – the new demands of restructured employment and intensified work (‘greedy’ workplaces and jobs) – and the consequent changing responsibilities of women & men within the economy and family

DUE: First Life History Review

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 6 “Career Clocks: Forked Roads”

February 17th: How do our ideas about gender continue to shape how we think about time? And what does this have to do with family and work?

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 2 “Time-Clocks: Work-Hour Strategies”

It’s About Time: Ch 3 “Competing-Clocks: Work and Leisure”

February 19th: Guest lecture, Professor Erin Kelly: getting time off when you need it

Read for today: no assigned readings

February 24th: in the context of current transformations, what does it mean to talk about a life course? How is it still a useful tool for understanding the links between work and family?

DUE: Second Article Review

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 3 “Getting Younger While Getting Older: Family-Building at Midlife”

February 26th: how can we distinguish between a mechanism of social change and a normative presumption of a social problem?

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 14 “Children, Work, and Family: Some Thoughts on Mother-Blame”

Working Families: Ch 15 “The Kinderdult: The New Child Born to Conflict Between Work and Family”

(end first third of course)

March 2nd: from work-family conflict to work-family spillover

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 7 “Spillover”

The Packaged Deal: Ch 4 “Marriage and the Women in the Middle”

March 4th: what characteristics of work and home life contribute to positive outcomes for women and men? How much influence do individual women and men have over these characteristics?

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 8 “Well-being”

It’s About Time: Ch 9 “Success”

March 9th: the role of career in drawing and managing boundaries

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 11 “Turning Points in Work Careers”

It’s About Time: Ch 12 “Prioritizing Careers”

March 11th: **Midterm Exam, in-class**

Read for today: No Readings

March 15th --- 19th: *No Classes, Spring Break*

March 23rd: If we talk about employment arrangements as couple-level strategies, do they represent the same strategy for husbands as they do for wives?

Read for today:

It’s About Time: Ch 15 “Alternative Employment Arrangements”

The Packaged Deal: Ch 5 “Employment as Fatherhood”

March 25th: Alternative perspectives on work and family

DUE: Second Life History Review

Read for today:

It's About Time: Ch 14 "The New Technology Climate"

Working Families: Ch 16 "Passing Between the Worlds of Maid and Mistress: The Life of a Mexican Maid's Daughter"

OR Ch 17 "Eavesdropping Children, Adult Deals, and Cultures of Care"

OR Ch 18 "Pick-Up Time at Oakdale Elementary School: Work and Family from the Vantage Points of Children"

March 30th: Changes in families and implications for managing

Read for today:

It's About Time: Ch 10 "Managing Households"

It's About Time: Ch 17 "The Case of Same-Sex Couples"

April 1st: How are changing temporal and spatial boundaries shifting community?

Read for today:

It's About Time: Ch 5 "Commuting Clocks: Journey to Work"

The Packaged Deal: Ch 6 "Home Ownership: Housing the Family"

April 6th: Are transitions always stressful? Managing change

DUE: Third Life History

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 11 "Workplace Policies and the Psychological Well-Being of First-Time Parents: The Case of Working-Class Families"

It's About Time: Ch 16 "Moving Toward Retirement"

April 8th: Changes in families and implications for managing: single-parent families, what's new?

DUE: Third Article Review

Read for today: As assigned

Section III How Organizations and Formal Institutions Manage the Boundaries Between Work and Family

April 13th: What are some of the pressures 'felt' by businesses that encourage new policies?

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 7 "Part-time Work Arrangements and the Corporation: A Dynamic Interaction"

Working Families: Ch 8 "Toward a New View of Work and Family Life"

April 15th: (continued)

Read for today:

It's About Time: Ch 19 "Work-Life Integration: Challenges and Organization Responses"

April 20th: family-friendly policies and workplace culture

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch10 "Changing the Structure and Culture of Work: Work and Family Conflict, Work Flexibility, and Gender Equity in the Modern Workplace"

It's About Time: Ch 18 "Institutionalizing Family-Friendly Policies"

April 22nd: (continued)

DUE: Fourth Life History Review

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 6 "How are Small Businesses Responding to Work and Family Issues?"

Section IV: Rethinking Public Policy and Other Initiatives

April 27th:

Read for today:

Working Families: Ch 9 "Work, Family, and Globalization: Broadening the Scope of Policy Analysis"

It's About Time: Epilogue "Toward a Policy Agenda"

April 29th:

DUE: Life History Paper

Read for today:

The Packaged Deal: Ch 7 "Fathers of Fathers: Kinship and Gender"

The Packaged Deal: Ch 8 "Implications"

May 4th:

Read for today: (web pages as assigned)

May 6th: Last Day of Classes

May 10th – 15th: *Finals Week*

Useful Web References:

AFL-CIO: www.aflcio.org

American Society of Training and Development: www.astd.org

Americans United for Affirmative Action: www.auaaa.org

American with Disabilities Act: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm

Bureau of Labor Statistics: www.bls.gov

Census Bureau Homepage: www.census.gov

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: www.chpp.org

Digest of Educational Statistics 2001 – National center for Education Statistics:
www.nced.ed.gov//pubs2002

EconData.net: Your Guide to Regional Economic Data: www.econdata.net

Economic Policy Institute: www.epinet.org

Employee Benefit Research Institute: www.ebri.org

Income Page: www.census.gov/hhes/www/income.html

Juggling Work and Family: www.pbs.org/workfamily

National Center for Health Statistics: www.cdc.gov/nchs/

National Vital Statistics Report: www.cdc.gov/nchs/data.nvsr.gov

NewWork News: www.newwork.com

OECD publications scheduled for release from **November 2003 through
January 2004:**

<http://www.oecdwash.org/PUBS/BOOKS/RP041/rp041cov.htm>

Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov/offices/OCR

Population Reference Bureau: www.prb.org

Progressive Policy Institute (work, family, and community): www.ppionline.org

Project on Global Working Families:

www.hsph.harvard.edu/globalworkingfamilies

School-to-work: www.stw.ed.gov

SLOAN Work and Family Network Literature Database:

<http://library.bc.edu:4545/ALEPH/-/start/bcl03>

Statistical Abstract: www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract-02.html

Workers with Disabilities: www.worksupport.com