Welcome to the world of work-life, a topic that has recently attracted much attention from researchers, the media, and policy-makers. The critical issues we cover concern how employment and life at home interact. There are basically three aspects to the course: personal, theoretical, and political. Almost no matter what your plans for the future are, you will face conflicts between the demands of work and of home. You may have young children some day, a disabled parent, a job with extreme travel demands that make relationships difficult to sustain, or your own illness; I hope the course gives you some insight into how you might handle these conflicts. Theoretically, it is difficult to understand why these conflicts exist without some grounding in the history of gender relations, family structures, and work demands. Most importantly, I hope you gain an understanding of how norms around motherhood, ideal worker jobs, and individualism function, and how they can change. Finally, politics are important in part because the U.S. is so far behind most other nations in terms of family policies, but also because this is an election year, and the outcome of the election will determine what we as a nation do about these issues.

Critical reading, thinking and writing is central to accomplishing the objectives of the course. For purposes of reading, this means asking 1) can I describe a specific reading briefly, 2) did the author accomplish what she or he set out to do, 3) do the data (if used) fit the author's arguments, 4) does the reading help to make sense of your world, 5) does the reading help to make sense of the lives of others here in the U.S. and abroad, and 6) what is missing or wrong with the reading, and does it contradict other readings?

This course uses a living syllabus approach, so you should check the world-wide web version of this syllabus regularly for any changes in the scheduling of readings or assignments and for any revisions to the discussion questions. If you or I discover better or more up-to-date readings during the semester, readings can be switched, but the class will always have at least two weeks notice of any changes (and the assigned books will not be changed).

Readings:
Most of the readings are available by clicking on this syllabus from the world-wide web (http://lser.la.psu.edu/workfam/lirwm472.htm). Articles that are not directly available from the web are available either directly from the on-line PSU "CAT" (check the catalogue entry for the
link) or through the "e-journals" links on the library web page. The three books you need to purchase can be found (often used) at www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com and are:


Course Requirements:
Students who write the initial paper, attend class, engage in discussions, do the readings prior to class, and work on the project throughout the semester will do well. *If you miss more than two weeks of class for any reason, or are often late, it will be very difficult to pass this class, so please plan on regular, and on-time attendance.*

*Initial paper:* A one- to four-page double-spaced history of your life is due on Tuesday, September 2. Please email the paper as an attachment before class if there is any reason you might be late or miss class. The paper should cover: a) where you were born and when, b) your parents work situation, ethnic and class background (e.g., middle class or working class), c) your most favorite and least favorite activities as a child, d) any moves or major family events while you were growing up, e) your most favorite and least favorite activities and people while you were in high school, f) why you selected PSU, g) your plans for the future in terms of a partner/spouse, children, and a career, including where you would like to live. These will be distributed to other class members, so please do not include information you do not want others to know.[5% of the final grade, grading based on the quality of the writing, coherence, and coverage of all relevant topics]

*Project:* A project, concluding with a 15-page paper due during the final examination period or a 20-minute in-class presentation, should pull the course together for students. For the project, you pick a real family (it need not be your own, but could be), and give a history of work and family commitments and conflicts. For example, if you picked your mother, you might ask a) what plans she had for work, family, marriage and education during high school, b) how these plans actually played out and why they (usually) did not work as hoped, c) how children, other family issues, and volunteer work or paid employment (if relevant) was juggled with those other commitments, and d) what policies he or she thinks might have helped. This history and discussion should be analyzed in light of the class readings and discussion (e.g., whether the circumstances were typical, and how societal gender, race and class patterns fit or do not fit), and conclude with your own policy prescriptions. Students are invited to (but do not have to) work on these projects in groups of two. If you work in a group, you will also be expected to analyze: a) who 'pays' for any policies or strategies you suggest (including time and money), b) why your suggested strategies are fair, and c) whether the strategies are likely to be implemented soon and why. Eight students will be able to present the project in class; powerpoint will be available and should be used for in-class presentations, but no written version of the presentation is required. For those of you who would like to undertake a different research project, please let me know and that can be arranged. A one-page outline of the paper is due on November 4 [the project is 25% of the final grade, with 1% based on the outline] Sample powerpoint
Class Attendance: Starting on September 9, students who regularly attend class will receive at least half of the points possible here, and those who are active in discussions on a regular basis will receive full credit (i.e., 3 pts. of 6 each period for attendance, with 6 pts. for students who demonstrate knowledge of the readings). Being active in discussion means a) doing the readings beforehand, and b) providing thoughtful feedback on the readings. I will toss out two class period's worth of participation (or one week). You may also attend Elrena Eva's brownbag lecture on "Mama PhD" from 11:30a-12:30p, Tues, Oct 28, 132 Elec. Eng. East, Mary Ann Mason's lecture 4-5:30p, Thur, Sept. 11, 112 Walker bldg., or the Phillip Murray lecture, 7-9p, Mon., Sept. 22, 104 Feller bldg., featuring Stewart Acuff, Organizing Director of the AFL-CIO to make up for up to two class periods (let me know if you hear of other relevant events). [30% of final grade]

Quizzes: There will be 11 quizzes, one for each week starting on September 9 and ending before the Thanksgiving recess. These will be given at the beginning of class on either Tuesday or Thursday, and will last ten minutes each. Each quiz will include two to five short answer questions, and will cover the readings assigned for the three class periods up to and including that day. You can either miss one quiz or the lowest quiz score will be dropped [4% for each of 10 quizzes counts toward the final grade, for 40% of the total on the final grade].

Workfam Newsgroup: Students should join "workfam," the newsgroup that I moderate. This is a weekly summary of research and events in the field. We will start Tuesday class with a discussion of materials from the last week's post. Just send an email to drago@psu.edu saying "put me on," and you will be. Unlike most other newsgroups, you will not be able to reply or post directly to the group, but please feel free to mention in class any materials you think should be covered on the newsgroup that week.

Course grade: Final grades will be scored out of 100 possible points using the scale A 93-100, A- 90-92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 70-76, D 60-69, F 59 or below.

Academic Integrity: Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University’s Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

If any student has a special need for accommodation, please let me know on the first day of class.

CLASS SCHEDULE
Introduction of the Class 8/26

An introduction to the issues and to class members.


Background 8/28

"Family and Medical Leave Act" entry in BC Work-Family Encyclopedia (pretend you are employed and have a new child arriving soon; how would you determine whether you are eligible for leave, how long would the leave be, and what pay or benefits would you receive?).


Initial project due in class 9/2

Workplace Flexibility 9/2

Alliance for Workplace Flexibility, Workplace Flexibility: Innovation in Action, 2008 (note, you need to briefly login to download the document)

Discussion of initial project 9/4

Definitions, 9/9-9/11


Theory 9/16-9/25

Robert Drago, Striking a Balance, C1-2 (9/16), C3-4 (9/18), C5-6 (9/23), C7 (9/25)

Motherhood Manifesto (movie) 10/2

Personal Challenges 10/7-10/16

Ellen Ernst Kossek and Brenda Lautsch, CEO of Me: Creating a Life That Works in the Flexible Job Age, C1-3 (10/7), C4-6 (10/9), C7-8 (10/14), C9-10 (10/16)

Presidential Politics 10/21-10/23

McCain campaign, Obama campaign (find stances on issues covered in the work and family bill of rights) (10/23)

Gender and Work-Family 10/28-10/30


Mary Dean Lee and Ellen Ernst Kossek, "Crafting Lives That Work: A Six-Year Retrospective on Reduced-Hours Work" 2005 (10/28).


OUTLINE OF FINAL PROJECT DUE 11/4

Unions and Work/Family 11/4

BC Work-Family Encyclopedia entry: "Unions and Work and Family Integration"


The UAW/Ford Family Service & Learning Center online http://www.familycenteronline.org/

Poverty 11/6


11/11 Women at PSU


Employer Initiatives 11/13


OUTLINE OF FINAL PROJECT DUE 11/18
Politics on an International Scale 11/18


Sexual Harassment 11/20

[PSU Policies on Sexual Harassment](#), 2000.

[Cases of Sexual Harassment](#), 2000.

Child Care & Work/Family at PSU (guest speaker: Linda Pierce, Coordinator of Work/Life Programs, PSU) 12/2


21st Century Community Learning Centers, "*Federal Initiatives*," 2008. (after school care)


NACCRRRA, [Some State's Regulations Don't Protect Children in Home Care Settings](#). 2008.

Student Presentations: 12/4, 12/9, 12/11

Final Project due on 12/16 at classtime. Papers should be sent as an attachment by email to [drago@psu.edu](mailto:drago@psu.edu), and have your name (only) on the first page, with the paper beginning on the 2nd page. *Please save a copy of the paper in case the original is lost!*
