Welcome to the world of work and family research! The field of work-family (w-f) historically concerned intersections and the interplay between commitments to employment and to family, although the field has since broadened to include related issues such as leisure, the division of housework between men and women, and gender pay equity.

The field emerged from the entry of white women and particularly mothers into the workforce. These phenomena were associated with increased family diversity, the expansion of formal and informal child care and elder care programs, an increase in reduced and flexible hours employment, and a growing mismatch between public policies and the needs of employers and families. The field emerged as an attempt to address the practical problems associated with these social shifts, although ideology necessarily plays a role (e.g., in studies of the effects on child development related to mothers’ employment... that ignore fathers).

Given the practical nature of the questions and policy issues the w-f field addresses, it is inherently interdisciplinary. The field proper arguably started inside the discipline of sociology during the 1970s and early 1980s. It then expanded into the disciplines of child development, economics, demography, psychology, anthropology, management, gender studies, legal studies, and history. The objective of the course is to give you much of the background needed to successfully perform interdisciplinary w-f research.

**Assignments.** Your course grade will be based upon performance on

- A mid-term examination (20 pts.). The exam will last 60 minutes, and will involve answering four out of six questions.
- A final quiz covering the last few set pieces of material (10 pts.). The quiz will last 40 minutes and involve answering four short questions.
- Class participation (20 pts.). Students can miss two class periods without penalty, but are otherwise expected to and will be graded on doing the set readings prior to class and discussing the same.
- Two half-hour book reviews will be presented by each student during the final few weeks (12 pts. each). Other students will not be responsible for reading this material.
- A research paper due during the final examination period (26 pts). If we have enough students (e.g. six), the research papers can be joint. The paper can serve as a section of your literature review for a thesis, although that is not required.
- Books are available at amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com, and should total less than $100 for required works. The rest of the assigned readings will either be available on-line through the Penn State library, or I will provide a single copy in class for copying (e.g., the Striking a Balance m.s.).
Academic Integrity Statement

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.

Course Schedule

Overview (week 1)

- TakeCareNet, “The Work and Family Bill of Rights,” www.takecarenet.org (9/7)

Sociological Approaches


Ethnographic Approaches


I/O Psychology & Management
• Behson, S.J. The relative contribution of formal and informal organizational work-family support. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* v. 66, 2004.(10/12)

**Mid-term Examination** (10/24)

**Developmental Approaches**


**Economic Approaches**


**Interdisciplinary Approaches**


**Public Policy**


**Final quiz** (11/28)
Books for Review (11/28-12/14)