NOTE: This is an instructor’s version of the syllabus. It includes notes (indicated by an IV) about in-class visuals/presentations and assignments. The assignments could be included on a student syllabus. Also, please note that these are just examples of the kinds of in-class visuals and presentations available on the Sloan Work-Family website. More are available on a variety of topics. In addition to activities and assignments that incorporate the use of the Sloan Work-Family encyclopedia, I also assign take-home exams that provide another outlet for students to work with entries.

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Course introduction:
This course explores the relationship between people’s work and family lives, and why work-family conflict has increased in recent years. We discuss the causes and consequences of work-family conflict, with consequences including workers’ psychological and physical well-being, child development and well-being, workplace productivity, and issues related to employee recruitment and retention. We study how work-family issues are affected by current trends in society and the economy and labor market, and we look at the role of work flexibility policies in reducing work-family conflict.

This course has an optional service learning component, which consists of volunteering in the community with a disadvantaged population facing work-life and other related issues. The purpose of the service learning experience is to provide an additional perspective on course lessons. While it is important to become familiar with the research and other literature on work and family, obtaining first-hand experience is a powerful way to add to your understanding of these issues as they exist in people's real lives.

Readings:
Unless otherwise noted, readings are available on the course Blackboard page. An (S) next to the reading indicates an entry from the Sloan Work-Family Encyclopedia; links available on Blackboard

Grading:
Midterm 25%, Final 25%, Assignments 40%, Class Participation 10%

Assignments (see separate page)
-Country profile
-Two two- to three-page reflection pieces on service learning.
-Interview project on changes in the gender division of labor.
-Essay on encyclopedia articles
Week 1 (Jan. 15 and Jan. 18):
Introduction to course and to service learning

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

Week 2 (Jan. 22 and Jan. 25):
Family composition: Trends in marriage, divorce, and fertility

Social capital
- Edwards 2006. Social Capital. (S)

IV: Social capital activity:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=779&area=All

The workplace: Job design and workplace culture
- Lambert and Henley. 2007. Low Level Jobs and Work-Family Studies. (S)
- Han 2007. Nonstandard Work Schedules and Work-Family Issues. (S)
- Fried. 1998. "The Decision to Take Time," (pp. 33-52)

Consumption
- Schor. 1998. The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don’t Need. (Selection)

Week 3 (Jan. 29 and Feb. 1):
Child care
- Casper and Bianchi. 2002. Continuity and Change in the American Family. Ch. 7

IV: Costs of Childcare activity:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=6362&area=All

Gender, the division of labor, and segmentation/inequality
- Estes. 2005. Work Family Policies and Gender Inequality at Work (S)

IV: Workplace culture and gender activity:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=1231&area=All

Week 4 (Feb. 5 and Feb. 8):
Gender (continued)
CONSEQUENCES (POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE)

Week 5 (Feb. 12 and Feb. 15):
Background

Benefits of multiple roles
Menaghan. 1989. "Role Changes and Psychological Well-Being: Variations in Effects by Gender and Role Repertoire." (Read up to but not including the Methods section)

Challenges of multiple roles: How work affects individuals, their partners, and their children
Hochschild. 1989. The Second Shift. (Selection)
Westman. 2005. Crossover of Stress and Strain Between Spouses (S)
Brockwood. 2007. Marital Satisfaction and the Work-Family Interface (S)

IV: Slides on paid sick days:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=4246&area=All
IV: Slides on work flexibility as a public health issue:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=4548&area=All
IV: Slides on work flexibility, food choices, and health:
http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=14794&area=All

Week 6 (Feb. 22.) (No class Feb. 19, follow Monday schedule): Service-learning reflection #1 due

Challenges of multiple roles (continued)

Week 7 (Feb. 26 and Feb. 29):
Work-family strain and community: How do they affect each other?
Voydanoff. 2002. Community as a Context for the Work-Family Interface. (S)
Bookman. 2004. Starting in Our Own Backyards: How Working Families Can Build Community and Survive the New Economy. (S)
Week 8 (March 4 and March 7): March 7: Receive take-home midterm.
Reflections on service-learning

Week 9 (March 11) (No class March 14: SPRING BREAK) March 11: Midterm DUE
The life-course perspective
   Moen and Sweet. 2004. "From 'Work-Family' to 'Flexible Careers': A Life Course
   Reframing."

Week 10 (March 18 and March 21): SPRING BREAK

Week 11 (March 25 and March 28): Service-learning reflection #2 due 3/25
Welfare reform, work, and family
   Thorniest Conundrum?"
   Welfare Reform.*
   Kaushal et al. 2007. "Welfare Reform and Family Expenditures: How are Single
   Mothers Adapting to the New Welfare and Work Regime." Do NOT get bogged down in
   the complexities of the statistical results.

Week 12 (April 1 and April 4): Service-learning reflection #3 due 4/4
Private and public policies to address work family conflict: America and abroad
   Nowicki. 2003. *Family and Medical Leave Act.* (S)
   Pitt-Catsouphes. 2003. *Family Friendly Workplace.* (S)

Week 13 (April 8 and April 11):
Work and family later in life: Workers, parents, and spouses
   James. 2007. *Aging and Work.* (S)

Week 14 (April 15 and April 18): Paper on gender division of labor due 4/18
The Opt-Out Revolution???

Week 15 (April 22 and April 25): April 25: Receive final exam
Prospects for the future, prospects for change
   Glass. 2000. "Envisioning the Integration of Family and Work: Toward a Kinder,
   Gentler Workplace."
   DeGroot and Armando. 2005. *Historical Perspectives on Social Change.* (Start
   reading at Future-Where are We Going?) (S)
**Week 16 (April 29):**
Final Exam DUE

**Assignments:**
*Country work and family profiles.* See [http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=6366&area=All](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/activities_entry.php?id=6366&area=All)

20 percent of assignments grade

*Two two- to three-page reflection pieces linking your service learning experience to one or more specific topics or readings from class.* Be clear and descriptive about the topic/reading you are choosing and how something you experienced/heard about during your service learning links to it (is it an example of it? does it contradict it? etc.)

30 percent of assignments grade

*Encyclopedia essay.* Read Lambert and Henly (2007) and Han (2007) and write a two- to three-page essay discussing the similarities and differences between how low wage work and nonstandard work pose challenges for individuals and families. Use 12-point Times New Roman font, standard margins, double space, etc.

20 percent of assignments grade

*Interview project on changes in the gender division of labor.*
For this assignment, you will interview two people aged 55 or older. One must be female and one must be male. They must be parents (anyone’s parents). In your interview, ask them about how they and their spouse split up child-raising and domestic tasks when their kids were younger and whether they think that things have begun to change. Then write a five- or six-page essay reporting your findings. Use 12-point Times New Roman font, standard margins, double space, etc.

This assignment is basically a mini social research project. It will give you experience gathering data and figuring out how to report your data in a way that conveys the lessons and some of the specific details you have learned, but in a concise and summarized way so that the reader is not overwhelmed. It will give you a chance to look at the world and make your own sociological observations, which might be fun and interesting.

Tips on interviewing:
The goal is to get as many of your interviewees’ own thoughts and feelings as possible. Therefore, instead of asking them a bunch of yes or no questions, start out with very general questions and let the interviewee direct the course of the conversation as much as possible. If your interviewee doesn’t cover some of the specific topics that you think are interesting, then you might want to ask more specific questions. But try to avoiding “leading” your interviewees into certain specific answers. We are interested in what they think and what their experiences are.

Tips on the type of information you might look for (but you don’t have to limit yourself to these):
• Ask about both behaviors and attitudes. For example, a woman’s husband might have spent time with the kids (his behavior), but maybe he had to be asked to do so (so he didn’t necessarily have an egalitarian attitude towards contributing to child-raising).

• As you know, there are different types of housework tasks. Maybe the husband contributed more in some ways than others.

• There are also different ways that a parent can be involved with kids—it might include “watching” them or going to a school event, but there is also emotional involvement and whether a parent is knowledgeable or concerned about the details of their kids’ lives. For example, a parent might attend the school play, but they might not have heart-to-heart conversations about their children’s concerns.

• In short, don’t just find out whether the father was involved or not—it’s not a yes or no question. Make sure you pick up on this complexity.

• Also, for each person, give their basic personal information: age, gender, number of kids, marital history, was there ever a stepfamily, if they ever worked, occupation, and whatever else you find relevant or interesting.

Tips on writing:
• There are two main ways I can think of to organize this essay. If you think of another way, ask me.

Both formats have the same type of introduction and the same conclusion:

Start with an introduction in which you introduce the issue of the gender division of labor, and the fact that it has evolved (this includes trends in women working for pay, men doing housework, etc.; ask me if you want some additional sources on this). Cite some statistics and some issues that we have discussed in class. Then explain that you have interviewed some people regarding these issues as a way to get an “up close and personal” look at some of these issues (as opposed to just looking at a bunch of statistics).

In the conclusion, sum up what you found in your interviews. Do your interviewees perceive that the world has changed significantly? Will it continue to change in the future? Do your interviewees’ stories either reflect or don’t reflect what the statistics seem to suggest about the gender division of labor? Etc.

The first option for the body of the essay is to write about each interviewee separately. The first paragraph or paragraphs is about the first interviewee and what they said, the second paragraph(s) are about the second interviewee and what they said, etc.

The second option is to organize the body by theme. For example, the first theme might be time spent with children, and you’d discuss what your interviewees said about that theme. The second theme might be how knowledgeable the husband/father was about the children. The third theme might be the mother’s work life. The fourth theme might be housework. Etc.

• Don’t overuse direct quotations. Quotations are usually awkward and disrupt from the flow of the paper. Use them if people said something very colorful or poignant. Otherwise, just paraphrase. Always keep the quotes as short as possible.

• You won’t be able to report all the details you learn about. That can be frustrating if you get a lot of good information that you want to report. It’s just a part of life as a researcher. Focus on the most interesting and important points.

30 percent of assignments grade