Description

Although Rosabeth Moss Kanter pioneered work-family studies in the late 1970s, even as recently as two decades ago, these realms of human activity were treated as "separate spheres." That is, individuals were supposed to maintain a sharp distinction between their responsibilities to their employers and loved ones. The last two decades has seen increased research on how each institution affects the other. We will survey theory and research in the growing area of work and family, with the aim of discovering what we know, what we don’t know, and what we need to find out through systematic research.

Readings:

In the past, I've assigned a reader for the course: Dubeck and Dunn's, Workplace / Women's Place (vol2). Although this reader is for an undergraduate major, you might find it helpful if you are surveying this field for the first time. Selections from this reader are posted as "optional readings" on the syllabus. For required readings, please see the scanned research articles loaded onto Blackboard (see "course documents").

Course Format

I assign approximately 4-6 articles per class session, which allows us the opportunity to modify the syllabus if necessary. In addition, if you have an article you would like added to the syllabus, the calendar allows for that. At each class session, a student will be responsible for leading a discussion on a block of material. Here you will take an article or two, summarize them for the class, and offer some questions for class discussion. Please see the appended tip sheet for more information.

To facilitate discussion in any given class period, I am going to ask that you write a reaction piece of about 200 words on the assigned readings every week. By a reaction piece, I mean a comment that might start something like this: "When I was reading (selected article or articles), I was thinking of....." You can relate an article(s) to personal experiences of your work or family life (or someone you know), other material from this or another course that you think is relevant, or you can be analytical if you want to (what criticisms do you have and what research questions are raised in your mind by this article?). The purpose of the discussion forums is to get you thinking and talking about the material and to share your thoughts with others. Please post your reaction pieces to the current week's discussion forum on BlackBoard. So that everyone has a chance to digest the reaction pieces prior to seminar, I am going to require that you post your thoughts by 1930 on Sunday evenings. I also encourage you to offer reactions to the postings of others in the seminar.

Evaluation

I will evaluate you on your communication skills. Your participation in class sessions and your presentations will account for approximately half of your grade. The other half will come from either a paper or from the final exam. If you elect to take a final exam, you will answer two "comp-type" questions during the final exam period (closed book). Students who elect to take the final are limited to earning a grade of no higher than B+ in the course.
Students can try for an A by forgoing the final exam and writing an original paper that will advance knowledge in the field of work-family studies. In evaluating papers, I try to take a student's program into account. If you are a first-year student in our program and/or in the M.A. program, a research proposal may be beneficial to your professional development. If you can synthesize a literature, critique it, and develop a research design that would advance knowledge in the field, that would be about an A effort on a paper. For students who are more advanced, I think you should already be doing research. This is especially true if you aspire to an academic career – to get an academic job you have to publish in graduate school. So, for advanced students, I regard literature reviews as about a B+ or A- effort (depending on the quality of your proposed design), and I reserve the highest grade for students who present actual findings If you elect to write a paper, I will ask you for a prospectus and a central bibliography in about week 7 of the course.

**Course Calendar**

**Week 1 (March 26) - Introduction to the Course/Getting Organized**

**Week 2 (April 2) – Trends in female labor force participation, family, and work**


Bianchi, 2000, "Maternal employment & time with children," *Demography,*

*Optional -- D&D Reader: ch. 4 (England, et al.); ch. 5 (Williams); ch. 6 (Reskin); Appendix II*

**Week 3 (April 9) – Gender differences in work orientations**


Marsden, Kalleberg, and Cook, 1993, “Gender differences in organizational commitment” *Work and Occupations*

Mastekassa & Olsen, 1998, "Gender, absenteeism, and job characteristics." *Work and Occupations*

*Optional – D&D Reader: ch. 1 (Freeman); ch. 2 (Orenstein); ch. 3 (Correll); ch. 8 (Claes); ch. 14 (Stone & Lovejoy)*

Desai and Waite, 1991, "Women's employment during pregnancy and after the first birth," *ASR*
Week 4 (April 16) – Gender differences in work outcomes


Optional – D&D Reader: ch. 7 (Larson); ch. 9 (Federal commission); ch. 10 (Ragins et al.)

Week 5 (April 23) -- Dual-earner families and the Time Bind

Maume and Bellas, 1999, "The 'Overworked American' or 'The Time Bind'? Assessing competing explanations for time spent in paid labor. American Behavioral Scientist
Jacobs and Gerson, 2001, "Overworked individuals or overworked families: Explaining trends in work, leisure, and family time," Work and Occupations
Mattingly et. al., 2003, "Gender Differences in the Quantity and Quality of Free Time: The U.S. Experience," Social Forces

Optional – D&D Reader: ch. 12, 13 (Hochschild);

Week 6 (April 30) – Gender, work, and household roles

Presser, 1994, “Employment schedules among dual-earner spouses and the division of household labor” ASR
Kmec, 1999, “Multiple Aspects of Work-Family Conflict.” Sociological Focus,
Week 7 (May 7) – Have Men Changed?


Glass, "Gender liberation, economic squeeze, or fear of strangers: Why fathers provide infant care in dual-earner families," *J. of Marriage and the Family*


Aldous et al., "Fathering over time: What makes the difference?" *J. of Marriage and the Family*

Week 8 (May 14) – Parent’s jobs and children's lives


Parcel, Nickoll, and Dufur, 1996, “The effects of parental work and maternal non-employment on children’s reading and math achievement” *Work and Occupations*

Parcel and Menaghan, 1994, “Early parental work, family social capital, and early childhood outcomes” *AJS*


Optional: Crouter & McHale, 2003, "Work time, family time, and children's time," Unpublished manuscript

Week 9 (May 21) - “Family-friendly” organizations

Glass and Estes, 1997, The family-responsive workplace," *Annual Review of Sociology*

Kingston, 1990, “Illusions and ignorance about the family-responsive workplace” *Journal of Family Issues*


Glass, 2004, "Blessing or Curse?: Work-Family Policies and Mother’s Wage Growth Over Time" *Work & Occupations*

Optional – D &D Reader: ch. 28 (Mainero&Sullivan); ch. 29 (Gerstel & McGonagle)
Week 10 (May 28) – CLASS CANCELLED (Memorial Day)

Optional Final Exam (June 6) - 4:30-6:30 pm
Guidelines for in-class presentations

The purpose of this exercise is to practice presenting complex ideas to a learned audience, much like the atmosphere in presenting a paper at a professional conference or teaching at the college level. In this case you will select an article or two from the reading list and critique it for the benefit of the class. I provide some tips for effective presentations below:

1. Distribute a handout to the rest of the class showing the outline of your talk. Make the handout as detailed as you like as long as it fits on a single page. Aim to speak for about 15-20 minutes. Some students gain confidence when they time themselves at home before giving the scheduled talk.

2. Summarize the article briefly. We have all read it, so there is no need to give a page-by-page description of the content. Hit the important points of the article and emphasize what the authors are doing which has not been done in the literature before; highlight what is new and better about this article.

3. Make eye contact while making your points. As you know from the student's perspective, it is difficult to listen to a person "buried" in his/her notes.

4. Analyze the articles strengths and weaknesses. Show how the article fits in with or contradicts other writings we have covered in class. Of course, this is easier for presentations later in the course, and I will take that into account for early-presenters.

5. If you had written the article would you have done anything differently? Do you see a need for further research or conceptualization of important ideas?

6. You will know how successful your presentation was by the reaction you get from other seminarians. Try to provoke them.