UGS 302 Combining Work & Family: Challenges and Solutions

Semester: Fall, 2018
Class time: MW 12:00-1:30 p.m. CAL 323

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2:00 p.m. or by appointment

Description: This course will evaluate how modern societies have addressed the problem of work and family conflict in everyday life. Is it really possible to have a successful career and still be an involved parent of your own children, or can no one really "have it all"? We will focus on three key themes: 1) how the separation of "work" from the family household during industrialization created immediate social problems in Europe and the United States, and how these are now spreading through globalization to the rest of the world, 2) how and why the gendered solution of "women in the family and men at work" was both unfair and unsustainable in the 20th century, and 3) what models for integrating childbearing and family care with paid work currently exist, comparing European and UK social policies to the United States. Why are children now the age group most likely to live in poverty in the U.S.? How can we insure that ordinary citizens have both the time and money to raise children as the costs of educating and providing care for children rapidly escalate? How should the financial and opportunity costs of parenting be divided across mothers, fathers, business, and government? These questions will be the focus of our reading and critical analysis.

Learning Objectives:

1. To learn the most current information available on a wide variety of issues involving changing forms of work, and the challenges to partnering and parenting they bring with them.
2. To become familiar with comparative social policies in other developed Western countries dealing with globalized work, family care, and fertility issues.
3. To develop clear expository writing; including summarizing available evidence, understanding strengths and weaknesses of arguments, and developing an informed opinion of one’s own.
4. To improve critical thinking skills, especially the ability to discern biased and unbiased sources of information, common flaws in statistical information, and sustainable and unsustainable logical arguments.

Books:
There is one text required for this class and available at the UT bookstore:

Extra readings not available in the class texts will be posted on our CANVAS course web site. Since the format of the course will rely on classroom discussion of the readings, be sure to do the readings before classes begin each week. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, ask questions, and bring additional information to class.

**Requirements.** The class format will be a combination of discussion of class readings and in-class exercises and assignments. Each student will be responsible for attending class and contributing to the discussion; these will review our learning objectives and form the basis of the exams. Students will also be evaluated on the basis of in-class oral debates culminating in an op-ed essay, 2 short answer quizzes, and an empirical essay (8-15 pages) that you will have a chance to revise and resubmit before your final grade.

**Grade composition:**

- empirical paper 30%
- midterm quiz #1 20%
- midterm quiz #2 20%
- participation/oral debate 20%
- final op-ed 10%

**Examination and Graded Materials Policies for this class:**

UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES, NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN; NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. Under exceptional circumstances (verified illness or emergency) or PRIOR instructor consent, due dates for assignments may be rescheduled.

Regarding exams, students are expected to show at the announced place and time. Substitute exams will be provided only to those students with written verification of disability, illness or other emergency. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have missed an exam under these conditions and/or need to schedule a substitute form of examination. Students with known scheduling conflicts should come and see me ahead of time to arrange an alternative place and time for the exam. By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Finally, please remember to retain ALL your graded materials until your final grade report has arrived. In the event that a grade has been recorded improperly or a final grade is contested, it will be your obligation to provide documentation from the graded materials that have been returned to you. You are also advised to keep a copy of every written assignment that you turn in for evaluation (a saved computer file with appropriate date and time works best). While I
count papers before leaving the classroom, and try to make sure that every page of every assignment is kept safely until returned to you, there have been instances of essays turned in with missing pages, turned in to the wrong instructor or mailbox, etc. that make receipt of a back-up copy necessary.

**Other important information:**

The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with others now or in future.

This course fulfills three hours of the component area option of the university core curriculum and addresses three of the core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, and one additional objective (teamwork, personal responsibility, social responsibility, or empirical and quantitative skills).

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, [http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/). Any student needing disability accommodations for assignments or testing should come and speak with me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements before the first assignment or test is due.

Collaboration of any kind during the administration of exams will result in a failing grade for the exam. Cheating of any kind (obtaining exam copies, bringing unauthorized materials to the exam, etc.) will result in a failing grade for that exam. (Link to University Honor Code: [http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html](http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html))

Complaints about grades or course conduct should be first directed to the instructor. Students dissatisfied with the instructor’s resolution of a complaint can contact the department chair, Professor Robert Crosnoe at 512-232-632 for further consideration of the matter.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050

**SYLLABUS by week:**

**August 29** Course introduction and guided exploration: what do you know and what do you think you know? Cognitive bias, implicit bias, and reading critically

[https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html)
**September 5**

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION, Plagiarism, and Appropriate Citation**

*Project:* Search on-line sources on student loan debt and its impact on marriage, childbearing, and homeownership among millennials.

*Op-Ed Sample:*

**September 10-12**

**Does marriage matter?**

*Readings:*

*Op-Ed Sample:*

**September 17-19**

**Fertility, family planning and the baby bust**

*Readings: Sept. 17*

*Sept. 19*

*Op-Ed Sample:*
September 24-26  What’s My Line? Occupational Choice & Increasing Inequality in the Labor Market
University Lecture Series: 7-8 p.m. Bass Concert Hall [PICK ONE to attend]

Readings:
Sept. 24

Op-Ed Samples:

October 1-3  How Bad is the Time Squeeze Felt by American Families?
Midterm Exam #1  October 3

Readings:

October 8-10  The Ideal Worker and Intensive Motherhood – Cultural Archetypes and Their Discontents

Readings:

Op-Ed Sample:

October 15-17  Day care/Early Childhood Education
Debate #1  Should the U.S. Have Universal Pre-k Schooling?

Readings:
Op-Ed Sample:

October 22-24 Parenting Crimes and Misdemeanors

Readings:

Op-Ed Sample:


October 29-31 Can Anyone Have it All?
Debate #2 Is Gender Equality Possible in Work and Family?

Readings:

Op-Ed Sample:

November 5-7 Making Work and Family Decisions – Long Term Consequences of Specialization
First draft of essay due NOV. 7

Readings:

November 12-14 The Value of Leisure? Harry Ransom Center visit
Midterm Exam #2 Nov. 14

Readings:

November 19 Work Day for Essay Revision and Op-Ed Preparation
Debate #3 Can Social Security Be Reformed?  

Readings:  

Op-Ed Sample:  

December 3-5  What Do Other Developed Nations Do? What Should the U.S. Do?  
Debate #4 Should we follow the example of Europe with public supports for parenting?  
Final draft of essay and op-ed due DEC. 5  

Readings:  
Covert, Bryce “We Know We Work Too Much. Now How Do We Stop It?” The New Republic, July 2, 2014  

FINAL PARTY – Monday, December 10

“Educated people should be able to express complex ideas in clear writing and speech. They should appreciate that objective knowledge is a precious commodity, and know how to distinguish vetted fact from superstition, rumor, and unexamined conventional wisdom. They should know how to reason logically and statistically, avoiding the fallacies and biases to which the untutored human mind is vulnerable. They should think causally rather than magically, and know what it takes to distinguish causation from correlation and coincidence. They should be acutely aware of human fallibility, most notably their own, and appreciate that people who disagree with them are not stupid or evil. Accordingly, they should appreciate the value of trying to change minds by persuasion rather than intimidation or demagoguery.”

-Steven Pinker, New Republic, September 4, 2014