Managing the Demands of Work and Family for Women in Academic Medicine and Science

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What’s on your mind about work and family?
Work-life integration: What can be included?

- Dual Career couples
- Elder/ family care
- Parenthood/ child care
- Sick care (self and others)
- Same sex couples/families
- Birth and adoption
- Personal Health and well-being
- Civic engagement /hobbies
- Other?
Why Institutions are Becoming “Family Friendly”

- To recruit and retain quality faculty
- Concerns about (under)representation of women
- To have higher morale and greater productivity
- To create more equitable work places
- Pressure from external sources
  - AAUP Statement on Family and Academic Work
  - Funding Agencies (NSF)
  - Other institutions
Academic context

- Greedy workplaces
- Greedy jobs
- Bad reputation
- Ideal worker norms
- Work-life conflicts
- Culture of doing more with less
- Crisis orientation
- Historically not friendly to women
Personal contexts

- Choice
- Timing
  - Careers (e.g., wait to be full)
  - Family (e.g., when kids get older)
- Readiness
- Socialization
- Dual careers
- Family/personal needs
- Synergy between teaching, research, service, and clinical practice
What is at stake?

- Health and well-being
- Productivity
- Making WSU a great place to work
- Mimetic isomorphism – keeping up with the Jone’s
- Millenial faculty
- Shared parenting
- New models for families
- Other?
Work and life integration?

Really?
Methods

- Qualitative study
  - Interviews with 120 women pre-tenure (1998-2000) (early career)
    - Research universities, comprehensive colleges, liberal arts, community colleges
    - All with young children, all tenure track
    - Variety of fields
  - Follow up interviews with 87 post-tenure (2007-2009) (mid career)
  - Follow up interviews 2014-2017 (n=82 mid mid-career)
Conceptual lenses

- Socialization
  - Linear (pipeline)

- Life Course Perspective
  - Synergistic/Integrative View of Life and Work
  - Feminist Perspectives
    - Liberal
    - Post structural
Early career

“I can only do so much in a day. Having a family helps me be more efficient with my time and also gives me much needed perspective.”
Mid-career

“You get tenure and you never hear anything about promotion.”

“I am not really interested in moving up at this time.”
“Going into administration isn’t really worth it. You have to work all the time and that doesn’t seem that appealing to me.”
The difference that difference makes...

- Race/ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Socioeconomic status
- Dual careers
- Single moms
- Institutional type
- Rank and status
- Disciplinary differences
Women in STEM

- Not all STEM is the same
- Managing labs
- Field Work
- Grant funding
- Identity as a scientist
- Options beyond academe
- Collaboration (+/-)
In sum….

- Family life and academic careers evolve
- Both life long propositions
- Progress more than just leaning in
- Friction between structure and agency
- Tenure process—based on the male clock
- Getting stuck in the middle—Associate Professor/Associate Dean
  - Smile work (Tierney & Bensimon, 1986)
  - “good professor”/ “good mother”
- Women at the top – leadership not a priority
Tenure and Biological Clocks: Can they Get along?

- Tenure is a normative academic structure fashioned on a male career trajectory
- Tenure is essential, but may need to be more flexible while maintaining integrity

What good is a policy, if people don’t use it?

- Allow paid leave
- Flexibility
- Create environment that minimizes fear
- Policies need to focus on immediate needs of having babies and long term concerns (child care, coordinated semester schedules with local schools)
Work/Life Policies and Programs at WSU

- Tenure clock extension (faculty handbook III c.3.f)
- FMLA (faculty handbook III.d.6)
- Paid leave (faculty handbook III.d.13,14)
- Policies supporting a positive work and educational environment (faculty handbook III.a)
- Professional and Retraining Leave (Sabbaticals) (faculty handbook III.d.12)
- Phased retirement (faculty handbook III.f.3)

Source: WSU Faculty Manual

Other policies at WSU

- Partner accommodations (https://policies.wsu.edu/prf/index/manuals/60-00-personnel/60-15-partner-spouse-accommodation/)
- Modified duties: (https://hrs.wsu.edu/employees/disability-services/modified-duties/)
- Part-time tenure track options
- Mentoring programs (multiple)
- Childcare subsidy program: (https://spokane.wsu.edu/studentaffairs/successcenter/childcare-subsidy-program/)
- ADVANCE Grant: (https://advance.wsu.edu/)
Dilemmas

How meet needs of women AND men as parents? Can we give women special treatment?

- Policies to integrate work and family need to be implemented for men and women
- Men need to be included in such policies, in part to minimize the effect of the “second shift” experienced by women
- Equitable families require equitable workplaces
- Yet recognize unique needs of women given history in higher education and given physical aspect of motherhood
Implications

- Update, monitor, publicize campus policies
- Leadership development programs
- Lead by example
- It’s not just about women, but gendered
- It’s not just about agency – it’s structural
- Problem with pipeline metaphor
Questions?

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