

The Professional & the Personal: Worklife Balance and Mid-Level Student
Affairs Administrators

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ABSTRACT

The integration of work and family continues to be a challenge for women and men of the academy (Gatta & Roos, 2004). Much of the research on worklife balance in the post-secondary education setting focuses on the lives of instructional faculty (Bailyn, 2003; Bassett, 2005; Drago et al., 2006; Drago & Williams, 2000; Gatta & Roos, 2004; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1999; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). There is also a need to understand how university administrators juggle the demands of work and personal life.

The primary purpose of this phenomenological inquiry was to make meaning of the lived experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators by examining worklife balance. A secondary purpose was to gather administrator perceptions of their environment to gain insight into infrastructures that may promote or hinder worklife balance efforts. Respondents consisted of 30 mid-level student affairs administrators from an array of post-secondary institutions across the United States. Data were generated from semi-structured telephone interviews and two projection exercises.

Findings suggest that mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences as driven by a shortage of time. Administrators maintain that time is a limited resource that causes difficulty when juggling competing worklife demands. Their involvement in multiple, interdependent roles is rewarding but presents ongoing personal and professional challenges. Administrators report that shortage of time, coupled with the demands of multiple roles impacts personal well-being and career satisfaction. Mid-level student affairs administrators also identified environmental infrastructures that promote and/or hinder worklife efforts in the context of several cultural dynamics. Formal and informal support mechanisms such as policies, programs and resources, effective supervision and campus support networks assist administrators in mitigating worklife challenges. This is in contrast to expectations, behaviors, and values that

reinforce unhealthy workplace norms. In addition, the lack of organizational policies and programs and poor supervision also hindered worklife efforts.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The United States economy has experienced a great deal of uncertainty since the beginning of the millennium. The shift in the American market has produced a crisis of massive proportion in the housing, banking and finance, and automobile industries (Morgan, 2009). Company closures and downsizing have yielded staggering unemployment numbers. Record high job losses such as the one set on December 11, 2008, when a single-day ushered in 58,000 unemployment claims (Morgan, 2009) signal an ongoing concern about the future of the American workforce.

The economy is markedly different from the robust market of the recent past. The period between 1992 and 2000 reflected a rise in start-up businesses (Smith, 2001). The emergence of traditional brick-and-mortar and e-commerce organizations greatly affected the workforce. Employment opportunities were plentiful and unemployment rates reached record lows (Smith, 2001). The viability of the economy however posed two major implications. First, although the increase in start-ups created more jobs, the pool of qualified workers to fill those positions was limited. To remedy the disparity between jobs and human capital, subcontracting work to foreign countries became a common practice. Outsourcing may have served as a solution for some organizations, but it did not solve the second implication of the market's success – employee turnover. Not only were organizations faced with the arduous task of filling unoccupied positions, they also experienced challenges to retaining their current workforce. No industry escaped turnover problems (Smith, 2001).

Skilled workers are in high demand when unemployment is low (Dobbs, 1999; Smith 2001). Economic booms yield more jobs and higher rates of turnover (Adkerson, 2000; Dobbs, 1999; Jo, 2008; Smith, 2001). Employees dissatisfied with their work environment are more vulnerable to the competitive offers from “poachers” who lure talent away with attractive signing bonuses, stock options, and compensation packages (Cappelli, 2000; Dobbs, 1999). Employees today rarely see themselves as obligated to an organization for an extended period of time (Adkerson, 2000). Turnover is inevitable if better opportunities are presented (Smith, 2001).

A turnaround in the economy and job market influences turnover, however. During tight economic times employees are less likely to depart (Jo, 2008). For example, in a study of 300 managerial or executive employees, 83% of those surveyed indicated their intent to actively seek new employment once the economy improved ("Looking toward recovery," 2003). In the same study, 56% of the 451 human resources professionals surveyed were expecting voluntary turnover rates to rise with a change in the economy. Many of those professionals acknowledged the implementation of retention programs as a means of proactively addressing personnel issues.

Turnover is an ongoing challenge. Although higher rates of turnover occur when the economy is prosperous (Adkerson, 2000; Jo, 2008), organizations are susceptible to turnover at all times (Phillips & Connell, 2003). Employers are more likely to withdraw financial resources to support employees when the economy is slow. Some scholars however maintain that investment in the training and development of staff is most important when there is a temporary economic decline (Phillips & Connell, 2003).

The growth rate of the workforce has declined since the mid-1960s (Smith, 2001). By 2025, this rate is expected to plunge below zero (Smith, 2001). As a result, the job market is reaching a critical juncture - there will be less qualified personnel (Smith, 2001). This conundrum is the impetus for competition among organizations. As such, when talented workers are presented with more attractive opportunities, they are more likely to depart (Dobbs, 1999; Smith, 2001). The existing and looming economic currents are cause for organizations to focus attention on the issues associated with employee turnover.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is more relevant now than ever before. In tight economic and labor market times, not only is the recruitment of staff a problem, retaining staff is also a challenge. The national turnover rate of employees at all companies is an estimated 12% (Pinkovitz, Moskal, & Green, n.d.). One study's findings revealed that 75% of the demand for new hires was not to fill newly created positions but rather to replace those employees who had departed for other jobs (Pinkovitz, et al., n.d.).

There are two types of turnover – involuntary and voluntary. Involuntary turnover refers to departures initiated by the organization. Reasons for involuntary turnover may

include dismissal for poor performance, layoff, early retirement incentives, or resignation under pressure (Phillips & Connell, 2003). Voluntary turnover involves employee departures influenced by personal and/or environmental factors. Inadequate pay, lack of recognition for work, strained supervisor-supervisee relationships, and poor working environments are all examples of factors that influence voluntary turnover. All employee departure is not bad (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Turnover is sometimes necessary, particularly, in situations where the termination of an unproductive employee is essential to maintaining the integrity of an organization. It is also a natural consequence of professional advancement (Xu, 2008a; Zhou & Volkwein, 2004). Voluntary turnover, however, poses a bigger threat to an organization.

High rates of turnover can contribute to a myriad of organizational issues (Hatcher, 1999; Jo, 2008). First, turnover is an administrative burden (Phillips & Connell, 2003). The time employers spend confronting the issue and completing additional paperwork interrupts regular business practices. Another issue associated with voluntary turnover is the disturbance of socialization and communication patterns (Phillips & Connell, 2003). A disruption of communication networks is detrimental to any organizational setting and can lead to a breakdown in team dynamics. Additionally, excessive levels of turnover can damage an organization's reputation (Phillips & Connell, 2003). The revolving door image carries negative implications that can hamper recruitment efforts. Lastly, high levels of voluntary turnover are costly, incurring both direct and indirect costs (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Expenses to recruit and train a new staff member are significant (Adkerson, 2000; Krausz, Bizman, & Weiss, 1989) ranging anywhere between \$1,200 and \$40,000 (Hatcher, 1999). Costs can be considerably higher depending on the position and the educational and experiential background required of the incumbent (Adkerson, 2000). Even replacing an hourly wage employee can cost as much as \$3,372 ("Stay, just a little," 2000).

Indirect costs of turnover include the time spent in the recruitment and training process. The energy invested "may hamper effective operation and interfere with efficient achievement of organizational goals" (Krausz, et al., 1989, p. 94). Moreover, productivity is negatively impacted by turnover (Adkerson, 2000). The indirect costs associated with

lost production are so enormous that they are difficult to quantify (Adkerson, 2000) but production is guaranteed to suffer when an employee departs an organization.

Another indirect cost of turnover is the impact it has on remaining employees (Mobley, 1982; Phillips & Connell, 2003). While departure may create opportunities for horizontal or upward mobility for the “stayer”, the additional workload may be burdensome. The stayer may also be distracted by the co-worker’s exit; curiosity and concern as to why the co-worker departed are likely (Phillips & Connell, 2003). Loss of expertise, poor morale, and service quality are also negative outcomes of turnover (Hatcher, 1999; Jo, 2008; Krausz, et al., 1989; Phillips & Connell, 2003; Shields, 2002).

The voluntary departure of employees has received much attention in the literature, with the primary focus on causes or antecedents of departure. While there is a strong relationship between turnover and salary, an employee’s decision to leave an organization is not always influenced by pay or lack thereof (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Organizational commitment (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002), supervisor-supervisee relations (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Xu, 2008a; Zhou & Volkein, 2004), quality of the job (Rosser, 2004), the work environment (Rosser & Townsend, 2006; Smart, 1990), and overall job satisfaction (Smart, 1990) are among broad factors associated with turnover. Stress and burnout are also predictors of turnover (Barnes, Agago, & Coombs, 1998). The inability of employees to balance work and non-work activities (e.g., family, community obligations) is often the cause of psychological and physical strain.

Interference of work with non-work activities also contributes to higher rates of turnover (Adkerson, 2000; Dalton, Hill, & Ramsay, 1997; Griffeth & Hom, 2001; Phillips & Connell, 2003; Smith, 2001). Expanding family responsibilities along with the growing challenges of work create role/inter-role conflict for those engaged in care-taking behaviors (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Time demands are not just indicative of married workers or those with children. Single and childless employees also acknowledge their frustration with the conflicts between work and life obligations (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Organizations that are intentional in structuring environments that promote worklife balance are more likely to retain employees.

Work, Family, and Life

Turnover is the number one issue facing businesses today (Pinkovitz, et al., n.d.). Company loyalty is almost non-existent (Adkerson, 2000); Americans change jobs an estimated six times in their careers (Jo, 2008). The baby boomer standard of staying with an organization for an extended period of time is no longer commonplace (Mushrush, 2002). This change in employment culture has much to do with the demand for a balance between the dimensions of work and family (Adkerson, 2000; Mushrush, 2002).

Conventional norms regarding the separation of work and family life have permeated the American work culture for decades. Social scientists have rejected this model since its inception (Kanter, 1977). The “most prevalent sociological position on work and family” is the myth of separate worlds (Kanter, 1977, p. 8). Kanter (1977) maintained:

Despite separate territories and an organizational image of ‘non-intrusion,’ the structure of work has a variety of strong influences on family life. Work operates as a dominant constraint on family life as well as a source of economic and personal sustenance. (p. 21)

Kanter (1989) further explains that targeting women as the focal point when studying family life reinforces the myth of separate worlds. Early literature that explored work and family almost exclusively focused on women. This body of work explored the psychological and physical well-being of middle-class women who occupy the roles of wife, mother, and employee. Literature also examined the impact of women’s employment on children. Researchers have examined differences in the psychological well-being between housewives and employed wives (Campbell, 1980; Kibria, Barnett, Baruch, Marshall, & Pleck, 1990); the relationship of paid work to stress indicators such as role overload, role conflict, depression, and anxiety (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Rosenfield, 1989); work-related stress and family-related stress (Baruch, Beiner, & Barnett, 1987); and the impact of labor force changes and parenting on psychological distress (Wethington & Kessler, 1989). The aforementioned studies focused exclusively on mental health. Other studies have investigated differences in job type on the mental and physical stability of women (Repetti, Matthews & Wadron, 1989; Waldron & Jacobs, 1989).

The separate-spheres model by language and definition assumes tension and incompatibility between the dimensions of work and family (Martin, 1990). This framework creates a “false dichotomy” (Martin, 1990), giving the illusion that employees experience family and work in isolation of one another. But in reality there is overlap between the two dimensions (Kanter, 1977; Stebbins, 2001; Voydanoff, 1984).

Four trends have contributed to the change in workforce demographics and these trends have altered previously held attitudes regarding the separate-spheres model and gender roles (Barnett, 1999). The first trend is the growing number of married women in the workforce with young/adolescent children (Barnett, 1999; Stebbins, 2001). In 1992, 75% of married mothers worked in some capacity (part-time or full-time) compared to a more than 50% in 1970 (Stebbins, 2001). Second, the semblance of male and female employment patterns sparked a shift in workforce demographics (Barnett, 1999). No longer are women limiting work to a period in their lives before marriage or postponing paid employment until after their children have reached the age of adulthood (Barnett, 1999). No longer are women dependent on marriage for economic stability (Barnett, 1999). Women are also more likely to engage in full-year, full-time employment (Barnett, 1999). Over time, female employment patterns have begun to parallel those of males. The entrance of middle-to upper-class women to the workforce begged the question of how mothers’ employment impacts children. Studies have investigated differences in the mother-adolescent relationships of women who worked in comparison to those who did not (Armistead, Wierson, & Forehand, 1990; Zaslow, Pedersen, Suwalsky, & Rabinovich, 1989). There is also literature that examined the cognitive (Greenstein, 1995), physical (Hong & White-Means, 1993), psychosocial (Heyns & Catsambis, 1986; Pett, Vaughan-Cole, & Wampold, 1994; Williams & Radin, 1993) and emotional well-being (Joebgen & Richards, 1990) of adolescents with working mothers.

Next, the rise in the diversity of families has challenged the nuclear family structure. Social values have changed significantly with a surge in divorce rates and acceptance of alternative familial arrangements (Stebbins, 2001). No longer is the Ozzie and Harriet lifestyle the dominant societal image. Single-parent, blended, lesbian and gay families, and stepfamilies are becoming the norm (Barnett, 1999; Stebbins, 2001). The fourth trend in workforce demographics involves the increase in dual-earner couples, a

pattern that has been deemed the “new” American family (Barnett, 1999). Father as sole breadwinner was a 1950’s phenomenon. Today, an overwhelming majority of American households consists of dual-earner couples. These four trends not only transformed the landscape of the workforce, but they also brought to the forefront the notion that work and family tensions were not just “women’s issues” (Barnett, 1999).

Work and family are the most dominant domains in the lives of employed men and women (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Michel, Mitchelson, Kotrba, LeBreton, & Baltes, 2009) and maintaining both domains presents challenges. The most common example of work-family conflict occurs “when the time demands of one role make it difficult to meet the time demands of another role or when one schedule directly interferes with another” (Stebbins, 2001, p. 236). Much of the research on work-family conflict focuses on the most common form – time demands of roles. A third of Americans are chronically overworked (Geller, 2005). The 40-hour workweek is almost nonexistent in some employment sectors. On average, the American workforce dedicates 260 hours more to work annually than in decades past (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). The metaphor, “the second shift,” was adopted by Hochschild (1989) in the 1980s to reflect the experiences of married women whose home life was reminiscent of their daily jobs. Hochschild concluded that men were also susceptible to feelings of always being “on duty” in their home life. However, women tended to bear most of the burden with respect to family responsibilities. In a later work, Hochschild (1997) argued that even when two parties participated in the management of the home, “there seemed to be less and less time for the second shift, not to mention relaxed family life” (p. 6). The “time bind” reflects the desire of Hochschild’s participants who wanted to have more time for family. This is an example of the tension between work and family where one dimension (either work or family) suffers.

While early literature focused primarily on the study of women, researchers later explored the impact of role conflict on the psychological and physical well-being of both men and women (Burley, 1994; Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Eckenrode & Gore, 1990; Frone, Russell, Cooper, 1992; Googins, 1991; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991; Izraeli, 1993; Larson, Richards, Perry-Jenkins, 1994; O’Neil & Greenberger, 1994; Weiss, 1990). Conflict is also present “when stress in one domain ‘spills over’ into the

other domain, or when behaviors used in one domain, such as emotional sensitivity useful in family interactions, may not be accepted in another domain” (Stebbins, 2001, p. 236). An extensive body of literature caters to spillover and its effects on working mothers (Barnett & Marshall, 1992; Barnett, Marshall, & Sayer, 1992; Bromet, Dew, & Parkinson, 1990), working fathers (DeLong & DeLong, 1992; Kinnunen, Gerris, & Vermulst, 1996), and dual-earner couples (Barnett, 1994; Neal & Hammer, 2007; Small & Riley, 1990; Williams & Alliger, 1994). Spillover refers to stress that one domain may cause in the other domain. Crossover however occurs when on-the-job circumstances impact one’s relationship with her/his spouse or partner. Several scholars have examined crossover effects (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Wethington, 1989; Doby & Caplan, 1995; Westman, 2006).

Contemporary literature is focused primarily on the integration of work and family/life. The term “balance” is somewhat elusive - its meaning may vary from person to person. Numerous studies have explored the concept of worklife balance (Booth & Frank, 2005; Googins, 1991; Hakim, 2005; Hall, 1993; Houston, 2005; Houston & Marks, 2005; Lewis & Cooper, 2005). Research has also focused on balance in the context of childcare (Deutsch, 2002; Googins, 1991; Nelson, 2002) and eldercare (Anastas, Gibeau, Larson, 1990; Moen, Robison, & Fields, 1994; Wolf & Soldo, 1994).

With the rise in women’s paid work, both men and women are now participating in maintaining the home and providing childcare. The demands associated with household maintenance and childcare can cause strain on employees and infringe on paid work-related responsibilities (Stebbins, 2001). Assisting employees in managing personal and work-related responsibilities is a key retention strategy (Adkerson, 2000). Organizations that support and invest in programs designed to assist personnel to balance work and non-work responsibilities are more likely to retain employees (Jahn, 1998).

Worklife and Higher Education

Higher education has not been immune from the changes seen in other sectors of the economy during the past several decades. The higher education workforce has experienced significant growth and transformation during that time period. According to a recent study of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, the higher education workforce increased by 1.03 million during the years 1987 to 2007. This

number is inclusive of both instructional and non-instructional staff, yielding a 48% increase (Bennett, 2009). This growth is the direct result of rising student enrollment (AFT Higher Education, 2009; Bennett, 2009). Despite technological advances, the labor burden on college and university campuses has not decreased (Bennett, 2009). As the demand for higher education continues to increase, a competent workforce will be necessary to facilitate the instructional and administrative goals of institutions.

Higher education is one of the largest employment sectors in the nation (Jo, 2008). An estimated 1,000,000 faculty and non-instructional professionals are employed at more than 4,000 accredited colleges and universities (Jo, 2008). Like the corporate/business sector, academic institutions are not immune to personnel and human resource management challenges. High levels of voluntary turnover are reported in academia just as they are in other sectors (Buck & Watson, 2002; Jo, 2008).

Of the causes associated with turnover in higher education, work-family conflict has been identified as one of the primary reasons for departure among academics (Jo, 2008). This conflict is particularly challenging for women faculty and administrators. Jo (2008) maintained that an “incompatible working schedule is a constraint to people with parenting responsibilities, who are typically women, and a supportive work environment is critical for retaining women” (p. 578).

The higher education enterprise has traditionally embraced the conventional, separate spheres, work-life model. Gatta and Roos (2004) reported, “Put simply, the [higher education] workplace is structured around the idea that the male professor has a full-time wife at home fulfilling the roles of childcare worker, eldercare provider, maid, launderer, and chef . . . This then allows the hypothetical male faculty member to dedicate time to his university work” (p. 124). A masculine work culture has dominated colleges and universities for more than a century (Gatta & Roos, 2004) however more women have joined the higher education workforce. For example, from 1997 to 2007, the number of women faculty at degree-granting institutions increased by 56% and women in executive, administrative, or managerial roles grew by 66% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008).

Progress by way of policy implementation (e.g., child care, stop-the-tenure-clock, flex-time/modified duties, dual career) has strengthened institutional infrastructures to

assist faculty in the complex task of balancing home and work obligations. While these systems serve to advance worklife balance for faculty there is still a group of individuals that continues to be marginalized – higher education administrators.

One such group of administrators includes student affairs professionals who support the academic mission of the institution through the facilitation of programs and services outside the classroom. The programmatic areas associated with the student affairs profession vary from campus to campus. Generally speaking, student affairs professionals occupy “functionally based” positions in housing, financial aid, and admissions offices (Hirt, 2006, p. 8). They also support the needs of “population-based” groups such as ethnic and cultural minorities and women (Hirt, 2006, p. 8). Broadly defined, the student affairs profession involves all aspects of student life that deal with the personal and interpersonal development and education of students (Javinar, 2000; Rosser, 2000).

While administrators at all levels face challenges with respect to worklife balance, mid-level professionals experience the most tension between work and personal life. They are often raising children, caring for aging parents, and dealing with their own mid-life changes. It is difficult to define what constitutes the mid-level professional (R. Young, 2007; W. Young 2007). A theoretical model grounded in the competencies and skills most often used by mid-level professionals has been offered to define the role of these administrators (W. Young, 2007). Mid-level student affairs administrators have also been defined as those individuals who “occupy the space between entry-level professionals and senior student affairs officers” (Roper, 2007, p. vii). The hierarchical nature of distinguishing mid-level professionals from other administrators is the commonly accepted practice or measure in the student affairs profession (Young, 2007). For purposes of this study, mid-level refers to professionals who have served in the field for somewhere between six and fifteen years after completing a master’s degree.

Conceptual Framework

This study is guided by the Berg, Kalleberg, and Appelbaum’s (2003) high-commitment environments model. According to Berg et al. (2003), organizational climate greatly impacts employees’ ability to maintain a sense of balance between work and family. A high-commitment environment is one that is intentionally designed to support

worklife balance through policy creation and implementation. Other practices also increase an employee's ability to manage the two domains. Involvement in decision-making, informal training, promotion opportunities, and pay for performance are among those practices.

The high-commitment environment model is guided by the theory that organizational commitment increases if workplace structures that assist employees in balancing their work and life obligations are in place. This philosophy is grounded in two postulates. The first refers to the job and personal characteristics that impact organizational commitment. Berg et al. (2003) maintained, "Individual and family characteristics sort and select people into particular kinds of organizations and jobs" (p. 169). Therefore, an employee's commitment to an organization is contingent on support mechanisms that allow balance between work and family domains.

The second postulate presumes that select jobs and workplaces allow employees more autonomy and self-efficacy which, in turn, impacts their ability to manage the various areas of their lives. This is often facilitated through worklife or family-friendly policies and practices. For instance, organizations that allow workers control over scheduling or provide child care assistance help simplify the lives of dual career couples.

Problem Statement

In summary, turnover is not a new challenge for organizations. The demand for human capital is high but at the same time the availability of skilled workers continues to decline. Every industry has been or will be affected by the decline of the workforce (Smith, 2001). Consequently, this negative growth pattern is expected to persist (Smith, 2001). Present issues of the workforce necessitate a closer look at employee turnover.

One of the primary causes associated with turnover is the inability of employees to manage worklife obligations (Griffeth & Hom, 2001; Jo, 2008). Much of this conundrum can be attributed to a change from the traditional 40-hour workweek. Americans are working longer hours (Griffith & Hom, 2001) and report being overworked (Geller, 2005). Employees are devoting more time to their paid work responsibilities (Drago, 2007; Schor, 1991) but want to spend more time with their families (Jones, 2003).

Changes in workforce demography further exasperate the issue. Expanding work hours coupled with the influx of married women with young children, the rise of the dual earner family, and the growing number of diverse family structures (e.g., single parent, same-sex parents) brings to the forefront the complex realities of worklife balance (Barnett, 1999). Organizations that offer pension and medical benefits reduce turnover, but employees prefer nontraditional benefits (i.e. flexible work schedules) that assist in the daily management of worklife demands (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Employees report higher levels of satisfaction and experience fewer mental health problems when they have access to flexible work arrangements (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002). Organizations committed to employee worklife balance are more likely to retain employees (Berg, et al., 2003). But while benefits and worklife policies are essential to helping workers maintain work and life responsibilities, environmental infrastructures are also necessary to facilitate worklife balance (Berg, et al., 2003).

The integration of work and family continues to be an issue for women and men of the academy (Gatta & Roos, 2004). Much of the research on work-life balance in the post-secondary education setting focuses on the lives of faculty (Bailyn, 2003; Bassett, 2005; Drago et al., 2006; Drago & Williams, 2000; Gatta & Roos, 2004; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1999; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Arguably, worklife for college and university administrators is different than that of faculty. It is reasonable to suggest that current policies and practices to foster worklife balance for faculty may not be useful for administrators. The literature on administrator worklife experiences is almost non-existent. As such, there is a need to understand administrator worklife experiences.

Purpose Statement

The primary purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to make meaning of the lived experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators by examining worklife balance. A secondary purpose was to gather administrator perceptions of their environment to gain insight into infrastructures that may promote or hinder worklife balance efforts. This study revealed themes and patterns that provided an understanding of how administrators negotiate the elusive boundaries between the public sphere of work and private sphere of life. This notion of worklife balance was investigated using a phenomenological design

that involved interviewing and concept mapping as the primary sources of data gathering. A phenomenological study is typically used to explore the deeper meaning of participant experiences with particular attention to how that person communicates that experience (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Language is critical when studying worklife issues. I refrain from using a space, dash, or slash to separate the terms “work” and “life.” Edley (2001) averred, “Language produces and reproduces a dualistic division of choices and separates, divides, and organizes people’s relationships and experiences into strict categories of mutual exclusions” (p. 28). Use of these types of language systems perpetuates the myth of the separate worlds. Contemporary research suggests that individuals do not live their lives in two separate spheres (Edley, 2001; Kanter, 1977; 1989; Martin, 1990). Instead the dimensions of work and life are fluid. In an attempt to move past dichotomous divisions, worklife will be used devoid of any divisive mechanism.

Worklife is a multi-disciplinary field of study (Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006) that refers to the public sphere of paid work and the private, domestic sphere of life. Traditionally, worklife research has focused on the interrelationship and conflict of work and family. The shift to alternative family arrangements has challenged researchers to further examine the socially constructed phenomenon - family. For purposes of this study, the term family deviates from its traditional use to acknowledge unconventional familial structures. The use of family in this study may not always constitute a biological relationship, or kinship by virtue of civil marriage.

Contemporary literature on worklife is not just limited to issues of family. It addresses the diversity of lifestyles and the integration of work, family/friends, leisure, community, and self care. For purposes of this study, worklife is inclusive of concerns that may impact personal interests and demands outside the realm of work-related activities (Stebbins, 2001).

Understanding the experiences of midlevel student affairs administrators is significant to the conversations about worklife balance in higher education. Although they are the largest administrative group on college and university campuses, mid-level professionals are an understudied group (Rosser, 2000). Little is known about how these individuals juggle the demands of work and family although they are arguably at more of

a crossroads with respect to life and career decisions. This study will offer insight into this phenomenon.

Research Questions

The present study explored two primary research questions concerning worklife balance:

1. How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?
2. What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

Significance of Study

The present study had significance for future practice, research, and policy. For practice the results of this study may be useful for human resources personnel and senior level management concerned with retaining university administrators. The study explored the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators focusing specifically on environmental infrastructures. The findings might inform higher education managers in the design and implementation of worklife programs. Results should also assist in structuring environments that yield high levels of performance and productivity.

The present study also served as the impetus for additional research. This study explored the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. The need for research that investigates the experiences of student affairs administrators at other levels in their professional development may be necessary. Additionally, the study of other university administrators may be relevant. A similar research design could explore worklife balance experiences among academic affairs, human resources, financial, or development administrators, for example. Comparisons between the experiences of men and women administrators, faculty and administrators, and among administrators by functional area might also be conducted

This study employed a qualitative design. A majority of the worklife research comes from a quantitative perspective. However, those studies do not focus on the culture of the work environment. A future study could focus on the collection of quantitative data that examine environmental infrastructures.

Research on men and worklife is limited. As the number of men involved in caretaking responsibilities continues to increase, additional research that focuses exclusively on their experiences is necessary. Such a study would expand the literature available about male administrators involved in care-taking activities.

Finally, this study may be useful for policymakers concerned with assisting university administrators in the maintenance of the various dimensions of life. Administrator worklife policies are typically subsumed under the Family and Medical Leave Act and university leave policies. The results of my study provided insight into the worklife experiences of one group of university administrators. Policymakers may use these findings when assessing or creating worklife and retention-related policies for student affairs and/or academic administrators.

Delimitations

As with all research, delimitations existed in this study. The first related to the sample. This study focused on the experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. It cannot be assumed that the results of this inquiry are applicable to entry or senior-level administrators, or academic and administrative affairs professionals. It is possible that the study of other types of administrators, at differing career levels would yield different results.

A second delimitation also related to the sample. Respondents all volunteered to participate in the study. It is possible that those who offered to participate differed in some important manner from those who were invited to participate but declined. If so, the findings might have been influenced.

The third delimitation is relative to the recruitment of participants. Participants for this study were selected from one of two national organizations that cater to the student affairs profession. While there is overlap in memberships, there is a possibility that the findings may have differed in a significant way if mid-level administrators affiliated with both organizations were given an opportunity to participate in the study.

Finally, the data for this study were based on self-reported responses. Data were primarily generated through interviews and concept mapping. Self-reported data in these settings may not always elicit candid responses. Other means of data collection may have produced different responses.

Organization of Study

The present study is organized around six chapters. The statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and its significance were introduced in Chapter One. An annotated bibliography highlighting the current literature is presented in Chapter Two. Chapter Three provides a description of the methodology, including the sampling technique and how the data were collected and analyzed. Chapter Four contains a general summary of the findings of the

study. Chapters Five and Six are written in article format. The two articles are based upon the most compelling findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Annotated Bibliography

My home institution offers graduate students an alternative dissertation format. In lieu of writing the traditional Results and Discussion chapters, doctoral candidates may write two articles that are of sufficient quality to be submitted for review by a refereed publication. The articles are based on the most compelling findings of the study.

I have elected to take that approach to my dissertation. Consequently, I will be writing literature reviews in each of those articles so I am not including a full literature review in this chapter. Instead, this chapter is a bibliography that features contemporary worklife research. The citations are a collection of journal articles, books, and documents that may be used to support the study's most compelling findings. The bibliography is organized around four key themes identified in the worklife literature: (a) alternative family structures, (b) spillover/crossover, (c) dependent care, and (d) worklife within human resources.

Alternative Family Structures

The body of work on alternative family structures explores worklife literature that supports the shift from the traditional, single income, father-as-breadwinner family structure to more diverse lifestyles. This section presents manuscripts that focus on worklife balance for single-parent and dual-earner families. There is also research that examines the experiences of men involved in caretaking roles.

Bergen, K., Kirby, E., & McBride, M. (2007). "How do you get two houses cleaned?":

Accomplishing family caregiving in commuter marriages [Electronic version].

Journal of Family Communication, 7(4), 287-307.

Scholars interpreted expectations communicated to commuter wives by members of their social networks. They argue that commuter wives are expected to perform traditional "women's work," such as unpaid family labor and relational maintenance, despite the unconventionality of their marital relationships. They struggle to reconcile their family and professional obligations. Their lack of success in conforming to traditional gender norms results in feelings of guilt.

Cox, A. G., & Presser, H. B. (2000). Nonstandard employment schedules among American

mothers: The relevance of marital status. In T. L. Parcel & D. B. Cornfield (Eds.), *Work*

& family: Research informing policy (pp. 97-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Scholars investigated factors that determine nonstandard employment schedules (i.e., evening and weekend or part-time work) among mothers based on marital status. Findings suggest that the care of young children plays a critical role in married mothers' decision to work nonstandard hours. This is in contrast to never married mothers who organize their schedules around employment demands. The need for a reliable source of income impacts single mothers' work schedules. The authors conclude that the lack of reasonable child care assistance forces single mothers to forego work altogether. Welfare is the likely resort for these families.

Crawford, A. (2006). The impact of child care subsidies on single mothers' work effort [Electronic version]. *Review of Policy Research*, 23(3), 699-711.

Crawford investigated the impact of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which mandates increased state spending on child care support to welfare recipients, on the employment of single mothers. Using data from the National Survey of America's Family (NSAF), the author concludes that child care subsidies enable single mothers' ability to work. Findings suggest an increase in employment among this population when child care subsidies are available. Single mothers are also more likely to work full-time when state supported child care assistance is available.

Grady, G., & McCarthy, A. (2008). Work-life integration: Experiences of mid-career professional working mothers [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(5), 599-622.

Researchers explored the role experiences of mid-career working mothers focusing specifically on how they integrate work and parenting responsibilities. Using the construct of meaningful work as a tool of analysis, findings suggest that mid-career mothers perceive family roles as their priority but they are also deeply motivated and intellectually stimulated by their work roles. The combination of work and family roles creates a greater sense of meaning.

Hill, E., Mead, N., Dean, L., Dawn, H., Gadd, R., Palmer, A., et al. (2006). Researching the 60-hour dual-earner workweek: An alternative to the "opt-out revolution" [Electronic version]. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(9), 1184-1203.

Researchers evaluated three different types of work arrangements (i.e., single-earner, full-time dual-earners, and 60-hour dual earners) to determine outcomes associated with organizational commitment, job flexibility and work-family fit. Findings suggest that 60-hour professional couples where one partner works full-time and the other is employed part-time, experience more flexibility, decreased work-family conflict, and greater family satisfaction.

Kiecolt, K. J. (2003). Satisfaction with work and family life: No evidence of a cultural reversal [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(1), 23-35.

Kiecolt suggested that women experience greater satisfaction and meaning in family roles than in their work lives. This finding contradicts an earlier claim that suggested women viewed their jobs as a haven and in turn worked longer hours to avoid the demands of their familial responsibilities. The author found no evidence of women being more invested in work than family. Moreover, there was no correlation between longer working hours and greater satisfaction at work.

Lesnard, L. (2008). Off-scheduling within dual-earner couples: An unequal and negative externality for family time [Electronic version]. *American Journal of Sociology*, 114(2), 447-490.

Lesnard explored the impact of off-scheduling (i.e., when the work schedules of dual earners is desynchronized) on familial relations. The author developed three typologies of the family workday: (a) partner time, (b) parent-child time, and (c) family time. Findings suggest that off-scheduling impacts families most often during the evening hours, decreasing partner and parent-child interaction. Father-child interaction increases when the end of the father's workday coincides with the close of the school day. Mother-child interaction is not correlated with the time of day. Off-scheduling perpetuates gender roles in that women assume the traditional household maintenance and caregiver roles, while fathers engage in recreational activities. Off-scheduling appears to be associated with occupation, status within the organization, and employment sector.

Lleras, C. (2008). Employment, work conditions, and the home environment in single-mother families [Electronic version]. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(10), 1268-1297.

Lleras used data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to examine the relationship between employment status, work conditions, and the home environment of single-mother families. Findings suggest that quality of the home environment is not contingent on whether or not the mother is employed. Women who work low-wage jobs, part-time schedules, or evening shifts are more likely to have poorer home environments where there is inadequate support of the emotional, cognitive, and physical needs of preschool-age children.

McLoyd, V., Toyokawa, T., & Kaplan, R. (2008). Work demands, work-family conflict, and child adjustment in African American families: The mediating role of family routines [Electronic version]. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(10), 1247-1267.

Researchers used data from the Family and Community Health Study to examine the impact of African American mothers' work demands on the behaviors of their 10-to-12-year old offspring. Findings suggest no relationship between mothers' workload and children's behavior in two-parent families. Authors did however find a positive relationship between work demands and work-family conflict in single parent households. Children were more likely to demonstrate externalizing behaviors such as oppositional defiant and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders as a result of increased work demands, maternal depressive symptoms, and decreased parent-child interaction.

Perrone, K. M., Wright, S. L., & Jackson, Z. V. (2009). Traditional and nontraditional gender roles and work-family interface for men and women [Electronic version]. *Journal of Career Development*, 36(1), 8-24.

Authors explored the shift from traditional to nontraditional gender roles in the context of career, marriage, and parenting. They offer strategies for career counselors who assist clients in dealing with issues of work-family conflict.

Perry-Jenkins, M., Repetti, R. L., & Crouter, A. C. (2000). Work and family in the 1990s [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 981-998.

Authors provided a review of work-family scholarship of the twentieth century. Four themes emerged: maternal employment and children's well-being, work

socialization, work stress, and multiple roles. The authors also offer suggestions for future research and policy.

Peus, C., & Traut-Mattausch, E. (2008). Manager and mommy? A cross-cultural comparison [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(5), 558-575.

Researchers offered a cross-cultural comparison of the impact of the legal system on work-family interface for women managers in the USA and Germany. Findings suggest that both American and German women managers experience great difficulty in balancing work and family. Time demands and family needs were attributed to the challenges. Negative stereotypes of women managers with children also negatively influence their ability to fulfill worklife obligations. Authors argue that the existence of financial benefits, maternity protection, and rights for working parents does not necessarily advance women's worklife efforts. On the contrary, they recognized negative consequences associated with laws designed to support families.

Poortman, A., & Van der Lippe, T. (2009). Attitudes toward housework and child care and the gendered division of labor [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(3), 526-541.

Researchers investigated partners' attitudes towards domestic work using data from the Dutch Time Competition Survey. Findings suggest a direct correlation between attitudes and contributions to household work. Women are more likely to demonstrate positive attitudes towards tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and child rearing than their male counterparts. Therefore, women contribute the greatest amount of time and energy to these tasks.

Rochlen, A., Suizzo, M., McKelley, R., & Scaringi, V. (2008). "I'm just providing for my family": A qualitative study of stay-at-home fathers [Electronic version]. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 9(4), 193-2006.

Researchers investigated the decision-making process of becoming a stay-at-home father (SAHFs), their support networks, how SAHFs discuss gender roles and masculinity, and the values and parenting style of SAHFs. Findings suggest that the decision to become an SAHF is motivated by numerous economical and pragmatic reasons. Regardless of mixed reactions from their broader social

networks, SAHFs expressed a high degree of satisfaction in this role and a great sense of responsibility in their role as the primary caregiver.

Romich, J. L. (2007). Sharing the work: Mother-child relationships and household management [Electronic version]. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 27(2), 192-222.

Romich examined how single mothers manage the roles of employed worker, caregiver to adolescents, and unpaid domestic worker. Findings suggest that single mothers' worklife experiences are marked by significant difficulties. As such, caregiving and household maintenance tasks are divided among mother and the child. Unsupervised children care for younger siblings and assist with household chores. The author concluded that the success of balancing work and family life for single mothers was facilitated by trust and mutual understanding between mother and child.

Vandeweyer, J., & Glorieux, I. (2008). Men taking up career leave: An opportunity for a better work and family life [Electronic version]. *Journal of Social Policy*, 37(2), 271-294.

Researchers explored Belgium's system of flexible work arrangements focusing specifically on the use of career breaks by men. Findings suggest that men take career breaks for numerous reasons. Full-time career breakers are likely to engage in another professional activity or test out another career opportunity. Part-time career breakers use the reduction in workload for purposes of balancing work and professional obligations. The authors report that 80 percent of the additional time is used for household maintenance responsibilities and child rearing.

Spillover/Crossover

The second theme, spillover/crossover, is one of the larger bodies of worklife literature. Spillover occurs when occurrences at work are exacerbated by the individual's personal life, or vice versa (Stebbins, 2001). Crossover involves the impact of work stress and strain on marital or partner relations (Gareis, 2003). Broader definitions of crossover also involve the effects of work stress on relationships with people other than a partner or spouse. The literature in this area focuses on the experiences of workers engaged in multiple roles.

Allen, T. D., & Armstrong, J. (2006). Further examination of the link between work-family conflict and physical health: The role of health-related behaviors [Electronic version]. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(9), 1204-1221.

Researchers investigated the relationship between physical health and both directions of work-family conflict – work-to-family interference and family-to-work interference. Findings suggest that family-to-work interference is associated with decreased physical activity and increased consumption of fatty foods. Work-to-family interference is associated with decreased consumption of healthy foods. Both types of interferences impact the overall health of workers and may result in health disorders such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.

Allis, P., & O'Driscoll, M. (2008). Positive effects of nonwork-to-work facilitation on well-being in work, family and personal domains [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 273-291.

Researchers explored the domains of family life and personal benefit activities to determine if nonwork-to-work spillover facilitates or hinders the individual's psychological well-being and work-related outcomes. Findings suggest that high levels of psychological involvement in nonwork activities facilitate positive mental health and satisfaction. Therefore, nonwork-to-work spillover results in positive work-related outcomes. The authors did not find support for the hypothesis that the amount of time dedicated to family and personal activities hinders work-related responsibilities.

Bakker, A., & Demerouti, E. (2009). The crossover of work engagement between working couples: A closer look at the role of empathy [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 24(3), 220-236.

Researchers explored the impact of empathy (perspective taking and empathic concern) in the crossover process. Findings suggest that crossover of work engagement from female to male was most evident in husbands who adopted the psychological perspectives or point of view of their partners. Partners who communicate excitement about work are more likely to influence spouses' work performance. This study confirms that work performance can both negatively and positively intersect between dual-earner couples. Researchers did not find support for empathic concern in moderating the crossover process.

Barnett, R. C., Gareis, K. C., & Brennan, R. T. (2008). Wives' shift work schedules and husband's and wives' well-being in dual earner couples with children: A within-in couple analysis [Electronic version]. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(3), 396-422.

Researchers examined the intersection between shift work variables (time of day worked and number of hours worked) and work-family conflict, psychological distress, and marital role quality among women who are both wives and mothers. Findings suggest that women who regularly work the evening-shift, regardless of the number of hours, are more likely to experience work-family conflict than their counterparts who work the day-shift. Evening-shift work had no significant impact on psychological distress, or marital-role quality.

Barnett, R. C., & Hyde, J. S. (2001). Women, men, work, and family: An expansionist theory [Electronic version]. *American Psychologist*, 56(10), 781-796.

Barnett and Hyde explored the worklife literature and offer a contemporary theory on gender, work, and family that deviates from classical theories that focus on the disadvantages of women's involvement in multiple roles. Their expansionist theory consists of four constructs. First, engagement in work, family, and other life roles is advantageous for both men and women. Second, multiple role involvement is beneficial, resulting in positive effects such as buffering, social support, added income, and opportunities to experience success. Third, multiple role involvement is beneficial as long as the number of roles is not excessive or time consuming. Fourth, the psychological differences between men and women are insignificant therefore they should not be forced into highly differentiated gender roles.

Beutell, N., & Wittig-Berman, U. (2008). Work-family conflict and work-family synergy for generation X, baby boomers, and matures: Generational differences, predictors, and satisfaction outcomes [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(5), 507-523.

Beutell and Wittig-Berman used data from the National Study of the Changing Workforce to assess work-family conflict and synergy among workers of three generations: generation X, baby boomer, and matures. Findings suggest similarities across generations. For example, the strongest indicators of work-

family conflict for all generations are mental health and job pressure. Moreover, supervisor family support and learning opportunities on the job were the strongest indicators of work-family synergy. Disparities were noted with respect to satisfaction with work and life. For example, matures were most satisfied overall. While boomers were more satisfied with work and life than Gen Xers, the latter are more likely to report satisfaction in marriage.

Boyar, S. L., Maertz Jr., C. P., Mosley Jr., D. C., & Carr, J. C. (2008). The impact of work/family demand on work-family conflict [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 215-235.

Researchers contended that the constructs of family demand and work demand are ambiguous and undefined in the worklife literature. Authors offer a definition and determinants of the constructs and then use measures of the two to examine their impact on work-to-family interferences and family-to-work interferences.

Findings suggest that family and work demands significantly influence work and family domains. The degree to which the demands conflicted was based on the centrality of the individual's work and family values.

Bruck, C. S., Allen, T. D., & Spector, P. E. (2002). The relation between work-family conflict and job satisfaction: A finer-grained analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 60(3), 336-353.

Researchers investigated the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction. Findings suggest that work-to-family conflict (i.e. time based, strain-based, and behavior-based) positively correlates to both composite job satisfaction which refers to facets of the job such as supervision, coworkers, pay and nature of the work, and global satisfaction which refers to the respondents affective reaction to the job. Global job satisfaction was the stronger of the two predictors of work-family conflict.

Crouter, A. C., Bumpus, M. F., Head, M. R., & McHale, S. M. (2001). Implications of overwork and overload for the quality of men's family relationships [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(2), 404-416.

Researchers explored the impact of men's overwork and role overload on the quality of marital and father-adolescent relationships. Findings suggest that

overwork hinders marital interaction but it does not affect spouses' perception of the quality of the marriage. On the other hand, role overload negatively impacts spouses' perceptions of marital quality. Overwork and role overload negatively impacted the father-adolescent relationship regardless of the child's age.

Frone, M. R. (2003). Work-family balance. In J. C. Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational healthy psychology* (pp. 143-162). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Frone offered an overview of the work-family interface literature, defines what is meant by the notion of work-family balance, and offers early and contemporary frameworks of work-family balance. He also discusses the causes and consequences associated with work-family balance, and suggests potential strategies to mitigate the tensions that occur between work and personal life.

Gareis, K. C., Barnett, R. C., & Brennan, R. T. (2003). Individual and crossover effects of work schedule fit: A within-couple analysis [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(4), 1041- 1054.

Researchers determined whether the work schedule of dual-earner couples, where wives work reduced hours and husbands assume full-time careers, meets the needs of the individual (self/self schedule fit) and her or his family (partner/family schedule fit). Findings suggest that self/self schedule fit was a high predictor of job-role quality for men and women. Also, partner/family schedule fit was a high predictor of marital quality for both spouses. Crossover effects were evident.

Kinman, G., & Jones, F. (2008). Effort-reward imbalance, over-commitment and work-life conflict: Testing an expanded model [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 236-251.

Researchers examined work-family conflict using the effort-reward imbalance model of job stress which assumes that strain comes about as a result of increased workload and worker's perception of an imbalance between work performed and rewards received. Findings suggest that perceptions of organizational support, work-life separation/integration, and schedule flexibility were strong predictors of work-life conflict. Participants who perceived commitment to the job as

disproportionate to reward expectancies such as promotion or salary increases were most likely to reflect poorer work-life balance.

Mayrhofer, W., Meyer, M., Schiffinger, M., & Schmidt, A. (2008). The influence of family responsibilities, career fields and gender on career success [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 292-323.

Researchers investigated family involvement and career success (objective and subjective) in the context of work centrality and gender. Findings suggest a negative correlation between family responsibilities and career success for early-career business professionals. Results also suggest a gendered correlation between family and career success.

Milkie, M. A., & Peltola, P. (1999). Playing all the roles: Gender and the work-family balancing act [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(2), 476-490.

Researchers explored women's and men's perceptions and success of work-family balance. Using data from the 1996 General Social Survey, findings suggest comparable levels of success in balancing multiple roles among both women and men. Gender differences were noted with respect to work-family tradeoffs. For example, women were more likely to take off of work to care for a child than men. Men were also more likely to equate work-family imbalance to longer working hours whereas, this did not reflect women's sense of balance success

Nikandrou, I., Panayotopoulou, L., & Apospori, E. (2008). The impact of individual and organizational characteristics on work-family conflict and career outcomes [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(5), 576-598.

Researchers investigated the relationship between individual and organizational variables and work-family conflict and career outcomes for women managers. Findings suggest that characteristics such as self esteem, multiple role involvement, organizational culture, and career encouragement mediate work-family conflict. Work-family conflict did not predict career outcomes.

Roberts, N. A., & Levenson, R. W. (2001). The remains of the workday: Impact of job stress and exhaustion on marital interaction in police couples [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(4), 1052-1067.

Researchers explored the correlation between job stress and exhaustion on the marital interactions of male police officers and their wives. Findings suggest that job stress produces far more negative marital consequences than physical exhaustion. Authors report that stress negatively impacts marital relations and crosses over into the emotional lives of married couples. Husbands are more likely to demonstrate negative emotion when job stress is heightened while women exhibit none. These types of marital interaction reportedly result in marital instability and dissolution.

Sandberg, J. C., & Cornfield, D. B. (2000). Returning to work: The impact of gender, family, and work on terminating a family or medical leave. In T. L. Parcel & D. B. Cornfield (Eds.), *Work & family: Research informing policy* (pp. 161-184). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Researchers examined reasons why women and men return to work after family or medical leave using data generated by the Commission on Family and Medical Leave. Findings suggest that women are more likely to terminate leave due to career or work pressures while men terminate leave because of their own and/or societal expectations.

Streich, M., Casper, W., & Salvaggio, A. (2008). Examining couple agreement about work-family conflict [Electronic version]. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(3), 252-272.

Researchers explored the level of agreement about work-family conflict among dual-earners. Findings suggest that couples were more likely to agree than differ on the degree to which the individual and his or her partner experiences work-family conflict. Partners agreed most often on the wives' level of work-family conflict than the husband's. Authors maintain that this may speak to women being more communicative of the worklife challenges they face than their male counterparts.

Sturges, J., & Guest, D. (2004). Working to live or living to work? Work/life balance early in the career [Electronic version]. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 14(4), 5-20.

Researchers explored the work/life balance experiences of early-career workers. Findings suggest that recent graduates are willing and prepared to work long hours because they perceive this behavior demonstrates the organizational

commitment necessary for career advancement. The authors conclude that early-career workers desire a synergy between work and their personal lives but they are likely to experience work/life imbalance.

Thiagarajan, P., Chakrabarty, S., Lueg, J., & Taylor, R. (2007). Work-family role strain of single parents: The effects of role conflict and role ambiguity [Electronic version]. *The Marketing Management Journal*, 17(1), 82-94.

Researchers investigated the impact of work-family role conflict and work-family role ambiguity on role strain (i.e., psychological and physical health) among single parents. Findings suggest that role ambiguity caused the greatest source of stress among the population sampled.

Voydanoff, P., & Donnelly, B. (1999). The intersection of time in activities and perceived unfairness in relation to psychological distress and marital quality [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61(3), 739-751.

Researchers examined data from the 1992-1994 National Survey of Families and Households to determine perceptions of unfairness to self and spouse in the context of household chores, child care, and paid work and its impact on psychological distress and marital quality. Findings suggest that there is a positive correlation between perceptions of unfairness to self and psychological distress and marital dissatisfaction. A relationship between perceptions of unfairness to spouse and outcomes was unsubstantiated.

Dependent Care

The dependent care theme involves research focused on those who “care.” This is not just limited to individuals who care for dependent children. There are a growing number of workers who act as caregivers for aging or ailing parents. There is also literature on the “sandwich generation” that examines the lives of individuals who care for both dependent children and elderly parents. Literature in this area deals with childcare/eldercare options and strategies as well as challenges faced by those who care.

Boushey, H. (2008). Opting out? The effect of children on women's employment in the United States [Electronic version]. *Feminist Economics*, 14(1), 1-36.

Boushey investigated the “opting out” phenomenon to determine why the rate of employment among highly educated mothers has declined in recent years. Using

data from the Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Survey, the researcher concludes that women's departure from the workforce has less to do with the "child effect" and more to do with the instability of the labor market. Findings suggest that this trend has impacted women in general, not necessarily just those with small children.

Chesley, N., & Moen, P. (2006). When workers care: Dual-earner couples' caregiving strategies, benefit use, and psychological well-being [Electronic version]. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(9), 1248-1269.

Researchers focused on the positive and negative consequences of caring for aging parents on the well-being of dual-earner couples. They also examine the use of employer-provided benefits and their impact on working partners. Researchers argue that adult caregiving is gendered in that women are more likely to be the primary care provider for their own parents and their in-laws. Results suggest that psychological and physical well-being declines among women while it increases among men who care for aging parents. No evidence was found to support the assumption that use of employer-provided benefits improves caregiver well-being.

Chesley, N., & Poppie, K. (2009). Assisting parents and in-laws: Gender, type of Assistance, and Couples' Employment [Electronic version]. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(2), 247-262.

Researchers examined data from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States (MIDUS) to determine differences between gender and the level and types of elder care support (e.g., financial, emotional, and unpaid task assistance) that American workers provide to aging parents and in-laws. Findings suggest that women are more likely to invest a significant amount of time in the emotional support of aging parents and in-laws. Gender differences are not evident with respect to unpaid task assistance and financial support. Disparities among single-earner and dual-earner household are also prevalent among elder care providers. Dual-earners provide lower levels of financial assistance to parents and in-laws than their single-earner counterparts.

Craig, L., & Sawkriar, P. (2008). Satisfaction with work-family balance for parents of early adolescents compared to parents of younger children [Electronic version]. *Journal of Family Studies, 14*(1), 91-106.

Researchers determined whether satisfaction with work-family balance for parents of younger children differs from parents of teenagers. Findings suggest that work-family balance difficulties do not significantly decrease as young children transition to teenagers. The needs of parents with younger children differed from those with teenagers but work-family balance issues did not decrease as children grew older. Researchers concluded that the lack of formal childcare provisions impacted both parent groups. In fact, a significant number of parents of teenagers do not work or work part-time to ensure supervision of older children during after school hours.

Cullen, J. C. (2009). Development of a typology of dual-earner couples caring for children and aging parents [Electronic version]. *Journal of Family Issues, 30*(4), 458-483.

Authors generated three typological profiles among a sample of dual earners who simultaneously care for young children and elderly parents or in-laws. Using data from a larger research study, three patterns emerged: (a) couples with high parent care demands where the wife served as the primary caregiver, (b) couples with high child care demands where two or more children were present, and (c) couples with high work demands where both couples were engaged in long working hours. Respondents were more likely to demonstrate work-family conflicts than family-work conflicts. Individual and cluster differences were noted with respect to the conflict that occurs between work and family.

Drago, R., Colbeck, C., Stauffer, K., Pirretti, A., Burkum, K., Fazioli, J., et al. (2006). The avoidance of bias against caregiving: The case of academic faculty [Electronic version]. *American Behavioral Scientist, 49*(9), 1222-1247.

Researchers examined bias avoidance behaviors (i.e., strategies to avoid career consequences associated with involvement in caregiving responsibilities) among faculty involved in 507 U.S. colleges and universities. Findings suggest that two types of bias avoidance behaviors exist in the academy: productive, which increases work performance and unproductive, which minimizes efficiency.

Productive behaviors included staying single, having fewer children, or delaying the birth of a second child until after tenure. This is in contrast to unproductive behaviors such as not asking for parental leave, not requesting to stop the tenure clock, or coming back to work soon after a child is born. Bias avoidance behaviors were also found to be gendered. Women are more likely to conform to ideal worker norms. Researchers also concluded that supervisor support can mediate bias avoidance behaviors.

Hammer, L. B., & Neal, M. B. (2008). Working sandwiched-generation caregivers: Prevalence, characteristics, and outcomes [Electronic version]. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, *11*(1), 93-112.

Researchers examined the prevalence of multigenerational caregiving which involves the simultaneous support of children and aging parents and outcomes associated with this phenomenon. Findings suggest that dual-earners deviate from traditional gender role responsibilities with respect to elder care. Significant levels of involvement were found among both women and men in the care of parents and in-laws. Women however remained the primary caregiver of children.

Prentice, S. (2009). High stakes: The "investable" child and the economic reframing of child care [Electronic version]. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* *34*(3), 687-710.

Prentice offered a critical analysis of the consequences associated with the economization of childcare, the idea that childcare social spending secures long-term financial viability. Findings suggest benefits of economic reframing such as policy discourse and the extension of childcare services (i.e., prekindergarten programs). The author also maintains that the business approach hampers social and gender equality.

Szinovacz, M., & Davey, A. (2008). The division of parent care between spouses [Electronic version]. *Ageing & Society*, *28*(4), 571-597.

Researchers investigated how spouses distribute family work responsibilities when caring for an aging parents or in-laws. Findings suggest some degree of shared care for elder relatives but husband involvement was largely contingent on cultural mandates such as kinship (i.e., male caring for his own parent) and cross-

gender (i.e., caring for mothers more than fathers) obligations. The researchers concluded that elder care is a complex responsibility that involves support from spouses, children, and siblings.

Worklife within Human Resources

The last theme, worklife within human resources, deals with organizational responses to worklife matters. Literature in this section focuses on the ongoing debate over whether worklife balance is a public or private responsibility. There is also research that deals with policy initiatives and programs undertaken by businesses and corporations.

Caligiuri, P., & Givlekian, N. (2008). Strategic human resources and work-life balance. In S. Poelmans & P. Caligiuri (Eds.), *Harmonizing work, family, and personal life: From policy to practice* (pp. 19-38). Edinburgh, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Authors discussed factors that should influence organizational leaders' decisions to implement work-life programming. Findings suggest that worklife policies and benefits are essential to maintaining an edge over competitors. They conclude that a comprehensive offering of policies and programs is economically advantageous and necessary to retaining highly qualified staff.

Casey, P. R., & Grzywacz, J. G. (2008). Employee health and well-being: The role of flexibility and work-family balance. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 11(1), 31-47.

Researchers explored the health and wellness outcomes of flexible work-arrangements using longitudinal data from employees affiliated with a multinational pharmaceutical company. Findings suggest that perceptions of work flexibility decreases work absences due to sickness and work-related impairment (i.e., how health issues impacted work) and increases job commitment.

Connelly, R., Degraff, D., & Willis, R. (2004). The value of employer-sponsored child care to employees. *Industrial Relations*, 43(4), 759-792.

Researchers offered a model for assessing the value of employer-sponsored child care (ESCC). Findings suggest significant value for parents and all employees of firms that offered on-site child care centers. Pricing of service was a determinant of whether employees would continue use of services. Researchers concluded that employers that offer on-site assistance are more competitive than those that do

not. Moreover, newly hired employees placed greater significance on the availability of this service, regardless of whether or not they had children.

Facer II, R., & Wadsworth, L. (2008). Alternative work schedules and work-family

balance: A research note. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 28(2), 166- 177.

Researchers explored job satisfaction and work-family conflict among traditional workweek (five 8-hour days) and compressed workweek (four 10-hour days) participants. Findings suggests a correlation between 4/10 workweek scheduling and increased work productivity. 4/10 workers also reported lower levels of work-family conflict than their traditional workweek counterparts. There were no significant correlations with respect to job satisfaction.

Frone, M. R. (2003). Work-family balance. In J. C. Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational healthy psychology* (pp. 143-162). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Frone offered an overview of the work-family interface literature, defines what is meant by the notion of work-family balance, and offers early and contemporary frameworks of work-family balance. He also discusses the causes and consequences associated with work-family balance, and suggests potential strategies to mitigate the tensions that occur between work and personal life.

Gault, B., & Lovell, V. (2006). The costs and benefits of policies to advance work/life integration. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49(9), 1152-1164.

Authors argued the need for expanding and improving work/life policies at the local, state, and federal levels; offer examples of successful policy approaches; and provide cost/benefit assessments of worklife policies such as paid sick leave, paid family and medical leave, and publicly provided prekindergarten programs. The authors suggest that increased public discourse and broad-reaching support is necessary to strengthen work/life integration efforts

Golden, L. (2009). Flexible daily work schedules in U.S. jobs: Formal introductions needed? *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, 48(1), 27-54/

Golden investigated the prevalence of flexible work arrangements using data from the Current Population Survey Supplement on Work Schedules and Work at Home. Findings suggest that access to flexible scheduling is contingent on

individual and job characteristics. Educated workers have more flexibility in scheduling than lesser educated workers. Sales representatives, managers/executives, and workers involved in select specialty professions are more likely to have discretion in choosing when to start and end working time. The author concluded that flexible work arrangements are likely to be facilitated through informal structures instead of formal policy mechanisms.

Hammer, L. B., Kossek, E. E., Yragui, N. L., Bodner, T. E., & Hanson, G. C. (2009).

Development and validation of a multidimensional measure of family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB). *Journal of Management*, 35(4), 837-856.

Researchers offered a conceptual model of family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSB) using data from a survey of classified university staff. The multidimensional framework is inclusive of four constructs: (a) emotional support, (b) instrumental support, (c) role modeling behavior, and (4) creative work-family management. The authors found significant correlations between FSSB and work-family positive spillover, work-family conflict, turnover intentions, and job satisfaction.

Hayman, J. R. (2009). Flexible work arrangements: Exploring the linkages between perceived usability of flexible work schedules and work/life balance. *Community, Work and Family*, 12(3), 327-338.

Hayman investigated perceived usability and employee outcomes. Findings suggest a positive correlation between comfort in the use of formal flexible work arrangements and work/life balance. Flexitime scheduling yielded higher levels of work/life balance. No significant differences were found with respect to work/life balance and perceived usability of job sharing and flexiplace practices.

Jacob, J. I., Bond, J. T., Galinsky, E., & Hill, E. J. (2008). Six critical ingredients in creating an effective workplace. *The Society of Psychologists in Management*, 11, 141-161.

Researchers investigated the impact of six factors of workplace effectiveness (autonomy, learning opportunities, supervisor support, coworker team support, involvement in management decision making, workplace flexibility) on four employee and job outcomes (mental health, job satisfaction, employee retention, job engagement). Findings suggest a positive relationship between workplace

effectiveness variables and job satisfaction, employee retention, and job engagement. A positive but more modest relationship was found between workplace effectiveness and mental health.

Koerin, B., Harrigan, M., & Secret, M. (2008). Eldercare and employed caregivers: A public/private responsibility? *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 51(1), 143- 161.

Authors discussed the challenges associated with eldercare and speak to implications associated with lack of support via public policies and other programmatic resources for workers who care for aging relatives. They offer solutions for employers to consider in helping to mitigate the difficulties faced.

Kossek, E. E., Lee, M.D. (2008). Implementing a reduced-workload arrangement to retain high talent: A case study. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 11, 49-64.

Kossek offered a case study approach for the implementation of a reduced-load work program using data collected from 17 major United States and Canadian employers. Findings suggest that success of the program is contingent on three major factors: (a) the program must target high-talent workers, (b) it must be monitored and redesigned over time, and (c) coordination, communication, and challenge management are inherent to the implementation process.

Major, D. A., Verive, J. M., & Joice, W. (2008). Telework as a dependent care solution: Examining current practice to improve telework management strategies:

Researchers investigated the impact of telework on job performance, retention, and dependent care responsibilities. Findings suggest a positive correlation between working from home and intention to stay with an organization and job performance. Researchers conclude that telework facilitates employees' ability to respond to dependent care needs but formal policies are either nonexistent or existing policies are not applied evenly across departments.

Muna, F., & Mansour, N. (2009). Balancing work and personal life: The leader as acrobat. *Journal of Management Development*, 28(2), 121-133.

Authors offered strategies for organizational leaders on how to balance work with professional life. They maintain that changes in personal values and priorities and shifts in the work structure and environment are essential to effectively bring about a sense of balance.

Pedersen, D., Minnotte, K., Kiger, G., & Mannon, S. (2009). Workplace policy and environment, family role quality, and positive family-to-work spillover. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 30(1), 80-89.

Researchers explored the relationship between positive family-to-work spillover, workplace environment, family-friendly policies, and perceptions of role quality among dual-earners with children. Findings suggest a significant correlation between role quality and positive family-to-work spillover. Women's workplace environment and flexibility in scheduling was linked to positive family-to-work spillover. Authors concluded that workplace culture plays a critical role in dual-earners ability to meet work and family needs.

Poelmans, S., & Beham, B. (2008). Reviewing policies for harmonizing work, family, and personal life. In S. Poelmans & P. Caligiuri (Eds.), *Harmonizing work, family, and personal life: From policy to practice* (pp. 39-77). Edinburgh, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Authors offered a four-step process for consideration when implementing a work-life program: (a) adoption decision, (b) design decision, (c) implementation decision, and (d) allowance decision. This manuscript focuses on two of those steps: adoption decision which refers to if and when a program should be implemented and the economic, social, technological, and legal implications associated with doing so and (b) design decision which refers to the makeup of the program and what types of policies will be most beneficial to meet the unique needs of the organization.

Secret, M. (2005). Parenting in the workplace: Child care options for consideration. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 41(3), 326-347.

Secret explored similarities and differences between businesses that support parenting in the workplace (PIW) and those that do not. Parenting in the workplace refers to an arrangement that allows workers to care for children while on the job. Findings suggest that PIW practices are less intrusive and less problematic than anticipated. The author concluded that parenting in the workplace poses no disadvantages to business outcome. When compared to non-PIW businesses, PIW workplaces were regarded as having a higher regard for

innovation, less recruitment and hiring difficulties, and more positive collegial interactions

Shoptaugh, C. F., Phelps, J. A., & Vision, M. E. (2004). Employee eldercare responsibilities: Should organizations care? *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 19(2), 179-196.

Researchers investigated the experiences of workers involved in eldercare responsibilities. Findings suggest that workers are more likely to provide home/family care than to outsource the care of aging relatives. Employers report less satisfaction with the home/family care arrangement because it is time consuming and causes substantial interruptions at work. There was a positive correlation between eldercare and intent to depart the organization. The authors concluded the need for more attention to the eldercare needs of workers through employer-sponsored eldercare programs.

Thompson, C. (2008). Barriers to the implementation and usage of work-life policies. In S. Poelmans & P. Caligiuri (Eds.), *Harmonizing work, family, and personal life* (pp. 209-234). Edinburgh, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Thompson discussed potential barriers to the implementation and usage of worklife policies. She suggests that poorly designed programs and cultural dynamics such as lack of senior level support play a powerful role in the success and longevity of work-life programs.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

The primary purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to make meaning of the lived experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators by examining worklife balance. A secondary purpose was to gather administrator perceptions of their environment to gain insight into infrastructures that may assist or hinder worklife balance efforts. This study was designed to reveal themes and patterns that provide an understanding of how administrators negotiate the elusive boundaries between the public sphere of work and private sphere of life.

I explored two primary research questions concerning worklife balance:

1. How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?
2. What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

This chapter describes the methodology I used to address the research questions posed in the study. The following sections explain the assumptions underlying the study, the role of the researcher, how the participants were selected, the process used to collect data, the steps taken to enhance the quality of the study, and the method used to analyze the data.

Paradigmatic Assumptions for a Qualitative Design

I used a qualitative research paradigm in the study. This decision was shaped by two primary criteria, the nature of the problem and my worldview (Creswell, 1994; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). First, the nature of the problem, inclusive of the study's purpose (Patton, 2002) and its research questions (Patton, 2002; van Manen, 1997), was important to consider when selecting this paradigm (Creswell, 1994). The purpose of this inquiry was to develop an understanding of the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. While there is existing research that examines worklife balance with respect to academic staff, that body of work tends to focus almost exclusively on the experiences of faculty. A qualitative design was appropriate for this study because little is known about the research problem (Creswell, 1994) in the context of university administrators. The naturalistic character of qualitative research is helpful when variables and theories are unknown or inadequate (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 2002). Qualitative research allows for an emergent, flexible design strategy, devoid of manipulation, control, formulaic rules, and objective ontological assumptions on the social world (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

In this qualitative inquiry, I sought to examine the complexities of the human experience as they relate to worklife balance (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I wanted to understand how student affairs administrators perceived, described, felt about, remembered, judged, and made sense of worklife balance (Patton, 2002; Ray, 1994). The use of a qualitative design allowed for an in-depth exploration and detailed understanding (Patton, 2002) of the holistic experiences of study participants in the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Qualitative inquiry was particularly significant for this study because the prolonged time spent by participants in the natural setting was essential for eliciting thick, rich descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The phenomenological, qualitative research genre was used to frame this study. The overarching goal of phenomenology is to gain a deeper understanding of the essence of our experiences in the lifeworld (van Manen, 1997). By “essence” I mean the “questioning of the essential nature of a lived experience” (van Manen, 1997, p. 39). Van Manen (1997) maintained that phenomenology does not just involve recalling an experience. Rather, the researcher must construct and convey the experience:

In a way that the essential aspects, the meaning structures of this experience as lived through, are brought back, as it were, and in such a way that we recognize this description as a possible experience, which means as a possible interpretation of that experience. (p. 41)

Phenomenology examines how a small group of people makes meaning of their lived experiences and how this is ultimately transferred into their personal and collective consciousness (Patton, 2002).

Qualitative inquiry, while complex, is systematic research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Transparency in how processes were facilitated was critical in ensuring the study’s quality and methodological rigor (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The design of this study from the collection of data to analysis was purposeful, conscious, and intentional (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Prolonged engagement in the field, multiple data sources, and peer debriefing were just three strategies used to enhance credibility.

My worldview or philosophical assumptions about the nature of the natural world (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006) is the second criterion that shaped the research design for the present study. My epistemological values are grounded in the notion that “knowledge building is based

on observational and interactional ways of knowing” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 15). Individuals make meaning of life’s experiences differently (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). There is no universal social reality (Creswell, 1994). I understand an individual’s ontological assumptions of the natural world to be subjective. As such, I wanted to gain an understanding of what participants knew about worklife balance and how they use what they know about this topic in their daily interactions (Patton, 1991). I felt that the use of qualitative inquiry was necessary to honor and capture the multiple realities of mid-level administrator worklife balance experiences (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Patton, 2002; Ray, 1994).

Role of the Researcher

This study was facilitated through a constructivist paradigm. Deconstruction was used as an analytical tool to make meaning of participant experiences, hermeneutically and descriptively (Patton, 2002). The subjectivist and interactive nature of this qualitative inquiry (Rossman & Rallis, 2000) compelled me to situate myself within the study. This process was facilitated through the practice of reflexivity, a strategy aimed at exposing potential biases or predispositions that may impact the research process (Johnson & Christensen, 2000).

Researcher bias is a major threat to the trustworthiness of a study. This is true of all research regardless of the methodological tradition. Particularly in qualitative research, however, bias cannot be completely controlled (Rossman & Rallis, 2000). Reflexivity allows researchers to become self-aware, critically reflecting on their perspective about the topic under study (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Reflexivity is the ongoing reflection of what one knows and how one knows it (Patton, 2002). It is a conscious exploration of political, cultural, social, and ideological values and assumptions and how they converge with the perspective or voice of study participants (Patton, 2002). For these reasons, it was necessary for me to locate myself within the research.

Rossman and Rallis (2000) maintained that a key component of systematic research is being conscious and attentive to the baggage that researchers bring to the process. It is no coincidence that the topic of this dissertation inquiry is the worklife balance experiences of student affairs administrators. About 10 years ago when I was a new student affairs professional in higher education, I struggled with this notion of balance. The spoken and unspoken expectations associated with student affairs administration contributed greatly to this challenge. I did not have a typical eight-hour-per-day job. Time spent in the office extended well into the late

evening hours. The weekends were also dedicated to work-related obligations. As a single, childless professional, thoughts of having a family of my own were often quelled by demands of the workplace.

Student affairs is a “helping” profession. Many professionals are drawn to the field for that very reason – they want to serve. It is my belief that student affairs administrators are prone to burnout because job demands result in worklife imbalance. Some transition to other jobs within higher education. Others leave higher education all together. The revolving door of student affairs administration may be attributable, in part, to the lack of resources and support that aid in the worklife balance of employees. I feel that this lack of support is due in part to the perpetuation of traditional notions that have permeated the profession for decades. There is the belief that working grueling hours is part of “paying your dues.” Until the culture and/or environment of the field changes, high rates of turnover among professionals may be inevitable. By acknowledging my own experiences as a student affairs professional, in my observations of other professionals, I attempted to keep in check any biases that might have influenced the design of this study, the analysis of the data, and the interpretation of the findings.

Participant Selection

Participants for the present study were chosen using purposeful sampling. Purposeful or purposive sampling is characteristic of qualitative inquiry in that small, “information-rich cases” are selected for in-depth study (Patton, 2002, p. 230). A population of interest (in this case – mid-level student affairs administrators) was identified based on their ability to provide insight into the topic and research questions under study (Patton, 2002). There are various approaches to purposeful sampling. Participants for this study were initially selected using criterion sampling. Purposeful random sampling was used as the final means of selecting participants. Criterion sampling is a strategy in which information-rich informants are identified using predetermined conditions (Patton, 2002). Three primary criteria had to be met for selection. All requirements were necessary for the collection of information-rich cases.

First, this research inquiry was concerned with the worklife balance experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. It is my belief that mid-level administrators are at more of a crossroads with respect to worklife challenges. While studies have focused on job the quality of professional life for mid-level administrators (Rosser & Javinar, 2003) there is limited research that explores the confluence of career and personal life. For purposes of this study, mid-level

refers to number of years in the field. Individuals who had served in the field for a total of six to fifteen years after completing a master's degree were selected to participate. The master's is the degree that is typically required of student affairs professionals so it made sense to use completion of that degree as a baseline against which to calculate years of experience.

Second, participants had to work in a full-time, student affairs administrative position. Full-time refers to engagement in paid, work-related responsibilities for a minimum of 35-hours per week. This was an important criterion because it is reported that full-time professionals, in contrast to part-timers, are more likely to report worklife imbalances (Hill, Vjollca, & Ferris, 2004). Reduction in work hours through opportunities such as flextime programs has contributed to assisting workers with worklife balance challenges (Drago, 2007). As such, limiting this study to full-time employees was critical to obtaining rich, thick data. Student affairs was broadly defined in the study. It included those in traditional functional areas like student activities and residence life as well as those who worked in areas that sometimes fall under the purview of another division, like admissions or career services.

Third, participants had to indicate worklife challenges on a pre-screening questionnaire. Information rich-cases provide deeper understanding into the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2002). One of this study's central research questions was to identify environmental infrastructures that assist and/or hinder administrators' ability to balance worklife responsibilities. It was necessary to identify informants who have experienced worklife challenges to fully explore this question.

Participant selection was a four-part process. First, mid-level student affairs administrators affiliated with the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) were recruited to participate in this study. ACPA is one of two major international associations that cater to the student affairs profession. I petitioned ACPA's membership because of its diverse population and broad reach. An estimated 8,500 administrators, undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and organizations and companies comprise its membership, with the majority working in administrative capacities (ACPA, n.d.). Members represent numerous job functions, position levels, and institutional types.

A formal application was submitted to ACPA's Director of Educational Programs and Publications to request contact information for mid-level student affairs administrators. The application consisted of a description of the study's purpose, how the study was relative to the

organizational mission of the association, and the study's intended outcomes. Information about the duration of the study was also included in this request. The Director sent me a list containing the names and contact information of potential informants upon approval of the application.

Second, since the dataset from ACPA contained contact information on several thousand mid-level administrators, I needed to winnow the pool of potential respondents. I elected to randomly select potential respondents to participate in the study. Purposeful random sampling is a strategy that increases credibility and provides a systematic explanation of how and cases are selected (Patton, 2002). I randomly selected 100 potential participants to contact.

The next phase of the selection process involved direct communication with potential participants. Invitations to participate were extended via email to the 100 randomly selected individuals (see Appendix A). The email explained the purpose of the study and also included the uniform resource locator (URL) link to a pre-screening questionnaire (see Appendix B). The pre-screening instrument consisted of 13 items. I sought demographic information such as the individual's primary job function, institutional type, and geographic location. I also asked potential respondents about their experiences with balancing the demands of their work and personal lives. Those who were interested in participating were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it to me via email.

I reviewed each completed questionnaire to determine if the person met the criteria for participation in the study. I tried to select individuals from different types of institutions (e.g., liberal arts colleges, research universities) and of different ethnicities and genders. I sought 30 participants via this process. Others who indicated interest but who were not selected for the study were contacted via email and thanked for their interest. In the event that I was unsuccessful in selecting 30 participants from the first round, I was prepared to select another 100 potential respondents from the ACPA dataset and to repeat this process until I identified 30 people who agreed to participate.

Once selected, participants were emailed the informed consent form. A follow-up phone call was placed to those who were selected to participate. The purpose of this call was to schedule the telephone interview. I also wanted to alert participants to an additional email that they would receive containing the projection technique exercises. Participants were instructed on how to complete and submit these activities.

Data Collection

The first step in the data collection process was to obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) at Virginia Tech. Once the study was approved (see Appendix C), I solicited participants and initiated data collection.

Data for this qualitative inquiry were generated through both traditional and unconventional interviewing methods. An interview protocol and two projection technique exercises were developed to elicit feedback from participants. Peer debriefers were contacted to evaluate data collection instruments and a pilot study was conducted. Revisions were made where necessary.

Projection Techniques

The fluidity of qualitative research provides the space for researchers to adapt interview methods (Patton, 1992). Projection techniques are “creative interviewing” strategies (Patton, 1992, p. 340) that deviate from the traditional question-response format. Projection techniques allow the researcher to gain insight into the participants “perceptual world, their fantasies, their characteristic mode of responding, [and] their frame of references” (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 214). Instead of reacting to a question, participants interpret “ambiguous stimuli” (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 214) such as a blank page, statement, word, photo, pseudo-factual question, film, picture, drawing, cartoon, or story (Oppenheim, 1992; Patton, 1992). Projection techniques assist the researcher in getting to the core of a participant’s epistemological values (Patton, 1992). They are also used as a means to initiate conversation about the participant’s feelings and experiences (Patton, 1992).

Two projection techniques were used to address the research questions. The first projection technique was modified from a previous study (Flora, 2008). The purpose of exercise one was to elicit data about the participants’ roles. I wanted to understand the multitude of roles mid-level student affairs administrators fulfill and the implications that these identities have in the context of worklife balance. Individuals were given an activity sheet on which a circle labeled “YOU” was placed in the center. Participants were asked to draw additional circles to represent the roles that they fulfill [e.g. parent, spouse, church member]. The circles drawn varied in size and position based on their significance to the participant. Larger circles and those that were drawn closer to the main circle were representative of the roles that were most important to the respondent (see Appendix D).

The purpose of the second exercise was to extract data about the participant's weekly routine (see Appendix E). I wanted to understand what types of activities needed to be included when considering the balance between work and life. I also wanted to know the participants' time commitment to these work and non-work roles. Participants were presented a blank pie chart. The pie chart served as a visual illustration of the hours in a week (168). Participants were instructed to divide the pie chart into slices that represented the amount of time (in hours) spent on each work and non-work activity per week. They were also directed to label every "slice" of the chart with the number of hours spent on that activity.

Both projection exercises used in this study were designed with the intention of stimulating participants' thinking in preparation for the telephone interview. Projection techniques encourage deeper levels of understanding and meaning of a phenomenon (Oppenheim, 1992). Researchers also gain further insight into participants' feelings or attitudes about a concept based on how they order, name, or group various things (Oppenheim, 1992).

Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted to understand the lived experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. An estimated 95% of the United States population has access to the telephone (Neuman, 1997). Telephone interviewing facilitated accessibility to a wider, diverse range of participants. This method was also convenient and inexpensive for both participant and interviewer (Neuman, 1997).

Participants engaged in 50-60 minute semi-structured telephone interviews. All questions were thoughtfully worded to elicit rich data (see Appendix F). Interview questions were carefully cross-referenced with the research questions to ensure trustworthiness. The interview protocol was developed to ensure that issues of worklife balance were thoroughly explored with each participant. Interview protocols are a systematic, but flexible approach to interviewing, allowing the researcher to probe and explore the subject matter when necessary (Patton, 2002). The interview protocol consisted of questions were divided into four sections. Interviews were customized for each participant.

The first group of questions was labeled "Professional Life." This section set the tone for the interview and gave participants the opportunity to share their story. Questions were designed to elicit low-risk responses. I engaged participants in conversations about their journey to the student affairs professions. For example, one question asked participants to talk about how they

became a part of this profession. I also wanted to get a sense of how participants communicated about what it was like to be a student affairs professional. Participants were asked to describe their daily responsibilities and tasks.

The second section was the “Worklife Experiences” section. These questions elicited responses about the everyday work and non-work experiences of student affairs administrators. The “Who Am I” Exercise was used as a projection technique to facilitate responses to these questions. Participants were asked how they balance multiple roles and the challenges they face in those endeavors. They were asked to share concrete examples of how work and non-work obligations conflicted.

The next section was the “Environmental Perceptions” section. Participants were asked questions that about environmental infrastructures that promoted or hindered worklife balance. Participants were encouraged to give examples of people, practices, services, and/or policies that assist or hinder in worklife balance.

Lastly, the Personal Reflections section encouraged participants to reflect on their work and personal experiences. Participants were asked how they understood the notion of worklife balance and what sense they make of it. They were also asked if their worklife situations had changed since the beginning of their career and how they imagine their balance will be as they look towards the future. At the end of each interview, I summarized what I believed to be the key points were and asked the participants if I had accurately and adequately captured the gist of our conversation.

Interviews were audio recorded. After I eliminated all identifying information from the tapes, they were transcribed by a professional service. The transcripts contained no identifying information. To ensure confidentiality, participants were asked to select a pseudonym to use for the interview. This is the name that was used on each document. Audio tapes and transcripts were stored at my home in a locked file cabinet when they were not in use.

Pilot Study

I identified five student affairs administrators who expressed interest in the topic of worklife balance to take part in a pilot study. These individuals completed the projection technique exercises and participated in pilot interviews. Data from the pilot were not included for analysis. This information was however instrumental in the refinement of interview questions and data collection process.

Quality

Transparency during the entire research process was necessary to ensure the quality or rigor of the present study (Anfara et al., 2002; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004). A thoughtful, intentional design of the study was essential to enhance quality. The research design for the present study was tailored to the major research questions (Anfara et al., 2002). Interviewing was selected as the primary data-gathering source. Interview questions were intentionally designed to elicit rich in-depth responses. They were then cross-referenced with the research questions to ensure that responses received would inform the topic under study (Anfara et al., 2002).

The quality or rigor of a study is also contingent on its credibility. Several validity procedures were used to ensure the study's credibility. Credibility or trustworthiness is the extent to which the findings and results could be validated (Seale et al., 2004). It is a question of whether the researcher used principles of "accepted and competent" practice (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The first validity procedure employed was prolonged engagement in the field. Prolonged engagement in the field was necessary to build trust with participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Establishing rapport with study participants throughout the research period was essential for purposes of self-disclosure (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Participants who met the study criteria were contacted via phone prior to the telephone interview. The purpose of this dialogue was to further explain the purpose of the study and answer any questions that participants might have. This was an initial attempt at building trust.

For purposes of this study, I immersed myself in data collection and notions of worklife balance for a period of two months. Prolonged engagement in the topic was necessary to thoroughly understand participant worklife balance experiences (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Engagement for an extended period was intentional in that it gave me an opportunity to thoughtfully and reflexively review data, make observations, and respond where necessary (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Similarly, another procedure employed to ensure credibility of the present study was member checking. With member checking, participants validate the credibility of the researcher's data and interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Member checking also allows the researcher to engage participants in conversations about emergent findings (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). During the interview, participants were asked follow-up questions in instances

where responses were unclear or as findings emerged. Main points of the interview were recapped at the end. Participants were asked to confirm their accuracy.

Additionally, for purposes of credibility data were triangulated. Triangulation occurs when multiple or diverse data sources (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) converge to create themes or categories about the topic under investigation (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Multiple sources of data were triangulated for this study. Data collected from the projection techniques and interviews were used to provide a broader understanding of worklife balance.

Another validity procedure that enhanced credibility was the use of a critical friend or peer debriefer. The peer debriefer engages the researcher in critical dialogue about the data or research processes (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Colleagues external to the study and from diverse disciplines were consulted throughout the research process (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Peer debriefers provided a neutral eye to the study. Critical feedback was provided and revisions were made to the design of the study and data collection instruments where necessary. Furthermore, peer debriefers assisted in the interpretation of the data and gave insight with respect to themes and categories identified.

Lastly, an audit trail was maintained to establish validity. An audit trail is a chronological record of actions taken and decisions made by the researcher throughout the research inquiry process (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The audit trail for the present inquiry was a virtual log of processes undertaken during the data collection and analyses phases. My thoughts and reflections were also documented.

Analysis

Data analysis is the transformation of data to research results (LeCompte, 2000). It is the process of making sense of the data (Creswell, 2002). Data analysis is eclectic in that there are multiple ways to go about the process (Creswell, 2002; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Patton, 1990; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It is also ongoing (Creswell, 2002). Data analysis does not begin at the end of the data collection period (Patton, 1990). Instead, analysis requires continuous reflection throughout the research process. As I collected data, I wrote memos to note any insights that emerged (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Three data sources were analyzed for the present study, interviews and two projection technique exercises. Before I analyzed the data, I read through all interview transcripts, memos, and field notes. I also looked over responses to the two projection techniques to get a general

sense of the data (Creswell, 2002). I reflected on the data and logged these insights into the audit trail. After reflection, I began a systematic approach of analysis.

Open coding was used to identify themes, patterns, or categories that recurred in interview transcripts. Every line, sentence, and paragraph of each transcript was coded (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Interview transcripts were coded twice. The second coding was used to cluster codes into categories about participant role experiences (i.e., multiple role demands, role interdependence, role enrichment, personal well-being, and job satisfaction) and organizational culture (i.e., formal institutional supports, informal institutional supports, unequal institutional supports, and lack of support). Direct quotes were taken from transcripts to support these findings. Nvivo 8 QSR was used to store, manage, and organize interview data.

Coding was also used to elucidate key patterns in the projection technique data (Patton, 1990). Codes for both projection techniques were logged into separate Excel workbooks. Exercise 1 generated data on the number of roles that participants occupied as well as the significance of those roles. I used three spreadsheets to analyze the data. The first spreadsheet was a summary spreadsheet that listed respondent pseudonyms down the left-hand column. Labels across the top of the document consisted of the four most identified themes: (a) work, (b) family/friend, (c) civic/professional, and (d) spirituality. The category “other” was used to capture less common roles. The total number of roles for each individual participant was entered into the far right-hand column. The total number of roles by category was calculated and entered into the last row of the spreadsheet. The roles were then organized into two overarching groups, primary roles and secondary roles, based on frequency. Primary roles were identified as work and family/friend. Civic/professional, spirituality, and other were labeled secondary roles.

For the second spreadsheet, respondent pseudonyms were entered down the left-hand column. Three categories were entered across the top of the spreadsheet to illustrate the size of circles drawn: (a) small, (b) medium, and (c) large. A numerical value was applied to each category based on my interpretation of circle sizes. The sum of each category was calculated and entered into the last row of the spreadsheet. For the third spreadsheet, three levels of significance were entered down the left-hand column: (a) not close, (b) somewhat close, and (c) very close. The role categories were entered across the top of the spreadsheet. All roles were then assigned levels of significance.

Exercise Two produced data on participants' work and nonwork obligations. Participant pseudonyms were entered down the left-hand column of an Excel spreadsheet. Eight categories were entered across the top to display the types of weekly worklife commitments: (a) work, (b) family, (c) spirituality, (d) civic/professional, (e) self-care, (f) household maintenance, (g) social, and (h) other. The total number of hours spent on the designated obligations was entered into the last row of the spreadsheet. An average was calculated to determine how the collective sample spent their time. The data from both exercises were then compared and contrasted (LeCompte, 2000) to gain an understanding of which roles were of the most significance to participants. Data were stored in individually labeled manila folders and revisited as necessary.

In summary, the projection exercises, interview transcripts, memos, and field notes were analyzed using an emergent, inductive strategy. This systematic approach yielded thick, information-rich descriptions of the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. As such, the findings from this study are substantiated by the data.

Presentation of the Results

Instead of the traditional Results (Chapter Four) and Discussion (Chapter Five) sections, an alternative approach will be used in this dissertation. The most compelling findings of this study are presented as self-standing journal articles in Chapters Five and Six. Both chapters are of sufficient quality for submission to peer-reviewed journals. Chapter Five addresses the challenges mid-level administrators face in the simultaneous negotiation of work, family, and other life roles. This article reports on data from the interviews and projection exercise number one. Two themes identified in the data analysis are explored: time famine and role interdependence. Chapter Six highlights workplace cultural characteristics that facilitate and hinder worklife balance. This article reports data from the interviews and projection exercise number two. Three themes identified in the data analysis are central to this chapter: formal institutional supports, informal institutional supports, and lack of support.

CHAPTER FOUR

Summary of Findings

In this chapter I present revisions to the proposed approach to the study, provide demographic characteristics of the sample, present an overview of the findings in table format, and offer “code maps” of the themes and patterns that emerged from the data analysis (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002). Some of these tables may be modified or may appear in subsequent chapters. Other tables may be used for future publications. This chapter also sets the context for the remaining components of the dissertation. Chapter 5 presents the first of two article manuscripts and is followed by the references for that manuscript. Next, Chapter 6 includes the second manuscript followed by the references for that article. Subsequent to Chapter 6, I list the references for the full dissertation and the Appendices for the study.

Revisions to the Proposed Approach to the Study

Two revisions were made to the research design I originally proposed. The first revision involved the conceptual framework. As the data emerged, it became evident that the high-commitment environment model did not adequately address the interaction and interconnectedness between work and nonwork domains. Moreover, the constructs of the original model did not speak directly to the themes and patterns identified through data analysis. Two alternative models were used as frameworks when writing the articles: (a) a bioecological systems perspective, and (b) cultural barriers to work-life integration.

The second revision relates to the literature reviewed for this study. The annotated bibliography in Chapter Two does not identify literature relative to organizational culture. However as I reviewed the data, it became clear that this body of scholarship was significant to the present study. As such, research specific to this topic is reviewed in Chapter Six.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

This qualitative inquiry elicited data from a purposeful sample of mid-level student affairs administrators. Table 1 represents demographic characteristics of the sample. Overall, 30 professionals were selected from a pool of 1,208 potential respondents. Participants self-identified as Caucasian/European American (47%); African American/Black (20%); Asian/Pacific Islander (17%); Hispanic/Latino (13%); and Multiracial (3%). Both women (63%) and men (37%) were recruited and participated in this study. Ages ranged from 28 to 39 with the majority aged 30 and above (90%). The study included single (37%), married/domestically

Table 1

Detailed Display of Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=30)

Participant	Ethnicity/Race	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Children	Years in Field
Alex	Asian/Pacific Islander	Male	36	Married	2	13
April	Caucasian/European American	Female	37	Single	0	12
Betsy	Caucasian/European American	Female	39	Single	0	14
Carolyn	Multiracial	Female	30	Single	0	6
Cassandra	Caucasian/European American	Female	35	Married	2	6
Chris	Caucasian/European American	Male	34	Domestic Partnership	0	10
Denise	African American/Black	Female	36	Single	0	12
Elaine	Caucasian/European American	Female	31	Married	0	6
Ellie	Caucasian/European American	Female	30	Married	0	9
George	Hispanic/Latino(a)	Male	29	Separated	0	6
Gloria	Caucasian/European American	Female	33	Married	0	10
Greg	African American/Black	Male	34	Married	0	10
Jasmine	Asian/Pacific Islander	Female	38	Married	1	11
Joel	Caucasian/European American	Male	28	Married	1	7
JP	African American/Black	Male	29	Single	0	7
Karen	Caucasian/European American	Female	37	Divorced	0	14
Kerry	Caucasian/European American	Female	35	Married	0	13
Kim	Asian/Pacific Islander	Female	35	Married	1	12

Marcus	African American/Black	Male	30	Single	0	6
Marie	Caucasian/European American	Female	36	Married	1	14
Maurice	African American/Black	Male	38	Single	0	12
Nicole	Hispanic/Latino(a)	Female	36	Single	0	12
Pilar	Hispanic/Latino(a)	Female	37	Married	2	14
Robert	Asian/Pacific Islander	Male	35	Domestic Partnership	0	12
Roger	Asian/Pacific Islander	Male	32	Domestic Partnership	0	10
Sasha	African American/Black	Female	38	Single	2	11
Stacy	Caucasian/European American	Female	31	Single	0	10
Stephanie	Caucasian/European American	Female	33	Married	1	9
Sue	Caucasian/European American	Female	31	Married	1	7
Xavier	Hispanic/Latino(a)	Male	34	Single	0	13

Note. Participant selected pseudonyms

partnered (57%), and divorced/separated administrators (6%). Of the respondents, 67% percent were childless. Participants with children had one (20%) or two (13%). Number of years in the profession varied. The majority of participants had worked between 10 and 12 years (43%). Others had worked between 6 and 9 years (33%) and 13 and 14 years (23%).

Table Two reports by gender respondents' primary institutional type, functional area, and data about work and life obligations. Participants represented an array of public (50%) and private (50%) post-secondary institutions from across the country. Nearly all (97%) institutions were 4-year colleges and universities. They worked in numerous functional areas including residence life (37%); multicultural affairs (20%); student activities/leadership (13%); academic advising/honors (10%); judicial affairs/student conduct (7%); career plan/placement (3%); multiple (7%); and family programming which is designated as "other" (3%).

This table also provides a brief snapshot into the intersection between respondents' work and home obligations. Overwhelmingly, participants (83%) do not complete work-related responsibilities while in the office. To compensate for a lack of time experienced during the work day, 93% take work home. On average, 7% work from home at least once a month, 25% work from home two or three times a month, 29% work from home at least once a week, and 39% work from home more than once at least once a week. Respondents also reported family-to-work interferences. Of the 70% that reported challenges, 43% two to three times a month, 24% at least once a week, 19% more than once a week, and 14% experienced family interferences once a month.

Discussion of Findings

The primary purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to make meaning of the lived experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators by examining worklife balance. A secondary purpose was to gather administrator perceptions of their environment to gain insight into infrastructures that may assist or hinder worklife balance efforts. This study was designed to reveal themes and patterns that provide an understanding of how administrators negotiate the elusive boundaries between the public sphere of work and private sphere of life.

I explored two primary research questions concerning worklife balance:

3. How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?
4. What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

Table 2

Participant Work Demographics (N=30)

Demographics	Female	Male	Total
<i>Institutional Type</i>			
Private 4- year	10	5	15
Public 4-year	8	6	14
Public 2-year	1	0	1
Total	19	11	30
<i>Functional Area</i>			
Academic Advising/Honors	2	1	3
Career Plan/Placement	0	1	1
Judicial Affairs/Student Conduct	2	0	2
Multicultural Affairs	4	2	6
Residence Life	8	3	11
Student Activities/Leadership	1	3	4
Multiple	1	1	2
Other	1	0	1
Total	19	11	30
<i>Do you accomplish all of your work-related responsibilities at work?</i>			
No	17	8	25
Yes	2	3	5
Total	19	11	30
<i>Do you ever take work home?</i>			
No	0	2	2
Yes	19	9	28
Total	19	11	30
<i>How often do you take work home?</i>			
Once a month	2	0	2
Two or three times a month	5	2	7
At least once a week	4	4	8
More than once a week	8	3	11
Never	0	2	2
Total	19	11	30
<i>Do your home responsibilities ever interfere with your work obligations?</i>			
No	5	4	9

Yes	14	7	21
Total	19	11	30

*How often do you work
responsibilities interfere with your
work obligations?*

Once a month	3	0	3
Two or three times a month	5	4	9
At least once a week	3	2	5
More than once a week	3	1	4
Never	5	4	9
Total	19	11	30

Notes. “Other” in functional area refers to family programming

The remainder of this section will highlight the numerous themes and patterns that emerged in the interviews and projection exercises. Data were interpreted using a variety of theories and perspectives as lenses of analysis.

Research Question One: Worklife Experiences

Mid-level student affairs administrators describe the worklife experiences in the context of five overarching themes: (a) multiple role demands, (b) role interdependence (c) role enrichment (d) personal well-being, and (e) job/career satisfaction (see Table 3). This analysis revealed that mid-level student affairs administrators' worklife experiences are driven by a dearth of time and an excess of roles. Their involvement in multiple, interdependent roles although enriching, presents ongoing time-based conflicts due to intense pressures of work. The tension associated with juggling roles significantly impacts their personal well-being and career satisfaction.

Multiple role demands. The issue of time is primary to this discourse. Time is a finite, nonrenewable resource that mid-level student affairs administrators simply do not have enough of (see Table 4). The perceived dearth of time that respondents reported is a consequence of their involvement in a multitude of worklife roles. The number of worklife roles participants occupy is one of the most striking findings of this study. On average, participants are engaged in anywhere between 4 and 21 roles (see Table 5), each playing a major part in the individual's sense of self. They organize their lives around two primary domains, work and family. Participants also occupy numerous secondary roles that fall into the community, civic/professional, and spirituality categories (see Table 5). It is important to note that it is not so much the number of roles in which mid-level student affairs administrators are engaged that causes the greatest challenge. It is a scarcity of time that impacts their ability to successfully meet multiple role demands.

Role interdependence: The findings of this study are consistent with previous scholarship in that the boundaries between work, family, and life are permeable and constant (Aryee, Fields, & Luk, 1999; Edley, 2001; Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). Fluidity among roles results in tension between a finite amount of time and the intense pressures of a singular, dominant demand that requires total commitment, in this case, work. For example, Denise stated, "I feel that my life and my time and my mental and sometimes physical energies are definitely much more focused on my [work] than life outside of work." Work-to-family tension was revealed in

Table 3

Code Mapping of Worklife Experiences

RQ1. How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?

Third Iterations of Analysis: Application to Data Set

Mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences as one that is driven by a dearth of time and an excess of roles. Their involvement in multiple, interdependent roles while enriching presents ongoing time-based conflicts due to the intense pressures of work. The tension associated with the management of roles significantly impacts their personal well-being and career satisfaction.

Second Iteration: Themes

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Multiple Role Demands | 4. Personal Well-Being |
| 2. Role Interdependence | 5. Career/Job Satisfaction |
| 3. Role Enrichment | |

First Iteration: Initial Codes/Surface Content Analysis

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1A. Push and pull | 3A. Strong sense of obligation and pride |
| - Work | 3B. Buffers to dominant role demands |
| - Family/friends | |
| - Civic/professional | 4A. Health and wellness |
| - Spirituality | 4B. Relationship maintenance/development |
| - Other life roles | 4C. "Me-time" |
| 1B. Time famine | - The need to decompress |
| | - Time for the things I enjoy |
| 2A. Greedy student affairs | |
| 2B. Finding time (unidirectional) | 5A. Career rewards vs. personal sacrifices |
| - When work and parenting collide | 5B. "I honestly don't know if I'll stay in this profession" |
| - When work and dating/marriage collide | 5C. "I don't know if this is the right position for me" |
| - When work and extended family/friends collide | |
| - When work and other life commitments collide | |
| - Multiple collisions: When work, parenting, and partnering collide | |
| 2C. Family creep | |
| - Parenting challenges | |

DATA

DATA

DATA

DATA

Notes. To be read from bottom up

Table 4

Hours Spent During a Typical Week on Work and Nonwork Activities

Participant	Work	Self-Care	Family	Social	Household Maintenance	School	Civic/ Professional	Spirituality	Other
Alex	47	48	55	4			3		11
April	55	67		10	8				28
Betsy	66	73		23			6		
Carolyn	40	59		25	5	5	5		30
Cassandra	60	54	38	16					
Chris	45	47	61	14			1		
Denise	48	63	1	55				2	
Elaine	56	57		20	17				20
Ellie	50	63		33	20			2	
George	40	63	38	13	14				
Gloria	58	49	20	5		20	10		6
Greg	50	73		13	6		8	9	10
Jasmine	50	58	25	20			3	2	10
Joel	50	54	50	10				3	
JP	84	23	8			34	17	3	
Karen	50	65	17	8	8	20			
Kerry	84	32	25	7	17				3
Kim	56	49	44	14				5	
Marcus	80		30	5		35	15	3	
Marie	50	55	40	5	10		8		
Maurice	67	45	5	5		20	25		
Nicole	59	42	37	10	10		10		
Pilar	50	58	57					3	
Robert	52	63	8	23	10				12
Roger	45	63		18	2	20	15		5
Sasha	55	52	50	6					5
Stacy	54	67	20		3	20	3		
Stephanie	42	56	20	15	35				

Sue	45	52	58		13				
Xavier	50	59	16	36	7				
Total	1638	1609	723	413	185	174	129	32	140

Notes. There are 168 hours in the week. Decimals were rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Table 5

Role Frequency by Microsystems (N=278)

Participant	Primary Roles			Secondary Roles		Total
	Family/Friends	Work	Civic/Professional	Spirituality	Other	
Alex	3	1	1		2	7
April	3	2	2			7
Betsy	3	2	2		3	10
Carolyn	4	4				8
Cassandra	5	2		4		11
Chris	3	1	1			5
Denise	3	1		1		5
Elaine	4	2	1	2	3	12
Ellie	6	1		1		8
George	3		1	1		5
Gloria	3	1	3		1	8
Greg	7	4	1	1	2	15
Jasmine	10	3	3	2	2	21
Joel	5	1		2	2	9
JP	2	2	2	1	1	8
Karen	6	1	1		2	10
Kerry	5	1				6
Kim	5	1		1		7
Marcus	2		1	1		4
Marie	2	2	2	1	2	9
Maurice	4	3	1		1	9
Nicole	4	2	1		2	9
Pilar	4	5	2	1	4	16
Robert	4	3	8		1	16
Roger	3	3	3		1	10
Sasha	5	2	3			10
Stacy	5	2	2		2	11
Stephanie	5	1			1	7
Sue	9	1				10
Xavier	2	1	1	1		5
Total	129	55	42	20	32	278

the majority of interviews and was almost always unidirectional. That is, participants reported how they struggled to find time for family-related obligations, not how they struggled to find the time for work commitments.

Role enrichment. The theory of role enrichment recognizes the benefits of multiple role accumulation in the reduction of personal and interpersonal tension. Involvement in community, spirituality, and “other” roles acts as a buffer to the tension experienced in the work and family environment. For instance, Kim revealed that her involvement in roles outside of work “helps [her] stay grounded and not inundated only in working.” Similarly, Roger argued, “I think you take advantage of opportunities to get involved in your community so that you do have an outlet outside of work to be active and to build new relationships with people.” It appears that role involvement in community, spirituality, and other microsystems enhances the overall role experience. These roles mitigate strain caused by work and family. Participants viewed them as a “healthy outlet” (Kim) or retreat away from the more demanding roles of work and family.

Personal well-being. The fast-paced daily routines that mid-level student affairs administrators face coupled with a scarcity of time impinge upon their ability to successfully sustain to their personal well-being. First, mid-level student affairs administrators maintain that their physical and mental health is critical to their personal well-being. These needs however are often times neglected due to more pressing matters. For example, Robert reported, “I had walking pneumonia for almost 2 months. And still went to work . . . so I was sick, but I felt this need to keep working.” It is apparent that administrators want to focus more on their physical and mental health. However, finding time to do so is a major challenge. Nicole stated, “I give so much of myself and at the end of the day there’s nothing left to be like okay, let’s go workout for an hour.” Consequently, they experience episodes of sleep deprivation, stress and burnout, physical ailments, and unhealthy eating habits.

Second, the presence of friends and family is essential to their personal well-being from both an emotional and practical support perspective (Paris, Vickers, & Wilkes, 2008), but administrators struggle to find time for these relationships. For example, respondents stated that maintenance of amorous relationships was difficult due to the pace and structure of student affairs work. Participants felt that the quality of their dating and spousal/partner relationships suffered due to limited time. One participant commented on the lack of excitement in her marriage that she attributed to the long hours that both partners invested in work-related

obligations. Dual-earners found themselves unintentionally neglecting their relationship needs. Often times they did not realize the deficiencies in their relationships until the partner brought it to the participant's attention. Unfortunately, for some the inability to make time resulted in the dissolution of the marriage, engagement, or relationship. Similarly, establishing friendships was also a challenge because of time scarcity. Several participants spoke to their friendships being limited to colleagues. While these were valued relationships, respondents talked about desires to expand their circle of friends beyond the workplace environment.

Lastly, mid-level student affairs administrators do not have enough "me-time." This notion of "me-time" refers to time to decompress or de-stress from the day-to-day grind. Participating in social events or engaging in hobbies are just a couple examples of the activities they do not have adequate time to pursue. For example, Alex stated, "Me-time could be me going out with the guys to a bar . . . it's just it doesn't fit my schedule." As stated earlier, mid-level administrators commonly reported stress and burnout. It is reasonable to suggest that time for self would help to ease the worklife burden.

Career/job satisfaction. Interviews highlighted internal struggles faced in mid-level student affairs administrators' attempts to reconcile multiple identities. The day-to-day challenges they experience make the notion of balance daunting. Supervisors' inability to negotiate the boundaries of multiple role demands also contribute to the feeling that managing multiple roles is unachievable. Intent to leave the current position and/or the profession was evident in numerous conversations. Mid-level student affairs administrators questioned whether the student affairs lifestyle is "worth it" (Cassandra). "This work schedule and this worklife issue is something I really have been grappling with in my own mind and heart . . . I honestly don't know if I'll stay in this profession," Cassandra stated. They also expressed their anxiety and fear about the addition of roles. They questioned whether they could cope if they pursued an advanced degree, entered into a committed partnership, or added the responsibilities of having a pet, let alone a child. Gloria worried, "We both know when we have kids . . . our life cannot look like it does. And that to me seems really scary. And I haven't figured out how that's going to be integrated. It seems impossible right now." The desire to "have it all" had many participants contemplating a transition to careers outside of student affairs or outside higher education entirely. They questioned whether the professional rewards outweighed the sacrifice of their

relationships, physical well-being, and mental health. They believe that jobs in other divisions on campus (e.g. academic departments) or industries are more conducive for worklife management.

Research Question Two: Environmental Infrastructures

Mid-level student affairs administrators identified environmental infrastructures that promote and/or hinder worklife efforts in the context of several cultural dynamics: (a) formal institutional supports, (b) informal institutional supports, (c) uneven supports, and (d) lack of organizational responsibility (Table 6). Formal and informal support mechanisms such as policies, programs and resources, effective supervision and campus support networks assist administrators in mitigating worklife challenges. This is in contrast to unequal supports and a lack of organizational responsibility that hinder worklife efforts.

Formal institutional supports. Formal institutional supports are policies and programmatic resources intentionally designed to reduce the barriers mid-level student affairs administrators face in their struggle to manage professional and personal worklife commitments. Most institutions are bound by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which mandates 12-workweeks of uncompensated, job-protected leave in the event of child birth, adoption, foster child placement, or medically-related situations and crises that involve the individual, or a dependent, spouse, or parent (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). Institutional policies and programs that extend beyond FMLA are organized into three categories: child care assistance, health and wellness resources, and flexible work arrangements. First, child care assistance varied from financial resources and subsidies to support child care to on-site care. Second, free access to on-site recreational facilities, discounted gym memberships, and weight loss and management programs (e.g., Weight Watcher classes, and Biggest Loser programs) are just a few of the health and wellness initiatives in which respondents are actively engaged. Lastly, flexible work arrangements such as time release options, telecommuting, and job sharing assist administrators in meeting work and non-work obligations.

Informal institutional supports. Informal institutional supports include effective supervision and campus support networks. One of the most consistent messages that came across in interviews was the role of the supervisor in facilitating worklife balance. Supervisor support and sensitivity to worklife responsibilities significantly reduced the tensions mid-level student affairs administrators faced when juggling multiple role demands. Supportive supervisors were

Table 6

Code Mapping for Environmental Infrastructures

RQ2. What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

Third Iteration of Analysis: Application to Data Set

Mid-level student affairs administrators identified environmental infrastructures that promote and/or hinder worklife efforts in the context of several cultural dynamics. Formal and informal support mechanisms such as policies, programs and resources, effective supervision and campus support networks assist administrators in mitigating worklife challenges. This is in contrast to unequal supports and a lack of organizational responsibility that hinder worklife efforts.

Second Iteration: Themes

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Formal Institutional Supports (promote) | 3. Unequal Institutional Supports (hinder) |
| 2. Informal Institutional Supports (promote) | 4. Lack of Support (hinder) |
-

First Iteration: Initial Codes/Surface Content Analysis

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1A. FMLA
1B. Policies/programs in excess of FMLA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child care assistance - Health and wellness resources - Flexible work arrangements 2A. Supervisor support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocates of worklife balance - Models of worklife balance - Flexibility 2B. Campus support networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colleagues - Working mother's groups | 3A. Unequal respect for non-work roles
Single and childfree vs.
3B. Unequal work expectations

4A. No policies beyond FMLA/inadequate policies
4B. Limited programs and resources (i.e. child care)
4C. Mis-education/no education |
|--|--|
-

DATA	DATA	DATA	DATA
------	------	------	------

Note. To be read from bottom up

so critical to worker experiences that in some instances they compensated for a lack of formal institutional policies and programs. Campus support networks are an additional resource for colleagues to come together around a common interest (i.e. working mothers, women). For example, Anna explained, “Several of us moms have tried to get together over the years pretty regularly and just meet to have lunch and touch base and support each other on things that are happening like with our kids, and how we worked through it.” These groups form organically and serve as a support system and social outlet for mid-level student affairs administrators.

Unequal supports. Inequity in the availability of supports for workers is also a barrier to managing worklife role demands. This is particularly the case for single and childfree mid-level student affairs administrators who felt that there is a stigma attached to these identities. They perceived a lack of respect and support for their nonwork roles. They revealed that their nonwork roles were unimportant in comparison to their colleagues with immediate family obligations (Casper, Weltman, Kwesiga, 2007). Single and childfree workers however are engaged in demanding extended family roles. For example, several respondents highlighted involvement in the care of aging parents. Most often these were part-time care responsibilities where the parent(s) did not live with the worker. Administrators take an active role in shuttling parents back and forth to doctor’s appointments, assisting with the recovery process after major surgeries, and running pharmacy and grocery store errands. This is a particularly challenging for workers whose parents live in another city or state. April described the increased responsibilities associated with supporting aging parents who live at a distance. She explained:

I will be going up, taking three days off, for the surgery, coming back while she’s in patient rehab, and then going back for two weeks to help her when she gets back home. So that type of interaction and support for my parents is definitely increased as they’ve gotten older.

It is apparent that dependent care obligations extend beyond supporting children. Worklife supports must also address the extended family needs of workers.

Single and child-free mid-level student affairs administrators also reported unequal work expectations and felt that their married with children counterparts received more accommodations (Casper et al., 2007). They reported that their time did not seem as valued as workers with immediate family obligations. Respondents felt that they were assigned added responsibilities or were asked to stay at the workplace later due to their marital and parental

status. Nicole reported, “People feel [we] have more time or at least flexibility in [our] schedule versus those that already have people that they have to respond to after 5pm.” Ellie also expressed her frustration with the lack of regard for nonwork roles. She revealed the scheduling concerns she experienced as a pet parent. Ellie explained, “A dog is not the same as a human baby, but still It always affects them too if I’m gone all the time . . . it’s definitely a significant factor in scheduling what I’m doing for work that week.”

Unequal support is an interesting finding in that senior level administrators must take interest in not only being family-friendly (Casper et al., 2007) but must also acknowledge all nonwork roles that all workers occupy (Stebbins, 2001). The assumption that workers without immediate family needs have an abundance of time creates barriers to worklife balance. It is evident that single and child-free workers need worklife supports. Failure to provide assistance results in role conflict and higher levels of employee turnover (Casper et al., 2007).

Lack of institutional supports. Formal institutional worklife infrastructures were not readily available to all mid-level student affairs administrators. There were striking inconsistencies in perceptions’ of the availability of worklife policies, programs, and practices beyond FMLA – some respondents had access to them, others did not, and a few were simply unaware of what was available to them. This finding is consistent with a previous study that found that worklife practices were not universally available in higher education (The Center for the Education of Women, 2009). Colleges and universities typically get by with the minimal support mandated through FMLA (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005).

Overall, then, the results of the study provide fertile ground for the manuscripts presented in Chapters 5 and 6. They also point to implications for future practice, policy, research. These implications are more fully explicated in the manuscripts. The manuscripts are written in the first person plural as I intend to be the first author on the manuscripts when they are submitted for review. Joan Hirt will serve as the second author as she helped craft the articles.

CHAPTER FIVE

Time is a Nonrenewable Resource: Worklife Balance among Mid-Level Student Affairs Administrators

Juggling the obligations of work, family, and life is one of the primary causes of employee turnover (Griffeth & Hom, 2001; Jo, 2008). Expanding family responsibilities along with the growing challenges of work create tension for those engaged in multiple roles (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Much of this conundrum can be attributed to a change in the traditional 40-hour workweek. Americans are working longer hours (Griffeth & Hom, 2001) and report being overworked (Geller, 2005). Negotiating multiple roles is not an issue just for married workers or those with partners or children. Single and childless employees also attest to their frustration about tensions between work and other life obligations (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Employees are devoting more time to paid work responsibilities (Drago, 2007; Schor, 1991) but would prefer to spend more time with families and meet other life commitments (Jones, 2003).

Changes in workforce demography further exacerbate the issue. Expanded work hours coupled with the influx of married women with young children into the workforce, the rise of dual earner families, and the growing number of diverse family structures (e.g. single parent, same-sex parents) underscore the complex realities of the worklife continuum (Barnett, 1999). Organizational leaders have attempted to address employee frustrations. For instance, employers that offer traditional benefits like pensions and medical insurance reduce turnover somewhat, but employees prefer nontraditional benefits (e.g. flexible work schedules) that assist in the daily management of worklife demands (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Workers report higher levels of satisfaction and experience fewer mental health problems when they have access to flexible work arrangements (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002). Organizations committed to employee worklife management are more likely to retain employees (Berg, Kalleberg, & Appelbaum, 2003). However, while benefits and policies are essential to helping staff juggle work, family, and other life responsibilities, environmental infrastructures are also necessary to facilitate worklife integration (Berg et al., 2003).

The synthesis of work and family continues to be an issue for women and men of the academy (Gatta & Roos, 2004). Much of the research on worklife management in the post-secondary education setting focuses on the lives of faculty (Bailyn, 2003; Bassett, 2005; Curtis, 2004; Drago et al., 2006; Drago & Williams, 2000; Gattos & Roos, 2004; Massachusetts Institute

of Technology, 1999; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Progress by way of policy implementation (e.g., child care, stop-the-tenure-clock, flex-time/modified duties, dual career) has strengthened institutional infrastructures to assist faculty manage the complex task of balancing home and work obligations. While these systems serve to advance worklife management for faculty, higher education administrators continue to be marginalized.

Worklife management concerns for college and university administrators are arguably different than those of faculty. It is reasonable to suggest that current policies and practices that foster worklife integration for faculty may not be useful for administrators, yet very little research has been conducted on worklife experiences of administrators. Mid-level administrators are perhaps at more of a crossroads with respect to life and career decisions (Mills, 2009) than their entry and senior level counterparts. They are more likely to be involved in dual earner partnerships and the care of children and aging parents. The primary purpose of this phenomenological inquiry was to understand mid-level student affairs administrators' worklife experiences by focusing on how participants simultaneously negotiate multiple work, family, and other life roles. One primary research question guided this inquiry: What challenges do mid-level student affairs administrators face in the juggle of multiple worklife roles?

A Conceptual Frame to Understand Worklife Balance: Bioecology

Work and nonwork (e.g. family, community, spirituality) domains are dominant in the lives of employed men and women (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Michel, Mitchelson, Kotrba, LeBreton, & Baltes, 2009). The interaction among multiple domains is central to the worklife discourse. The study of the work-nonwork interface is grounded in a bioecological systems perspective that assumes an individual is constantly evolving and influenced by interactions between settings in which he or she resides (Bronfenbrenner, 2005b). The bioecological environment is viewed as a set of "nested structures" that move from a level closest to the individual to one that is more distant (Bronfenbrenner, 2005a, p. 50). This interconnected, hierarchical system consists of five levels: (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem.

The microsystem explains the interaction between individuals and their most immediate environment. A microsystem is a "pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations" that an individual experiences in a face-to-face interaction with a particular setting (Bronfenbrenner, 2005a, p. 57). Roles are learned behaviors, expectations, activities, or attitudes defined by

societal standards. Examples of microsystems include roles fulfilled in the workplace, home, community, and/or school. Common roles may include spouse, parent, employee, supervisor, or sister/brother. Primary to this study are roles that occur in worklife microsystems.

The mesosystem addresses the interdependency between two or more microsystems. It illustrates the bidirectional impact of microsystems on one another. The impact can be positive or negative. There are two types of mesosystems. The first type focuses on the direct relationship between two microsystems (e.g., the effects of individuals' work life on their home life, or vice versa). The second type focuses on the combined effect of two microsystems on a single microsystem (e.g., the effects of both community and spirituality on family) (Voydanoff, 2002). The majority of the worklife research, particularly multiple role experiences, has been conducted from the mesosystem level (Bellavia & Frone, 2005). For example, role theory furthers awareness of how individuals adapt to socially constructed roles and explains the interaction between microsystems that impact the worklife experiences of employees. The literature refers to this interface as role enhancement or role conflict.

The remaining three levels are less germane to this study. The exosystem is comprised of two or more microsystems and does not relate directly to the individual but to significant others. (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). The impact of one partner's work stress on the other partner exemplifies this level. The macrosystem encompasses institutional patterns, laws, and ideologies of a culture or subculture inclusive of characteristics of the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. The macrosystem level is reflected in workplace socialization practices that dictate employee behavior. The outermost level is the chronosystem. The chronosystem acknowledges the fluidity of the bioecological environment. Changes in an individual's environment may occur as a result of life events or experiences over time. These changes may occur in the person (e.g. birth of a child, severe illness) or the external environment (e.g. promotion, divorce, loss of a parent). This conceptual framework takes on added meaning in the context of employee turnover.

Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is more relevant now than ever before. In times of tight economic and labor markets, not only is the recruitment of staff a problem, retaining staff is also a challenge. The national annual turnover rate of employees at all companies is an estimated 12% (Pinkovitz, Moskal, & Green, n.d.). In fact, most (75%) of the demand for new hires is not to fill newly

created positions but rather to replace those employees who depart for other jobs (Pinkovitz, et al., n.d.).

A high rate of voluntary turnover poses the biggest threat to an organization. It can also contribute to myriad other organizational issues (Hatcher, 1999; Jo, 2008). First, turnover is an administrative burden (Phillips & Connell, 2003). The time employers spend confronting the issue and completing additional paperwork interrupts regular business practices. Another issue associated with voluntary turnover is the disturbance of socialization and communication patterns (Phillips & Connell, 2003). A disruption of communication networks is detrimental to any organizational setting and can lead to a breakdown in team dynamics. Additionally, excessive levels of turnover can damage an organization's reputation (Phillips & Connell, 2003). A revolving door image carries negative implications that can hamper recruitment efforts. Lastly, high levels of voluntary turnover are costly, incurring both direct and indirect costs (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). Expenses to recruit and train a new staff member are significant (Adkerson, 2000; Krausz, Bizman, & Weiss, 1989) ranging anywhere between \$1,200 and \$40,000 (Hatcher, 1999). Costs can be considerably higher depending on the position and the educational and experiential background required of the incumbent (Adkerson, 2000). Even turnover involving an hourly wage employee can cost as much as \$3,372 ("Stay, just a little," 2000).

While there is a strong relationship between turnover and salary, an employee's decision to leave an organization is not always influenced by pay or lack thereof (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Organizational commitment (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002), supervisor-supervisee relations (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Xu, 2008a; Zhou & Wolkein, 2004), quality of the job (Rosser, 2004), the work environment (Rosser & Townsend, 2006), and overall job satisfaction (Smart, 1990) are among broad factors associated with turnover.

The focus of this study was mid-level college and university administrators. These professionals play a major role in the management of American colleges and universities (Mills, 2009; Rosser, 2000). They support the primary mission of the institution by administering services and programs that support the quality of learning for students (Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Johnsrud and Rosser (1999) maintained that this population "significantly affect[s] the tone, manner, and style of the entire institution; and their daily performance levels can determine the quality of relationships with faculty, students, and the public" (p. 121). Although they are regarded as highly skilled and dedicated, mid-level administrators are an invisible population in

the higher education enterprise (Rosser, 2004a). This is somewhat surprising given their prevalence on campuses. Mid-level administrators are the largest administrative group at postsecondary institutions (Rosser, 2000). Their numbers have increased significantly over time and so has their rate of turnover (Rosser, 2004a). In fact, mid-level administrators experience higher rates of turnover than their entry and senior level counterparts (Rosser, 2004a).

Research on turnover among midlevel administrators is sparse. An early study by Penn (1990) attributed midlevel student affairs administrators' failures to role conflict and role ambiguity, arguing that they experience a higher degree of vagueness and confusion. Johnsrud and Rosser (1999) found a direct link between organizational commitment and morale. Mid-level administrators have a distinct work life experience that impacts morale (Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000). The nature of the midlevel role, lack of recognition, and limited opportunity for mobility are morale factors that contribute to turnover among this population. Rosser and Javinar (2003) examined similar variables regarding the quality of professional and institutional work and concluded that administrators' intent to leave is influenced by morale, number of years at the institution, and salary. All of these studies focused primarily on the work environment, however. There is an equally pressing need to understand the interface between work, family, and other life roles.

Administrators at all levels face challenges with respect to worklife management (Grant & Ranson, 2007). Arguably, mid-level professionals experience the most tension between work and personal life. They are often raising children, caring for aging parents, and dealing with their own mid-life changes. Yet, little is known about how these individuals negotiate multiple worklife roles. We sought to explore this gap in the literature base through our study.

Methodology

We conducted a qualitative inquiry that elicited information from a purposeful sample of student affairs professionals across the country. Data were collected via a projection exercise and interview.

Participants

Respondents needed to meet three primary criteria to participate in this study. First, this research inquiry was concerned with the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. Participants needed to have worked in the field for 6 to 15 years after completing a master's degree to be considered a mid-level administrator. Second, participants had to work in

a full-time (minimum of 35-hours per week), student affairs administrative position to ensure that work was a major component of their life. Third, participants had to report worklife challenges on a pre-screening questionnaire. These criteria ensured that we would elicit data from information-rich individuals who could provide deeper understanding into the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2002).

Participant selection was a four-part process. First, staff at the American College Personnel Association (a preeminent national professional association for student affairs administrators) generated a dataset containing contact information on 1,208 mid-level administrators who were potential participants. This dataset was winnowed using purposeful sampling. Next, invitations were extended via email to 100 randomly selected individuals. We used random sampling to identify a broad cross-section of potential respondents. Those potential respondents who were interested in participating completed a pre-screening survey to assess the degree to which they would be able to provide rich, deep data. Only those who met selection criteria were included in the study.

The final sample consisted of 30 mid-level student affairs administrators. Participants represented an array of public ($n = 15$) and private ($n = 15$) post-secondary institutions from across the country. Nearly all ($n = 29$) these institutions were 4-year colleges and universities. Participants also worked in numerous functional areas including residence life ($n = 11$); student activities/leadership ($n = 4$); multicultural affairs ($n = 6$); academic advising/honors ($n = 3$); judicial affairs/student conduct ($n = 2$); career plan/placement ($n = 1$); multiple ($n = 2$); and other ($n = 1$).

The study of the work-nonwork interface has traditionally focused on women (Kanter, 1989) or married employees with children. The increase in men engaged in caretaking activities made it important to understand their worklife experiences. To that end, both women ($n = 19$) and men ($n = 11$) were recruited and participated in this study. Traditional research has also excluded single and childless employees from the worklife discourse (Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, & Burnett, 2007). The present study included single ($n = 11$), married/domestically partnered ($n = 17$), and divorced/separated administrators ($n = 2$). In addition, 66% percent of respondents were childless ($n = 20$). Participants with children had one ($n = 6$) or two ($n = 4$). The racial and ethnic backgrounds of the respondents were varied. Participants self-identified as

Caucasian/European American ($n = 14$); African American/Black ($n = 6$); Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 5$); Hispanic/Latino ($n = 4$); and Multiracial ($n = 1$).

Instrumentation

Participation in the study involved completing a projection exercise and a personal interview. Projection techniques get to the core of a participant's epistemological values (Patton, 1990). The projection activity in our study was used to stimulate participant thinking prior to the interview and to elicit data about roles participants most identified with. Individuals were given an activity sheet on which a circle labeled "YOU" was placed in the center. They were instructed to draw additional circles on the sheet to represent the roles they fulfill (e.g. parent, spouse, professional, church member, dog owner). The significance of these roles was symbolized by size and closeness to the center circle. Larger circles and those that were drawn closer to the YOU circle represented roles that were most important to the respondent.

Subsequent to completing the projection exercise, telephone interviews were conducted. The 50-60 minute semi-structured interview was designed to ensure that the worklife experiences of participants were thoroughly explored. The interview protocol consisted of questions that were divided into three sections.

The first section of questions was labeled "Professional Life." This section set the tone for the interview and gave participants the opportunity to share their story. Questions were designed to elicit low-risk responses. Participants talked about their journey to the student affairs profession. For example, one question asked participants to talk about how they became a part of this profession. We also wanted to get a sense of how participants communicated about what it was like to be a student affairs professional. Participants were asked to describe their daily responsibilities and tasks.

The second section was the "Worklife Experiences" section. These questions elicited responses about the everyday work and non-work experiences of student affairs administrators. Participants were asked how they balance the multiple roles they listed in their projection exercise with the challenges they face in careers. They were asked to share concrete examples of how work and non-work obligations conflicted. Lastly, the "Personal Reflections" section encouraged participants to reflect on their work and personal experiences. Respondents were asked how they understood the notion of worklife balance and what sense they make of it.

Interviews were audio recorded. To ensure confidentiality, participants were asked to select a pseudonym to use for the interview. These pseudonyms are used when presenting findings of the study.

Data Analysis

An emergent, inductive strategy was employed in the analysis of both data sources. Open coding was used to identify themes, patterns, or categories that recurred in the interview data. Every line, sentence, and paragraph of each transcript was coded (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Coding was also used to analyze projection technique data. The roles identified in the exercise were organized into six categories, family/friend, work, civic/professional organizations, spirituality, extracurricular/recreation, and other. The data were then compared and contrasted (LeCompte, 2000) to gain an understanding of which roles were most significant to participants. Data were analyzed to elucidate key patterns (Patton, 1990). Analytical memos were used to report recurring themes. Memos, findings, and general thoughts were stored in the online audit trail.

Several validity procedures were used to ensure the study's credibility. The first was prolonged engagement in the field to build trust with participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Establishing rapport with study participants throughout the research period was essential for purposes of self-disclosure (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Participants who met the study criteria were contacted via phone prior to the telephone interview. The purpose of this dialogue was to further explain the purpose of the study and answer any questions that participants might have. This was an initial attempt at building trust. We also immersed ourselves in data collection and notions of worklife balance for a period of two months.

Second, prolonged engagement in the topic was necessary to thoroughly understand participant worklife balance experiences (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Engagement for an extended period was intentional in that it gave us an opportunity to thoughtfully and reflexively review data, make observations, and respond where necessary (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Third, member checking validated the credibility of the researchers' interpretations and engaged participants in conversations about emergent findings (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). During the interview, participants were asked follow-up questions in instances where responses were unclear or as findings emerged. We recapped main points of the interview at the conclusion of the interview and participants were asked to confirm their accuracy. Additionally, data were

triangulated. We used current literature and data collected from the projection exercise and interviews (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) to create themes or categories about worklife balance. Finally, we created an audit trail to enhance validity of the data. This entailed maintaining a virtual log of processes undertaken during the data collection and analyses phases. Thoughts and reflections were also documented.

Findings

The data suggest that worklife management issues primarily relate to the first and second levels of the bioecological systems model; specifically the roles that mid-level student affairs administrators occupy at the microsystem and mesosystem (interface between microsystems) levels. Analysis yielded three overarching themes: Multiple Role Demands (based on data from the projection exercise); and Role Interdependence and Finding Time (based on interview data). The latter two themes were further defined by sub-themes (see Table 7).

Multiple Role Demands

One of the most striking findings of the present study is the number of worklife roles participants occupy. Employers traditionally create policies, shape practice, and foster work culture based on a single allegiance philosophy (Blair-Loy, 2003). This ideology assumes that an employee's career is of primary importance; an employee's commitment to work is the sole factor that gives meaning and purpose to life. Employees who spend a significant amount of time at work and forego other obligations exemplify single allegiance. Participants in our study did not embrace a single allegiance identity. Instead, they fulfilled multiple roles that define their most meaningful personal and social identities. Our findings suggest that student affairs professionals live in five dominant microsystems: family/friends, work, civic/professional organizations, spirituality, and a category we called other microsystems. Overall, the 30 participants occupied 278 social roles (see Table 8). Individually, participants were actively engaged in anywhere between 4 and 21 roles and each role played a major part in the individual's sense of self.

Nearly half (46%, $n = 128$) of these roles fell into the family/friend domain. Participants were in dual earner, single-parent, blended, and lesbian/gay families. Family/friend roles included kinships by birth, marriage/civil union, and non-biological relationships. Roles ranged from immediate (i.e., partner/spouse) to extended familial relationships of aunt/uncle or in-law. Social and non-biological roles such as "friend" and "godmother" were also regarded as

Table 7

Code Mapping for Worklife Experiences

RQ1. How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?

Third Iterations of Analysis: Application to Data Set

Mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences as one that is driven by a dearth of time and an excess of roles. Their involvement in multiple, interdependent roles while enriching presents ongoing time-based conflicts due to the intense pressures of work.

Second Iteration: Themes

1. Role Interdependence

2. Finding Time

First Iteration: Initial Codes/Surface Content Analysis

1A. Push and pull

- Work
- Family/friends
- Civic/professional
- Spirituality
- Other life roles

1B. Time famine

2A. Greedy student affairs

2B. Finding time (unidirectional)

- When work and parenting collide
- When work and dating/marriage collide
- Multiple collisions: When work, parenting, and partnering collide

DATA

DATA

DATA

DATA

Notes. To be read from bottom up

Table 8

Role Frequency by Microsystems (N=278)

Participant	Primary Roles		Secondary Roles			Total
	Family/Friends	Work	Civic/Professional	Spirituality	Other	
Alex	3	1	1		2	7
April	3	2	2			7
Betsy	3	2	2		3	10
Carolyn	4	4				8
Cassandra	5	2		4		11
Chris	3	1	1			5
Denise	3	1		1		5
Elaine	4	2	1	2	3	12
Ellie	6	1		1		8
George	3		1	1		5
Gloria	3	1	3		1	8
Greg	7	4	1	1	2	15
Jasmine	10	3	3	2	2	21
Joel	5	1		2	2	9
JP	2	2	2	1	1	8
Karen	6	1	1		2	10
Kerry	5	1				6
Kim	5	1		1		7
Marcus	2		1	1		4
Marie	2	2	2	1	2	9
Maurice	4	3	1		1	9
Nicole	4	2	1		2	9
Pilar	4	5	2	1	4	16
Robert	4	3	8		1	16
Roger	3	3	3		1	10
Sasha	5	2	3			10
Stacy	5	2	2		2	11
Stephanie	5	1			1	7
Sue	9	1				10
Xavier	2	1	1	1		5
Total	129	55	42	20	32	278

significant. Next, worker roles comprised 20% of the worklife roles participants identified ($n = 55$). All participants acknowledged the role of worker as a critical component of their identity. Examples of worker roles included student affairs professional, educator, mentor, colleague, student advocate, colleague, and scholar practitioner. Several participants were also engaged in graduate studies that ultimately enhanced their worker identity.

The third category of roles encompassed the community domain, 15% ($n = 42$) of all roles named by participants. Examples of civic/professional association roles included sorority/fraternity member, professional association chair/volunteer, childcare board member, volunteer at child's school, and political campaign manager. Another category was spirituality that comprised 7% ($n = 20$) of participant worklife roles. Spirituality played a critical role in the lives of several participants (e.g., church member, Christian, and Catholic). In addition to identifying with a particular faith, participants actively engaged in their church communities as ordained minister, Sunday school teacher, church soccer league coordinator, praise and worship team member, or committee chair.

The last category reflected "other" worklife commitments and represented 12% ($n = 32$) of the worklife roles participants reported. Some roles were related to social identity such as Pan Asian community member, Latina, female, and African American male. Other roles reflected involvement in activities like knitter, co-op owner, party planner, violinist, learner, and jazz band member. Health and fitness related activities were also included in this category (e.g., soccer league member, fitness instructor, and athlete).

The number and complexity of roles participants occupied means that commitment to any given role has to vary. Generally speaking, family and work were paramount. Several acknowledged that "I make decisions based on family first" (Alex). Those involved in dependent care roles such as parent spoke with the deepest conviction. When describing her role as mother, Kim explained, "My child is the most important thing, my most important investment . . . and it doesn't mean that the other things don't matter or are not important. It's just that they're not my number one priority." Similarly, Sue added, "First and foremost I am a mother. So family has always come before work for me, so I'm fine saying no to things at work." Participants expressed sentiments of joy and pride as they spoke about their family-related role identities.

These administrators also expressed a strong sense of obligation to their worker identity. This commitment was reflected in nearly all interviews regardless of marital or parental status. Much of their commitment to this role is due to work being fundamental to their survival. This commitment is also fueled by their passion for the student affairs profession. For example, April enthusiastically proclaimed, “I am a student affairs professional and this is who I am and this is what I love to do.” Participants described this work as “fulfilling” (Alex), “rewarding” (Carolyn), and “enriching” (Jasmine).

Participants described their engagement in family, work, and other life roles as conflicting. Involvement in family and work roles is primary their lives are. Community, spirituality, and “other” microsystem roles act as buffers to the tension experienced in the work and family environment. For instance, Kim revealed that her involvement in roles outside of work “helps [her] stay grounded and not inundated only in working.” Similarly, Roger argued, “I think you take advantage of opportunities to get involved in your community so that you do have an outlet outside of work to be active and to build new relationships with people.” It appears that role involvement in community, spirituality, and other microsystems enhances the overall role experience. These roles mitigate strain caused by work and family. Participants viewed them as a “healthy outlet” (Kim) or retreat away from the more demanding roles of work and family.

The fast-paced nature of participant lives coupled with a multitude of commitments presents “ongoing challenges” (Joel). They described the push and pull of their day-to-day routine as a “juggling act” in which they struggled to meet the demands of work, family, and other life roles. This tension is a result of time famine. They reported that there is not enough time to complete work responsibilities; spend time with family; establish or maintain new friendships and relationships; and/or participate in other life activities. They also expressed a lack of time for spiritual renewal.

Role Interdependence

Participant involvement in multiple, interdependent roles while rewarding presented ongoing tension. Two subthemes were dominant in the data related to mesosystems: (a) greedy student affairs and (b) finding time.

Greedy student affairs. Participants described student affairs as a greedy profession that sought exclusive and undivided loyalty (Coser, 1974). The extension of the workday past the traditional eight-hour average presented challenges for participants who also attempted to juggle

non-work roles. The majority of study participants did not experience the standard 40-hour work week. They are working longer hours to keep up with increased work demands. They are attending campus programs and meetings late into the evening hours and on weekends. In addition, they are accessible around the clock to triage crises that occur after hours. The 24/7 nature of student affairs work blurs the lines between work and nonwork. Participants felt that they are “always on” and that there is not enough time to devote to other role commitments. Increased work demands and around the clock accessibility contributed to the notion of student affairs as a “greedy” profession.

Role overload: Increased work demands. Participants are working more hours now than ever before. They attribute increased work demands to the spiraling economy and widespread higher education budget cuts. To compensate for departmental downsizing, ongoing position vacancies, and state furloughs, participants have been asked to take on additional work responsibilities. Betsy maintained, “There’s so many hats that it’s hard, there are so many roles that we need to fill, that it makes it hard to come in, do my work, and then leave.” Gloria explained that due to a hiring freeze, she was now taking on “five titles”:

Our resources are so scarce and have been for so long . . . because the state kind of divested in higher ed a long time ago. Everyone is just looking—what else can we put on your plate? There’s all this stuff that needs to get done. We’re all just going to work however long we need to work to get it done, and no one is stopping to say ‘Hey, maybe we put too much on that person’s plate. Maybe it’s unreasonable to think that a person should take on this much.’

Other participants expressed sentiments similar to Gloria’s in which they felt that they were taking on more than one workplace role. Nicole stated, “There’s no way humanly possible that someone can work a 40 hour work week and do two jobs, there’s just no way.” She went on to explain:

I think one, it’s the sign of economic times, you are asked to do more with less, positions aren’t getting filled, so other responsibilities are kind of being redistributed in the office. And then that raises the level of stress, the expectations, that increases the hours you spend at work, that decreases quality of life.

The greater number of hours worked results in lower levels of employee well-being (Major, Klein, & Erhart, 2002). Physiological and psychological reactions were a common

consequence of the distress experienced by respondents in their attempt to manage competing role demands on a daily basis. Mental health issues were predominant to this discourse.

Participants reported emotional stress and physical burnout.

Getting the work done with limited human capital and financial resources is a difficult task for participants. Alex explained:

As much as we can say this is how [student affairs] is, we have so much [sic] changes and turnover that we're kind of living in a time that our workload and our day-to-day looks so different because we're trying to survive in very lean times. My staff went from 14 to 8 in the past year, the past two years. And as much as we say we're trying to cut back on some of the things that we're trying to do, I don't know how much of [that we have accomplished]... except of me saying "OK, we're tabling that; we're tabling this." ... The amount of work we've cut has not been equal to the amount of full-time employee hours we've reduced . . . I mean we're still waiting for the next round of budget cuts. And we're already at a place where we know if it's going to be 10%, it's another staff member.

As mid-level student affairs administrators, many participants are actively involved in making tough decisions (i.e. staff cuts) regarding the budgetary crisis. This adds another layer of stress. Many respondents bear the burden of staff depreciation by assigning more work to themselves rather than adding to the responsibilities of their remaining staff members. It is also important to note that many do not receive additional rewards or compensation for the extra work.

Participants dedicated more time to work-related responsibilities. They were asked to take on added responsibilities due to the economic downturn. As a result, they experienced role overload. Consequences of increased work demands were psychological and physical in nature. The greediness of the student affairs profession complicated participants' ability to successfully negotiate other worklife roles.

Always on: The technological burden. Conventional norms regarding the separation of work and nonwork permeated the American work culture for many decades but those norms have dissolved in recent years. For the majority of study participants, the lines between work and non-work are blurred. As Robert noted, "It's hard to separate where my life begins and where my work life ends . . . It's very fluid." Technology plays a major role in the permeability of the boundary between microsystems (Milliken & Dunn-Jensen, 2005).

Milliken and Dunn-Jensen (2005) argue that the use of email, laptops, fax machines, cell phones, and the like contributes to the on-call or 24/7 nature of work. These technologies were introduced as efficiency-enhancing communication technologies. However, contrary to their original intent, these devices have actually increased the number of hours that U.S. employees spend on work-related activities (Milliken & Dunn-Jensen, 2005). This notion is consistent with the experiences of study participants.

Technology has made work more accessible to employees (Eaton, 2003). Participants can access work-related documents via virtual private network (VPN) connections. Several participants reported telecommuting in the late evening hours to catch up on projects. Accessibility after hours is commonplace for participants. They also report 24/7 accessibility via institutionally and personally owned laptop, PC, and Smartphone technologies. Indeed, accessibility is an explicit expectation for several participants. For others, the expectation is an implicitly understood part of departmental culture. Cassandra explained, “People tend to just be ok with constantly having their Blackberries, constantly checking email, being on call, feeling responsible for 4,700 students that live on campus all the time. That’s kind of a norm.”

Participants attributed 24/7 accessibility to the greediness of the student affairs profession. They acknowledged the benefits of email, cell phone, and computer technologies in the management of multiple roles (i.e. calendar management, faster response to work-related concerns, easy access to work away from the office). However, the paradox is that these technologies also complicate the worklife juggle. Joel lamented:

The iPhone is useful and I love it, but there’s just certain times I wish I could just throw it out the window. It can be very frustrating to always feel tethered to the job and to this expectation that you’ll always be accessible.

Several participants reported that 24/7 access contributed to this sort of “always on” mentality.

Communication technology extends space and time beyond the workplace, adding to the complexity of negotiating multiple worklife roles (Edley, 2001; Milliken & Dunn-Jensen, 2005; Valcour & Hunter, 2005). Participants explained that time spent with family or other non-work related activities was frequently hijacked by an “emergency” phone call or “urgent” email. Participants described scenarios where “work kind of snuck” (Robert) into simple daily tasks. For instance, Cassandra explained, “I’ve just picked up my first-grader and someone will call with something. [I will say to my child] ‘How was your day? Oh...just a second, I have to

answer the phone.’ Work, I feel like sometimes gets more than my family does.” Cassandra and other participants explained that these types of situations were frequent in nature, a pattern that reinforces the “always on” feeling.

Participants viewed communication technologies as an inconvenience and means to control their non-work time. They described numerous occasions where time that was specifically carved out for family and other non-work activities was commandeered by unexpected work demands. For example, Nicole explained:

I’m away, everyone knew I was away and everybody knew how important this was to me because everyone knows that I’m very big on my family . . . I get a call from my job . . . day before the [event], I get a call asking me the stupidest question ever and I shouldn’t have even picked it up. But, I did because I thought it was an emergency, and it was something like so not important.

What is striking about work-to-family interference is the magnitude of the interruption. Participants become so emotionally overwhelmed and consumed by the work-related crisis that they experience difficulty shifting their energies back into the present moment. Robert stated:

So it took probably about an hour of me on the phone and kind of disengaged from spending time with my partner . . . that’s when you feel the push and pull . . . I really value the time I spend with my partner, but when work crept in, that became the priority. That was the one thing I had to pay attention to because somehow spending time with him was less [important] at that point in time.

Brief interferences also conjured similar emotions. Nicole stated, “It was like they stole so much from me. In like two minutes so much was robbed from me, I was trying to stay in the moment, it was so upsetting to me.” Frustration and resentment were noted as common responses to work interferences. Participants felt a general lack of respect for their non-work time. They expressed internal conflicts when they receive after-hours emails or phone calls - to respond or not to respond is the question.

Finding Time: Negotiating the Complexities of Multiple, Interdependent Roles

The most basic finding that emerged from the data in terms of microsystems is that time is a finite, non-renewable resource and mid-level professionals simply do not have enough of it. Participants experienced standards of living similar to those of high-powered, corporate professionals (Schorr, 1991). They embraced “fast-paced” routines in which time is a scarce

commodity. On any given day they commute to and from campus, attend back-to-back departmental and student organization meetings, participate in conference calls for national associations, react to student crises, respond to numerous emails, attend campus activities, network with alumni and donors, volunteer at the neighborhood co-op, accompany ailing parents to doctor's appointments, shuttle children to day care, manage a church's soccer league, and telecommute late into the evening hours. They also squeeze in time for health and wellness activities (sleeping, eating, and exercising) and household chores. The latter is not relegated to just female participants. Male participants are also actively engaged in household work. This is particularly true in dual-earner households in which participation by both partners is necessary to maintain the home. Child rearing also is not limited to mothers in the study. Fathers report moderate to significant involvement in raising their children. The perceived scarcity of time that employees face is a consequence of their involvement in a multitude of worklife roles.

Time is primary to this discourse. Energy spent at work cannot be reclaimed by another microsystem (Thompson & Bunderson, 2001). Nearly all participants experienced time-based conflict. This type of conflict occurs when individuals devote the majority of their time and energy to a more demanding role (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). For example, Denise stated, "I feel that my life and my time and my mental and sometimes physical energies are definitely much more focused on my [work] than life outside of work." The number of hours expended in a single domain increases the level of work-to-family interference (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Time-based conflict is a result of the intense pressures of a singular, dominant demand that requires total commitment. In this case, work was the dominant influence in participants' lives. Work-to-family tension was reflected in the majority of experiences and was almost always unidirectional. That is, participants reported how they struggled to find time for family-related obligations, not how they struggled to find the time for work commitments. The following three sub-themes address the conflict that participants experienced in their more immediate worklife roles (parenting, dating/marriage, multiple collisions).

When work and parenting collide. Finding time is an ongoing challenge for the working parent. Several participants articulated this theme as they described the push and pull of work-parent roles. Respondents suggested that the roles of worker and parent in sum were demanding. They wanted to play an active role in the emotional and mental development of their children (Kim). They took pleasure in attending musical concerts, participating on school boards,

and transporting their children to extracurricular activities. However, work demands often detracted from time devoted to offspring. Cassandra explained:

Last week my daughter had . . . this concert on the playground from 3:30 to 5:00. And I put it on my calendar that I was going to go around 4:15. Well then I got back to my office and I had emails and then somebody called and needed me to fax something. I just had had meetings from 9:00 to 3:00 that day, so that left me no time to do other things. So then when I sat down at my desk at 3:15, I didn't leave until 5:00 because I had stuff to do. So I missed the whole concert thing.

Feelings of disappointment and guilt are rampant among participants who experience difficulty in their attempt to juggle work demands with parental involvement. Cassandra's sentiments about missing her daughter's performance are typical: "I just was disappointed because I wasn't able to be at something that parents were invited to and could be involved in."

Participants are committed to their jobs. They strive to be competent professionals. They also take a lot of pride in their role as parent. They strive to be nurturing, active parents. Due to a scarcity of time, however, they are often torn between competing roles. Their inability to juggle these roles sometimes results in doubts about their effectiveness as professionals. Participants also question the quality of their relationship with their children and whether they are "sacrificing" their children for work (Pilar). Participants struggle internally with reconciling both identities and "making it all work" (Stephanie).

When work and dating/marriage collide. Several participants spoke to the incompatibility of student affairs work and dating/marriage. Maintenance of amorous relationships is difficult due to the pace and structure of student affairs work. Participants felt that the quality of their dating and marital relationships suffers due to limited time. One participant commented on the lack of excitement in her marriage that she attributed to the long hours that both partners invested in work-related obligations. Dual-earners found themselves unintentionally neglecting their relationship needs. Often times they did not realize the deficiencies in their relationships until the partner brought it to their attention. Unfortunately, for some the inability to make time resulted in the dissolution of the marriage or engagement.

Finding time for dating and social engagement is also a challenge. Participants expressed their frustration with failed relationships in the past. They felt pulled in multiple directions often inadvertently choosing career over dating and long term relationships. The 24/7 nature of student

affairs work contributes to the complexity. “It’s very difficult to have an established relationship with . . . your boyfriend . . . to make him understand why you have to work on a Saturday . . . when he wants you to go to dinner with his parents and you can’t” Nicole said. Participants reported that partners attempt to accommodate their fast-paced schedules. However, they often grow frustrated with the student affairs lifestyle because time spent on the job and responding to work-related issues impedes partner interaction. One participant even opted to forego dating altogether because she felt that it was impossible to foster a healthy relationship with her current work schedule.

Relationship issues are further exacerbated when both partners are engaged in demanding careers. Finding time in dual earner partnerships is complicated when both partners work in excess of 40 hours a week. Participants reported that even in their off-time they found it difficult to completely disconnect from work. This was especially challenging for participants involved in dual student affairs partnerships. For example, Alex maintained:

We find . . . when we should be husband and wife or partners we tend to be colleagues talking about work-related stuff. So yeah, that’s always a difficult challenge and we’ve joked around and we HAVE actually set dates up to go out and spend time and just be husband and wife. But then [there are] those times when we’re on a date and we’re talking about work. It’s really a difficult challenge to maneuver because even when we’re together sometimes, we’re not really husband and wife.

The inability to separate work from other life domains is aggravated when married to a colleague. Student affairs partnerships were referred to as “a blessing and a curse” (Robert). This contradicts participants’ belief that partnerships with individuals who understand higher education are less likely to experience tension. Tension is inevitable in situations where partners are devoting significant amounts of time to work-related obligations.

In general, reconciling partner and career identities is not an easy task. The tension experienced when juggling work and dating/marriage results in a significant amount of emotional and psychological strain.

Multiple collisions: work, partnering, and parenting. The addition of roles to a seemingly inflexible and arduous lifestyle is psychologically overwhelming. This is particularly the case for participants whose primary roles involved that of worker, partner, and parent. The initial challenge was making sense of the expectations inherent in the role of parent. The next

challenge was figuring out what the addition of parenting means in the context of also being a worker and partner. Many participants spoke about how the addition of the parenting role changed their perspective on life. They happily embraced the role of parent but questioned how they would find time for advancing in their careers. They also questioned how the parenting role would change the relationship with their partners. The complexity of managing all these roles resulted in uncertainty about being able to succeed in any of them.

Participants felt that the addition of a child changed the dynamics of their marital relationships. Their lifestyles became more structured and less flexible. Their time and attention became more restricted. Participants referred to their attention and time in terms of ratios in which a certain percentage was distributed to their various roles. For example, Kim explained, “We kind of had it down between two career people, but then ... we worked out the fact that now my attention gets split even more between somebody else who’s even more demanding because they can’t take care of themselves.” Pilar added:

Now we have two kids, there’s less of me to go around. And he doesn’t get me. Like where it was all us together, 100%, then you have one kid—OK, 75%...and then now two kids—Oh, 50%... oh and then you have [school]—25%.

Participants tapped out all their resources on working, parenting, and other roles. Unfortunately, the partner role received little to no attention. Participants expressed feelings of blame, guilt, and neglect about the burden that other roles have on the quality of their marital relationships.

Cassandra stated, “It is very overwhelming for me to feel that I can do my job well, and that I can be a mom and a wife well.” Participants want to tend to the needs of their partners but at times feel that they did not have the mental, emotional, or physical capacities to do so.

It appears that participants unconsciously prioritized their worklife roles. The partner role is secondary to work and parenting roles. In some instances, the partner role was also less important to other life roles. Partner needs inadvertently took a back seat to more pressing roles. The paradox is that participants felt that their partners deserve more attention and time. They know that this is necessary for the longevity of their marriages/partnerships. Yet they are too emotionally and physically exhausted from their daily routine to cater to spouse/partner needs.

Discussion and Implications

This study provides a snapshot into the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. Three findings highlight the day-to-day challenges respondents face in the juggle

of multiple work and nonwork roles. First, mid-level student affairs administrators' worklife experiences are driven by a dearth of time and an excess of roles. This finding is important because employers traditionally promulgate workplace policies based on a single allegiance philosophy (Blair-Loy, 2003) that presumes that an employee's career is of primary importance; an employee's commitment to work is the sole factor that gives meaning and purpose to life. The single allegiance ideology was born from conventional norms regarding the separation of work and family, a dichotomy that is problematic. It is racialized and rooted in a middle-to-upper class family structure (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). It is also gendered and implies an *ideal worker* in both domains (Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). The ideal worker male operates in the work domain and concerns himself exclusively with financially sustaining the family. The ideal worker female assumes primary responsibility for maintaining the home and raising children. This division of labor is no longer relevant in American society.

Second, student affairs is a greedy institution that seeks exclusive and undivided loyalty (Coser, 1974), a commitment that most professionals are not willing to make. The greediness of student affairs complicates participants' ability to successfully negotiate other worklife roles. Mid-level student affairs administrators devote more time to work, leaving limited time to engage in other worklife roles. Workers are assuming more job responsibilities in tight economic times but in most cases, the increased assignments do not come with additional rewards or monetary compensation. Consequently, professionals feel devalued and underappreciated for the extra time they are devoting to work responsibilities.

The final finding revolves around the extensive mutability between work and other life roles for mid-level student affairs professionals. This finding is consistent with previous research in which boundaries between work and life are permeable and constant (Aryee, Fields & Luk, 1999; Edley, 2001; Fletcher & Bailyn, 2005). Fluidity among roles results in tension between a finite amount of time and the intense pressures of a singular, dominant demand that requires total commitment, in this case, work. Unless this tension is reduced, turnover is inevitable.

The student affairs profession is at risk for losing talented mid-level student professionals to other academic departments and non-higher education industries. Senior level administrators would be well served to provide opportunities to support employees in the management of worklife roles if they wish to increase employee retention and productivity (Batt & Valcour, 2003). We offer the following recommendations to consider when shaping workplace

practice, crafting policy, and/or designing future research. While these recommendations focus primarily on organizational responsibility, it is important to note that individuals also play a significant role in the management of their personal and professional obligations. Scaling back or reducing the number of secondary and non-work demands is one possible solution to mitigating the worklife tensions that occur.

With respect to organizational responsibility, the first recommendation is that senior level administrators should foster a culture that values the nonwork lives of mid-level professionals. Providing child care resources (i.e. financial assistance and subsidies, on-site day and night care); implementing elder care support groups, workshops, and seminars; and purposefully developing family oriented events such as Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work programs and family fun days demonstrates support and recognition for workers involved in family roles.

Next, we recommend that senior level administrators design ongoing employee appreciation programs. Praising good work is a simple but often overlooked practice. Praise is a clear demonstration of how much an organization values its employees. However, employers tend to limit their appreciation to compensation and fringe benefits, forms of recognition that have all but disappeared in recent years. Several formal and informal initiatives might be adopted. First, saying “thank you” can be accomplished verbally or in writing. Formal means of praise can be conducted through the performance review and promotion processes. A formal appreciation letter copied to the senior student affairs officer and human resources manager is another way to highlight the extra efforts of employees. Second, publicly “thanking” employees during meetings or university events are another way to show appreciation. Incentives such as spa or restaurant gift cards and small desk trinkets should also be considered. Group efforts can be acknowledged through the establishment of office traditions such as First Friday ice cream/smoothie socials, birthday parties, quarterly luncheons, or end of the year celebrations. All these endeavors are means of expressing appreciation for the efforts that staff members make. Lastly, informal gestures such as handwritten notes or emails that address a specific action performed can also be used to express appreciation.

The current research also has implications for policy. Mid-level student affairs administrators need more flexibility in the workplace and control of their time. Flexible working policies are essential in helping them to meet work and nonwork obligations. These practices do not reduce working hours (Atkinson & Hall, 2011). Rather, they allow employees more control

over scheduling, ultimately resulting in a more efficient use of time (Sutton & Noe, 2005). Control refers to the timing, location, and duration of work (Atkinson & Hall, 2011). Examples of flexible working policies that may be useful in the management of multiple roles for mid-level student affairs administrators include telecommuting, flextime, compressed work-week scheduling, compensatory time, and sabbaticals (Atkinson & Hall, 2011; Sutton & Noe, 2005).

Telecommuting/teleworking is a common flexible work practice. It gives employees control of space with respect to where work is performed. Mid-level student affairs administrators described technology as a curse in that it blurs the boundaries between work and nonwork (Valcour & Hunter, 2005). At the same, it is also a blessing because telecommuting allows them to meet competing role obligations. Second, flextime is designed to enable employees to control the start and end time of their work day. Flexibility in scheduling frees up time for employees to respond to nonwork obligations. They can schedule work around doctor's appointments and family activities.

The compressed work week program is another flexible working practice. This program allows employees to accumulate the 40-plus hours required during the standard work-week. However, employees work fewer than five days to amass those hours. *Four-tens* is a typical compressed work week schedule in which employees work four, 10-hour days instead of five, 8-hour days. The fifth day is reserved for non-work obligations. For mid-level student affairs professionals, a four-ten schedule may not be feasible during the academic year. However, offering this option during winter break or the summer months when there are fewer students on campus suggests that senior administrators recognize and appreciate the complexity of mid-level administrators' lives and are endeavoring to help them manage worklife issues.

Third, compensatory or comp time is also a flexible working practice. Comp time is typically an incentive awarded to wage employees. However, salaried workers would benefit greatly from this practice. Comp time is an arrangement that rewards employees for overtime by granting time off instead of additional pay. Implementation of comp time varies with respect to how it can be used. Generally speaking, for each hour worked in excess of the standard schedule, the employee is given an hour off. When comp time can be used also varies. Select policies may limit when employees can use comp time. Supervisors would be well advised to implement informal policies that are helpful and truly reflect flexibility in use of comp time if they want to assist employees in the negotiation of multiple roles.

Lastly, sabbaticals or career breaks are not typical for university administrators. This benefit is typically reserved for instructional faculty for purposes of research endeavors. This practice could be useful for mid-level student affairs administrators who wish to take time away to raise children, care for an ailing parent, or complete advanced graduate studies, however. Sabbaticals can promote psychological and physical health among employees. They also signal job security. Senior level administrators should consider implementing paid or unpaid leave programs that allow employees to tend to their personal needs.

It is important to note that all these flexible working policies can be implemented without cost to the organization. In times of economic retrenchment, policies that enhance employee satisfaction, morale, and wellness without requiring additional resources merit serious consideration by employers. In fact, the findings of this study likely are relevant for populations beyond student affairs practitioners. It is reasonable to suggest that many other American workers are faced with challenges of multiple professional and personal role responsibilities. As such, these recommendations may help managers in all types of enterprises shape practices and design policies to promote worklife balance.

In addition to suggestions for future practice and policy, the findings serve as a springboard for future research. First, participant responses were a snapshot into a specific period in time for a particular group of professionals. The tension among roles increases and decreases depending on life experiences (e.g., birth of a child, marriage, retirement, divorce). A study of experiences throughout the lifespan is needed to gain a better understanding of mid-level administrator worklife experiences. Second, although the sample included men, women, and participants across the racial spectrum, we did not explore whether worklife integration experiences differed based on any of these personal characteristics. More research is warranted to explore how personal characteristics influence worklife integration.

Additionally, as with all research, there were limitations to this study. The first related to the sample. We focused on the experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. It cannot be assumed that the results of this inquiry are applicable to entry or senior-level administrators, or academic or administrative affairs professionals. The qualitative nature of the study renders the findings meaningful to our particular sample and generalizations to other groups of mid-level administrators should be undertaken with caution. Second, respondents all volunteered to participate in the study. It is possible that those who offered to participate differed in some

important manner from those who were invited to participate but declined. Finally, the findings were based on self-reported responses. Data were primarily generated through interviews and concept mapping. It is possible that respondents were not candid in their responses. Any of these eventualities could have influenced the findings in some unforeseen manner. Despite these limitations, this study contributes greatly to the cannon of worklife literature.

In closing, voluntary employee turnover is costly to colleges and universities (Jo, 2008). In the case of mid-level student affair administrators, worklife structures that assist administrators in juggling the multiple, demanding roles they fulfill are helpful. Practices that are integrative in nature and inclusive of worklife policies, human resources incentives, and participatory management are more likely to reduce employee turnover and assist employees in the management of multiples roles. Given the time and energy that student affairs professionals invest in their careers and the services they render to their institutions, efforts to support their struggles to balance the competing demands of work and life roles may not only reduce turnover, but also produce professionals who are happier and more satisfied in both their work and their personal lives.

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CHAPTER SIX

The Role of Supervisors and Organizational Practices in Worklife

Balance for Administrators

Employee turnover has long been a practical matter for institutional administrators and a subject of inquiry for scholars (Xu, 2008a). The challenge of retaining personnel has generated much of this interest (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). One staffing trend perpetuates turnover concerns - the departure of an aging institutional workforce. Over the next three decades, the higher education workforce will experience a significant shift as baby boomers between the ages of 41 and 59 exit the workforce in large numbers (Harrison, 2006). This transformation exacerbates the existing labor burdens on college and university campuses. As such, university administrators must employ strategies to respond to the ongoing shifts in labor supply and demand. The economic downturn produces more applicants, but fewer skilled candidates. As a result, recruitment of competent academic personnel problematic but retaining current talent is even more of a challenge.

Colleges and universities are not only competing with other academic institutions they are also at risk for losing academic personnel to industries outside the academy (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). Employees dissatisfied with their workplace environments are more vulnerable to competitive offers from “poachers” who lure qualified workers away with more attractive benefits (Cappelli, 2000; Dobbs, 1999). For example, worklife accommodations (i.e. support for family caregivers) give academic institutions more of a competitive advantage (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). Therefore, the availability of campus resources that assist academic personnel in juggling the demands of work with the challenges of life outside of work is essential to recruitment and retention efforts.

Generally speaking, American workers have accumulated increased work and family obligations in the last 20 years (Clark, 2001). Much of this transformation has been a result of the rise in dual-earner couples and the growing number of men actively involved in the care of children and elderly family members (Pitt-Catsouphes & Googins, 2005). Expanded family responsibilities, time scarcity, and the increased demands of work create role conflict for those engaged in multiple worklife capacities. As such, the discourse regarding the inability to balance work, family, and other personal commitments has shifted from a “woman’s issue” to a “people issue” (Pitt-Catsouphes & Googins, 2005, p. 469). The dialogue about the management of work,

family, and other life priorities has also evolved from a matter of personal accountability to one of organizational responsibility.

The passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 1993 transformed worklife policy at the organizational level. FMLA mandates 12 workweeks of uncompensated, job-protected leave in the event of child birth, adoption, foster child placement, or medically-related situations and crises that involve the individual, dependent, spouse, or parent (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). The implementation of FMLA brought about employment protections for workers in all public agencies. Private sector employees who worked for organizations with at least 50 employees were also covered by the act (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). Other protections under FMLA include the retention of health insurance and accrual of seniority during the leave period (Holcomb, 2001). Prior to the enactment of FMLA, family leave benefits were limited. Many workers relied on vacation and sick leave when responding to personal medical care or the healthcare needs of immediate family members (Holcomb, 2001). In more severe situations, workers resigned or the organization terminated employment.

While a giant leap for American workers and families, the worklife movement did not end with the ratification of FMLA. Rather, the legislation served as a catalyst for change. Over the past two decades employers have adopted additional policies and practices to assist workers in managing the work-nonwork interface. There are numerous incentives to using these resources; however, many employees do not take advantage of the opportunities that worklife policies offer (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Organizational culture plays a critical role in whether employees will seek out worklife supports. As such, culture can facilitate or impede an employee's ability to respond to work, family, and other life commitments (Thompson et al., 2001). Senior level staff and human resources personnel must strategically and intentionally foster a culture that encourages balance if they wish to retain employees (Allen, 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999).

The magnitude of the challenges that higher education personnel face in managing the work-nonwork interface is reflected in the extent of discourse evident in convention plenary sessions and academic publications (Perna, 2005). The vast majority of this discourse, however, focuses on the experiences of instructional personnel, specifically, tenure-track women faculty. The ubiquitous interest in faculty worklife was generated by the belief that maintaining the traditional academic career trajectory was incompatible with family responsibilities (The Center

for the Education of Women, 2005). In essence, worklife policies and practices emerged to reduce the barriers that women faculty encountered in the journey towards tenure and promotion. A broad range of policies was implemented to address the gender inequity that plagued the professoriate for years. Most of these policies were subsumed under five categories: tenure-clock extension, modified duties or reduced appointment, leave in excess of FMLA, dual earner programs, and paid dependent care leave (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005).

First, tenure-clock extension policies enable pre-tenured faculty members to delay the tenure-probationary period up to a year to accommodate the birth of a child, child rearing, care for an ailing parent or sick spouse, or for their own medical purposes (Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, & Hamilton, 2005; The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). Some extension policies allow faculty to “stop the clock” as many as two times (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). Second, modified duties or reduced appointments allow tenured or tenure track faculty to decrease work responsibilities for a designated period (i.e., semester or quarter) (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). This gives faculty members an opportunity to respond to personal and family commitments without being penalized for doing so. Modified duties also assist faculty in transitioning back into the workplace after an extended absence (Hollenshead et al., 2005). Job sharing and part-time employment are types of practices that fall into this category. Third, leave in excess of FMLA is time off beyond the federally mandated 12-week period. Faculty can use this time without tapping into sick or vacation benefits. The additional leave period is typically unpaid. Next, dual earner programs offer a variety of services to support new employees and their partners in their transition to the organization (The Center for the Education of Women, 2005). Job search assistance for partners, housing referrals, and networking opportunities are just a few of the resources provided. Finally, paid dependent care leave supports faculty who need time off to care for a child, aging parent, or ailing partner. The advantage of this policy is that faculty members receive a paycheck during the leave period.

These worklife policies have benefited faculty in untold ways. The career trajectories of faculty and administrators, however, are markedly different. There is no tenure process for administrative staff. There is no clear or ordered path to senior level leadership. While the trajectories are different, the challenges are similar. Mid-level student affairs administrators

struggle just as those in the professoriate do. Yet little is known about how administrative staff members negotiate the intersections of work, family, and other life obligations.

The purpose of this phenomenological inquiry was to gather administrator perceptions of their institutional environment to gain insight into the infrastructures that may promote or hinder worklife balance efforts among mid-level student affairs administrators. One primary research question guided this inquiry: What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

Employee Turnover in Higher Education

Most of the literature on employee turnover in higher education has focused on causes associated with intent to leave and actual departure. Researchers contend that intent to leave positively correlates with leaving (Noor, 2011). A scan of the literature reveals personal and environmental influences that contribute to employee turnover. Much of this scholarship examines the experiences of instructional faculty (Johnsrud & Rosser, 1999). An early study concluded that collegial relations and job satisfaction are the strongest indicators of intent to leave among the professoriate (Manger & Eikeland, 1990). Smart's (1990) comparative study of tenured and nontenured faculty found that regardless of tenure status younger faculty are more likely to leave their institution in instances of autocratic governance and low levels of organization and career satisfaction. He also found a positive correlation between excessive time spent on work responsibilities and intent to depart. Similarly, time commitment, along with lack of community, are major correlates to faculty members' intention to leave academia (Barnes, Agago, & Coombs, 1998). Both of these variables are linked to job-related stress. In general, then, professional priorities and rewards, administrative relations and support, and quality of benefits and services are connected to morale and intent to leave (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002).

More recent research on differences in departure intent among tenured and nontenured faculty has called attention to the drawbacks of a recent hiring trend in higher education. Zhou and Volkwein (2004) found that nontenured faculty are more likely to depart due to increased teaching workloads, mandated service responsibilities, and fixed-term contracts. The economic downturn has resulted in the appointment of larger proportions of nontenured faculty. While this practice is financially advantageous, institutions are also more likely to experience increased levels of turnover that could ultimately disrupt teaching schedules. Faculty rewards such as job

security are also critical to retention. Institutions devoid of a tenure system are at a higher risk of losing faculty. Factors that influence tenured faculty member's decision to depart include rank and compensation (Zhou & Volkwein, 2004).

There also appears to be a relationship between academic specialties and turnover intentions. According to Xu (2008a), an individual's discipline is instrumental in determining professional commitment, attitudes, and behavior. Therefore, discipline-specific approaches to retention versus a general response are necessary. Xu (2008b) also found no gender differences in intentions to depart among STEM field faculty. Overall, male and female faculty members demonstrate a high commitment to their disciplines. However, women faculty are more likely to depart due to cultural factors such as inadequate support, underrepresentation of women peers, inequity in leadership, and limited opportunities for advancement. There are also organizational and individual characteristics that influence turnover intention (Conklin & Desselle, 2007). Excessive workload, poor salary, lack of collegiality, and boredom in the position are factors that faculty members consider when deciding whether to remain or depart. Organizational commitment variables such as department chair support, collegial relationships, and a healthy work environment are also determinants of stayers versus leavers.

Although the bulk of research on turnover has explored faculty issues, there is a smaller body of work on turnover among administrative staff. Predictors of staff attrition are comparable to faculty reasons for departure. For example, demographic variables such as age (as noted in Smart, 1990) and years of service (as noted in Zhou & Volkwein, 2004) are indicators of either intent to leave or actual departure. Findings from Johnsrud and Rosser's (1999) study of mid-level student affairs administrators revealed that older employees are more committed to the organization; younger staff depart at a higher rate. In addition, individuals with more years of service exhibited signs of organizational loyalty. Structural variables such as opportunities for advancement and career development (also noted in Xu, 2008b) are indicators of turnover. An institution that promotes from within is most likely to retain employees. Another important finding of the Johnsrud and Rosser (1999) study was the power of perception. Perception informs an employee's understanding of institutional values and norms. Recognition for competence, working conditions, and morale are influential in an employees' decision to leave.

There is also a correlation between mid-level student affairs administrators' professional life and morale. Quality of the supervisor-supervisee relationship, opportunities for career

advancement, and recognition for service are significant to this population (Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000). The presence of these variables improves the work life conditions of employees and boosts morale. At times, the data contradict intuitive assumptions. For instance, lower levels of morale in staff are associated with more years of service and higher salaries. Despite their decreased sense of purpose and value, however, longer-term employees are least likely to depart (Rosser & Javinar, 2003). Perceptions of job satisfaction and morale also directly impact the quality of the work experience. Accessibility to professional development activities, recognition for expertise, positive collegial relations, equity, and healthy working conditions are strong predictors of satisfaction, morale, and intent to leave.

Poor supervision, lack of career progression, and inflexible worklife practices are salient themes that explain why women mid-level administrators depart (Jo, 2008). Employees leave their institution due to a lack of support from their immediate supervisor and disengagement from the decision making process. Inadequate opportunity for growth is another key reason for departure, as is the issue of promotion from within. The inability to meet work and family demands along with disparities in the way in which worklife practices and policies are implemented is a source of frustration among women administrators. Those who look for new jobs intentionally pursue organizations that offer flexible work hours even if it means working for a reduced salary. There is relatively clear evidence then, of the role that organizational culture plays in employee retention.

It is also important to discuss issues of employee turnover in the context of mid-level student affairs administrator worklife balance concerns. There are high levels of voluntary turnover among this population (Rosser & Javinar, 2003) and organizational culture likely plays a role in that turnover (Clark, 2001; Deery & Shaw, 1999; Sheridan, 1992). Little is known about how mid-level student affairs administrators balance work, family, and other life demands. There is a need to understand how institutional culture impacts their ability to respond to worklife needs. Institutional policies and practices that address these concerns are critical in the evaluation of career options for mid-level student affairs administrators. In fact, mid-level student affairs administrators are perhaps more likely to be at a crossroads with respect to life and career decisions (Mills, 2009) than their entry and senior level counterparts. They are more likely to be involved in dual earner partnerships and the care for children and/or aging parents. There is a need to explore this gap in the literature base.

Conceptual Framework

Studying an organization at the macro level is essential to understanding how a given culture predisposes its members to certain behaviors. This notion of culture is “defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration” (Schein, 2010, p. 18). Culture encompasses the rituals, traditions, rules, and norms, and values of an organization. It provides meaning and purpose to organizational life and impacts all aspects of the organization including climate and internal operations (Schein, 2010). Culture also shapes the socialization and acculturation process of group members, influencing how they think and behave (Schein, 2010). Organizations that foster a culture of shared beliefs and assumptions about providing support to assist employees in the integration of work and family are more likely to recruit and retain a skilled and qualified workforce (Allen, 2001).

This study is guided by Bailyn’s cultural barriers to work-life integration model. Bailyn (1997) offered three constructs of work culture that hinder an individual’s ability to juggle the demands of work, family, and other life commitments: time control, managerial control, and how “worklife” is organizationally defined. This perspective reflects the multifaceted nature of organizational culture (Clark, 2001). Time control refers to how time is used and understood in the workplace (Bailyn, 1997). For example, time spent in some organizations may be used as a metric to measure loyalty, efficiency and potential (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1997). Individuals who noticeably put in long hours may be viewed as highly committed versus employees who depart the workplace at the end of the workday or who have to leave early to take care of personal commitments (Bailyn, 1997). This type of environment cultivates a “work until you get it done” culture. An individual’s time is not her or his own because it is controlled by the organization (Bailyn, 1997). Working early morning, late evening, and weekend hours is a common practice (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999). Taking work home is the norm. Extensive travel is an expectation (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999). Rewards and incentives such as promotion and advancement are attached to conforming to the dominant culture (Bailyn, 1997). While this type of workplace may be less difficult to manage for an individual with limited family and other life responsibilities, employees engaged in multiple worklife roles may be at a significant disadvantage. Workplaces that offer employees flexibility in time and scheduling are

more likely to foster an environment that assists employees in their efforts to balance worklife demands (Berg et al., 2003; Clark, 2001)

Managerial control is the second cultural barrier. This construct refers to how working conditions are managed (Bailyn, 1997; Clark, 2001). Rigid structures where accommodations are not made for an employee's personal needs are a barrier to worklife balance. Unnecessary monitoring of tardiness and absences is one example of how this control manifests itself (Bailyn, 1997). Managerial control may also be exercised in how policies are implemented. For example, managers who are subjective in their response to who can take leave time, how leave time can be used, and when leave can occur do not foster a supportive environment. Managerial flexibility creates a sense of personal efficacy and control, therefore impacting how employees manage other aspects of their lives (Berg et al., 2003). This type of flexibility is essential to increasing organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Clark, 2001; Berg et al., 2003).

How "worklife" is organizationally understood and defined is the third cultural barrier and centers around notions of personal versus organizational responsibility. This is the most significant hindrance to employees' ability to manage professional and personal commitments (Bailyn, 1997; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1997). The worklife movement began as a work and family problem. At the heart of the matter were working mothers and issues of child care (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1997). This in turn sparked a debate about who is responsible for responding to the tensions that arise from the intersections of work, family, and life. A central argument in this debate is the belief that having children is a personal choice and therefore not a matter of business or societal interest (Bailyn, 1997). This position is perpetuated by deep rooted beliefs regarding the separation of work and family. It is informed by organizational and national culture (Bailyn, 1997). The personal responsibility position is operationalized in workplaces where there are limited or no worklife policies or practices. It is also manifest in environments where policies are available but not used due to employee fears of being penalized (Thompson et al., 1999). Organizations that value personal responsibility promote the belief that success is contingent on an individual's ability to exercise a strict separation between work and family (Bailyn, 1997). This in turn fosters a culture of imbalance, ineffectiveness, stress, fatigue, and illness. Organizations that support and value employees' work and family lives are more likely to increase creativity, boost productivity, and retain workers (Thompson et al., 1999).

Methodology

It is the intersection between organizational culture and worklife balance that formed the focus of our study. We conducted a qualitative inquiry that elicited information from a purposeful sample of mid-level student affairs professionals across the country. Data were collected via a semi-structured telephone interview.

Participants

Participant selection consisted of two phases. Three primary criteria were identified in the initial phase. The first criterion was number of years worked in the field. Only mid-level student affairs administrators with 6 to 15 years of service, post-masters, were eligible. The second criterion was employment status. Respondents had to be employed full-time, or a minimum of 35-hours per week. The third criterion involved the degree to which the respondent experienced worklife difficulties. Information about worklife imbalance was collected via a pre-screening questionnaire. Participants had to meet all three criteria to ensure that they could provide information-rich data on the worklife experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators.

A purposeful, four-part process was used for the second phase of participant selection. First, a dataset containing the contact information of 1, 208 mid-level student affairs administrators was secured from staff at the American College Personnel Association (a preeminent national professional association for student affairs administrators). Second, 100 randomly selected administrators received invitations to participate in the study. Random sampling was used to identify a broad range of prospective participants. Interested prospective participants completed a pre-screening survey. The information they provided was used to determine the degree to which potential respondents would be able to contribute to the research on worklife balance. Only participants who met the selection criteria were included in the study.

Thirty ($N = 30$) mid-level student affairs administrators participated in the study. Respondents worked at numerous public ($n = 15$) and private ($n = 15$) colleges and universities from across the country. Their primary functional areas included academic advising/honors ($n = 3$); career plan/placement ($n = 1$); judicial affairs/student conduct ($n = 2$); multicultural affairs ($n = 6$); residence life ($n = 11$); student activities/leadership ($n = 4$); multiple ($n = 7$); and other ($n = 1$).

The gender breakdown of the sample consisted of both women ($n = 19$) and men ($n = 11$). Participants were single ($n = 11$), married/domestically partnered ($n = 17$), and divorced/separated ($n = 2$). With respect to children, 34% were parents ($n = 10$). The remainder

of the sample was childless ($n = 20$). Respondents' racial and ethnic backgrounds varied. They self-identified as Caucasian/European American ($n = 14$); African American/Black ($n = 6$); Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 5$); Hispanic/Latino ($n = 4$); and Multiracial ($n = 1$).

Instrumentation

Respondents were asked to participate in a 50-60 minute semi-structured telephone interview. The interview protocol consisted of four sections and was purposefully designed to explore worklife balance issues. The first section of the protocol, "Professional Life," set the tone for the interview and allowed participants to share their story. For example, one question asked about what it was like to be a student affairs professional. The second section, "Worklife Experiences," elicited information about how participants' juggled the day-to-day commitments of work and nonwork. They were asked to share episodes or situations of how their work responsibilities interfered with nonwork commitments.

The third section, "Environmental Perceptions," focused on the work environment and perceptions of institutional and departmental culture. For example, respondents were asked to provide examples of people and policies that assisted or complicated their ability to meet their non-work needs. They were also asked to identify other environmental infrastructures such as services or practices that helped or hindered worklife balance efforts. The final section, "Personal Reflections," gave participants an opportunity to speak to their understanding of the notion of worklife balance. They were also asked about the institutional and individual role in the management of work and nonwork responsibilities.

All interviews were audio recorded. Respondents selected a pseudonym to use for the interview to ensure confidentiality. Those pseudonyms are used in the findings section.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data involved an emergent, inductive strategy. Recurring themes, patterns, and categories that appeared in the data were identified using the systematic process of open coding. Open coding involves assigning meaning to every line, sentence, and paragraph of each transcript (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). The data were then compared and contrasted (LeCompte, 2000) to gain an understanding of what environmental infrastructures mid-level student affairs administrators identified as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities. Data were analyzed to elucidate key patterns (Patton, 1990). Analytical

memos were used to report recurring themes. Memos, findings, and general thoughts were stored in the online audit trail.

Several validity procedures were used to ensure the study's credibility. First, prolonged engagement in the field was used to build trust and establish rapport (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Study participants were contacted prior to the telephone interview. Developing a relationship before the telephone interview was necessary for purposes of self-disclosure. We wanted participants to feel a sense of comfort in sharing intimate details about their lives. Second, we immersed ourselves in data collection and notions of worklife balance for a two month period. Prolonged engagement in the topic was necessary to thoroughly understand the experiences of respondents (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This period was intentionally designed to give us an opportunity to review and reflect on the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Third, member checking was used to validate the credibility of our interpretations of the data (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Follow-up questions were asked in instances where responses were unclear or as findings emerged during the interview. At the completion of each discussion, main points were summarized to ensure accuracy. Next, data were triangulated. Data collected from the interviews and current research were used to create patterns and themes about worklife balance (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Lastly, an audit trail was used to maintain a virtual log of processes undertaken during the data collection and analyses phases. General thoughts and reflections were also documented in the audit trail.

Findings

Bailyn's cultural barriers to work-life integration model was used as the frame of analysis for the study. The constructs of time control, managerial control, and organizational vs. personal responsibility are interwoven in the themes that assist and hinder worklife management efforts for mid-level student affairs administrators. Analysis of the transcripts yielded three overarching themes: informal support in the context of supervision (assist), formal institutional support (assist), and lack of institutional support (hinder). Each theme is further explained by sub-themes (see Table 9).

Informal Support: Role of the Supervisor

One of the most consistent messages that came across in interviews was the role of the supervisor in facilitating worklife balance. Supervisor support and sensitivity to worklife responsibilities significantly reduced the tensions respondents faced when juggling multiple role

demands. Respondents explained that the supervisor “sets the tone” (Pilar) and “dictates what kind of life you’re going to have at work, and then that transcends into your home life” (Jasmine). Supportive supervisors were so critical to worker experiences that in some instances they compensated for a lack of formal institutional policies and programs. They were also believed to be an alternative to institutional infrastructures. It is apparent that supervisors are instrumental in worker perceptions of whether an environment is a worklife friendly. Collectively, respondents felt that the role of the supervisor was to advocate for the worklife needs of workers and model worklife balance.

Advocates of worklife balance. Supervisors who advocated worklife balance assisted mid-level student affairs administrators in the management of professional and personal obligations. Advocacy was demonstrated in numerous ways. Anna explained that her supervisor frequently asked, “What do you have going on?” If she felt overwhelmed by work, she was comfortable communicating this concern. The supervisor would follow-up by making adjustments to the workload. Supervisors did not only check-in with participants to discuss work-related concerns, they also took an interest in their personal lives. Carolyn indicated that her supervisor would ask noninvasive questions such as, “How are you feeling adjusting to the city? Do you feel like you’re creating a community for yourself outside of work?” Pilar reported that her supervisor took a personal interest in improving her quality of life. After communicating the inadequacies of her on-campus apartment, the supervisor responded by investing resources in the renovation of her kitchen. The general care and concern for employee well-being that supervisors expressed mattered most to respondents.

Supervisors who interrupted unhealthy working patterns also fostered worklife balance. The data revealed that participants did not work the standard 40-hour week. On average, mid-level student affairs professionals work 55-hours a week. This average exceeds the national average of 42-hours a week (Tang & Wadsworth, 2010). The increase in working time appears to be motivated by the philosophy to “work until you get the work done” (Alex). This expectation was believed to be the consequence of being a contractual worker. George commented, “See we are salaried employees so there’s the expectation that, you know, you don’t really have an 8-to-5 job, it’s pretty much when it gets done, it gets done.” Getting “the work done when it is done” often translated into longer working hours with unreasonable late night and weekend commitments. This in turn compromised workers’ ability to respond to family and other life

Table 9

Code Mapping for Environmental Infrastructures

RQ2. What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

Third Iteration of Analysis: Application to Data Set

Mid-level student affairs administrators identified environmental infrastructures that promote and/or hinder worklife efforts in the context of several cultural dynamics. Formal and informal support mechanisms such as policies, programs and resources, effective supervision and campus support networks assist administrators in mitigating worklife challenges. This is in contrast to a lack of support that hinders worklife efforts.

Second Iteration: Themes

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Formal Supports (promote) | 3. Lack of Support (hinder) |
| 2. Informal Supports (promote) | |
-

First Iteration: Initial Codes/Surface Content Analysis

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1A. FMLA
1B. Policies/programs in excess of FMLA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child care assistance - Health and wellness resources - Flexible work arrangements | 3A. No policies beyond FMLA/inadequate policies
3B. Limited programs and resources (i.e. child care)
3C. Mis-education/no education |
| 2A. Supervisor support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocates of worklife balance - Models of worklife balance - Flexibility 2B. Campus support networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colleagues - Working mother's groups | |
-

DATA	DATA	DATA	DATA
------	------	------	------

Note. To be read from bottom up

responsibilities. This expectation fosters a culture of overwork, especially if the supervisor is reinforcing the notion of, “this is what we do in student affairs” (Ellie).

Respondents indicated that supervisors who monitored working time assisted in their juggle of worklife demands. Elaine remarked, “I think it would be even better if supervisors made that their responsibility—to make sure that their employees weren’t overworking themselves.” Respondents felt that it was not enough for supervisors to say that there is a need for workers to practice balance. “How are you supposed to find that balance if my responsibilities keep increasing and the expectations don’t decrease of what I should be doing,” Chris remarked. Participants stated that supervisors must take a proactive role by enforcing healthier practices. JP explained that his supervisor encourages a good work ethic but also ensures that workers are mindful of their health and their family priorities. If he feels that workers are spending too much time on the job he will ask them to go home. Supervisors who encourage employees to depart the office at a reasonable hour send the message that there are no negative consequences associated with leaving.

Supervisors who support temporal flexibility facilitate worklife balance. Scheduling is an ongoing concern for those involved in multiple worklife roles. The more autonomy workers have in creating their own schedule the more likely they are to be satisfied with their work environment. Supervisors who enforce strict rules such as when employees arrive and depart the workplace create tense environments. Ellie explained, “He’s (the supervisor) very much controlling of like when people are here and when they are not here . . . it isn’t a good climate.” Respondents who worked in contained environments were more likely to express their dissatisfaction. This was the case for Kerry whose supervisor controlled employee time by discouraging the use of the institutional compensatory time policy. Kerry explained, “The situation in our office is such that using it formally, like documenting a half an hour here or half an hour there is not encouraged. So we don’t use the official comp time.” Workers in the department do not use the official policy because there is the perception that the supervisor does not value the use of compensatory time. “What I was told was that the supervisor that I was telling you about that causes me some stress doesn’t believe in it,” Kerry stated. Supervisors who do not enforce or, worse, discourage use of institutional policies hinder worker efforts to achieve worklife balance and reinforce cultural norms associated with the Bailyn’s (date) cultural barriers

model. The more a culture is deemed worklife friendly, the more likely members of the community are to use the worklife policies available to them.

Flextime practices make the worklife juggle less stressful for mid-level student affairs administrators. Several respondents felt that they had more control of their time when not bound by a traditional work schedule. They explained that their supervisors were proponents of flexible working arrangements regardless of whether formal policies were in place. For example, most salaried employers were not afforded compensatory time for extra hours worked. Supervisors in turn created informal flextime structures to reward employees for the additional time worked. Alex arrives late or departs the workplace early to make up for evening or weekend time he works in excess of his 40-hour week. He attributes the ease of flexible scheduling to his supervisor.

Supervisors also encouraged flexible scheduling by allowing respondents to leave the workplace early or come in late if there was a need to respond to a family or other life commitment. For example, Anna explained that she is never questioned by her supervisor if she has to leave the office early to attend a child care board meeting. Similarly, Roger leaves work two hours early one day a week during the academic year to attend class. He explained that this is an informal agreement that he has with his supervisor. Roger does not have to document these hours because as he explained, “he knows that I’m going to get my work done.” This highlights another major advantage of flexible working arrangements. Without these practices, workers would be forced to tap into their vacation or sick leave.

Models of worklife balance. Beyond simply advocating for worklife balance, supervisors who model worklife balance reinforce workplace norms. A healthy balance includes not checking or sending excessive emails after regular business hours, departing the workplace at a reasonable time, knowingly leaving work early to tend to family matters, and vacationing regularly. These types of behaviors communicate a family-first philosophy and also demonstrate values aligned with worklife balance. Supervisors who model balance are also perceived to be more supportive and understanding of the challenges respondents face. George found his supervisor to be extremely accommodating and flexible when he unexpectedly took time away to be with his ailing father. George reported, “I was able to leave at moment’s notice without dealing with all the bureaucracy of, ‘oh my God do I have enough time to take off to do this’ you know.”

Supervisors who appear to prioritize family over work are believed to positively impact respondents' work experiences. Stephanie felt that her supervisor could relate to her because they both experienced the challenges of being working parents. She explained:

He just has an understanding of what I'm going through—that when I say I have to leave at 4:30 because my husband can't get [Jake] at daycare, it makes sense to him. He understands because he leaves no later than ten after 5:00, quarter after 5:00 every day because he has to go get his children.

Similarly, Jasmine commented that knowing her supervisor never misses her daughter's soccer games made her feel that she would be “offer[ed] the same luxury” if there was ever a need to be away to respond to a family matter.

Evidence of poor role modeling was also revealed in interviews. It is apparent that mid-level student affairs administrators monitor and take cues from the behaviors of those in senior level management. Several participants explained that their behavior and the behavior of their colleagues are dictated by the supervisor. If the supervisor works late into the evening, his or her subordinates follow suit. Supervisors consciously and unconsciously set standards for workers to conform through their actions. Respondents perceived these norms to be both positive and negative. Jasmine offered an example of the former. She explained that her supervisor and other senior level administrators leave the office everyday no later than 5:00pm. She went on to say that because this is the standard, she does not feel “guilty” if she decides to do the same thing. On the contrary, Cassandra offered an example of an office culture where it is not uncommon for participants to work excessive hours because the supervisor established this pattern of behavior. She explained:

I don't think anyone ever says, 'I expect you to work 60 hours a week.' It's just kinda...we all do. In a staff meeting she said about a month ago: “You know we're all working so hard. And I appreciate your work. We all get emails and are in meetings all day and then we all go home and do three hours of email at least, right?” That's what she said—just kind of this assuming that that was what we were going to do, or that's what we did.

Ellie described a workplace norm where lunch breaks are often disregarded. She explained, “My supervisor never takes lunch, ever. Say we have a meeting from 10:00 to 12:00. She'll just make

it go to 12:30 and doesn't have any regard for our lunch hour." While subtle, this behavior can impart the idea that wellness is not valued in the workplace.

The unexpected consequence of poor role modeling is that it discourages mid-level administrators from pursuing higher ranking positions. Joel explained:

I said "Oh I want to be a chief Student Affairs officer." And then I sort of learned what they do and the hours they put in and I thought "Oh, maybe not." . . . I've learned that I don't think I'm willing to sacrifice the other end of my life for that end.

Several participants did not feel that they had any models of worklife balance whether in their department or in the broader student affairs division. It appears that respondents may enter the field with the ultimate goal of obtaining a senior level administrative post. However they grow disenchanted with the idea because of their perception of the workload. Supervisors' inability to negotiate the boundaries of multiple role demands make respondents feel that balance is not achievable.

Formal Institutional Support

Beyond supervision, worklife culture is facilitated by the ways in which organizations support employees in the juggle of multiple role demands (Thompson et al., 1999). Worklife policies are one way in which employers allow workers to spend more time with family (Berg et al., 2003). Organizational practices allow employees the ease of responding to personal obligations.

Most higher education institutions are bound by FMLA. We wanted to know what additional worklife supports were accessible to mid-level student affairs administrators beyond the federal mandate. Offerings varied from formal to informal structures. Support also came in the form of policies and programmatic resources. Commonly identified mechanisms were organized into three categories: child care assistance, health and wellness resources, and flexible work arrangements.

Child care assistance. Employer-sponsored child care assistance reduces worklife conflict (Connelly, Degraff, & Willis, 2002; Connelly, Degraff, & Willis, 2004; Kossek & Nichol, 1992) and remedies several worklife issues for mid-level student affairs administrators. For one, subsidies or vouchers help respondents compensate for the exorbitant costs of child care. This is a major benefit for workers who often times sacrifice the quality of child care over affordability (Williams & Boushey, 2010). Joel indicated that his institution offers a child care

grant. The amount allocated to workers is unique to the individual and based on family income and the amount incurred for child care. He explained, “It really sort of acknowledges that this is one of those hidden expenses that eats up a lot of people’s income.” Generally speaking, vouchers are a widely offered child care resource due to the ease of linking the program to an existing benefits option (Morrissey & Warner, 2009). Jasmine explained that her institution offers a flexible spending plan where workers reserve a percentage of their earnings to pay for child care. Employees may also receive a portion of the health care premium if they waive the institution’s health care plan (typically an option for those covered under a spouse or partner plan). These monies are placed into a flexible spending account to be used to supplement child care costs or any other qualified expense.

Also, on-site child care positively influences mid-level student affairs administrators’ attitudes about managing work and family demands (Kossek & Nichol, 1992). Respondents noted that the availability of on-site services offer a convenient and reliable child care option. The availability of on-site child care for participants was not limited to daytime care. Kim revealed that her institution offers drop-in child care from 6:30 to 10:00pm. She explained that workers are provided a flexible payment plan where they can pay a daily fee or weekly rate for the service. Several respondents reported their inability to participate in campus programs and events because they often struggle to secure child care after the traditional 9-to-5 workday. The availability of day and evening child care services appears to maximize mid-level student affairs administrators’ ability to meet worklife responsibilities.

Health and wellness resources. Access to institutional health and wellness resources facilitates mid-level student affairs administrators’ worklife balance efforts. These types of programs are preventative measures to reduce stress and burnout, physical ailments, and other serious illnesses, resulting in decreased organizational and individual health insurance costs (Baicker, Cutler, & Song, 2010; Herlihy & Attridge, 2005). Respondents felt that access to these resources was a valuable incentive. For one, their health and wellness needs are often not on the radar due to issues of time and attention being spent on more pressing demands. However, they expressed appreciation for the availability of programs and services citing ease and affordability as factors that encourage participation in a range of programs. For example, free access to on-site recreational facilities, discounted gym memberships, and weight loss and management programs (e.g., Weight Watcher classes, and Biggest Loser programs) are just a few of the initiatives in

which respondents are actively engaged in. One respondent explained that her institution sponsors an ongoing walking program to encourage exercise among employees. Those who walk the most steps are rewarded for their accomplishments. Another respondent revealed that her institution offers a seminar program that focuses on healthy eating habits, mental well-being, and physical fitness. Participants receive prizes to encourage long term participation in the program.

Chris spoke about the benefits of working on a campus with an office that caters exclusively to the wellness needs of faculty, staff, and students. He participated in an eight-session personal training program at a significantly reduced rate offered by the wellness office. Employee assistance programs (EAPs) also facilitate balance efforts. EAPs are short-term counseling and support services that help employees deal with personal matters that may impact job performance. Anna received six free counseling sessions through her institution's EAP. The combination of intense job demands, caring for a one-year old child, and recovering from knee surgery prompted her decision. She stated, "Like just going and venting—that was really great. But it felt weird feeling like I had to go to see a counselor to figure out how to balance my world at the same time."

Flexible work arrangements. Institutions are more likely to create a culture that is supportive of worklife balance when workers have more control of their time (Bailyn, 1997). Flexible work arrangements such as flextime, telecommuting and compensatory time are examples of practices that allow workers to manage the location, timing, and duration of work (Atkinson & Hall, 2011; Bailyn, 1997). Mid-level student affairs administrators acknowledged accessibility to these resources. For example, Roger explained that he has a time-release arrangement to take classes. This is an informal agreement made with his supervisor whereby he is allowed to leave work early to attend class. The advantage of this arrangement is that he does not use vacation or other leave time to compensate for the time taken off. Instead, he works evenings and weekends to make up for time missed when attending class. Similarly, another participant has an informal time release arrangement to attend monthly child care board meetings. She typically arrives early on the morning of her meeting to ensure that work duties are completed prior to departure. Yet another participant talked about the benefits of her institution's telecommuting policy. Workers can elect to work in the office or from home during the summer months. Sasha's institution has a formal job sharing program in which colleagues from her department were the first to participate. Job sharing is an alternative work arrangement

in which the hours of a full-time position are distributed among two workers. The individual employees work on a reduced or part-time basis. Sasha stated, “Together they were 110%. One was 60% and one was 50%.” Sasha went on to explain how she felt that this type of program is helpful for working parents because it frees up additional time to spend with children. Sasha’s was the only institution in our sample to offer a job-sharing program to mid-level student affairs administrators.

Lack of Institutional Support

Worklife policies and programs assist workers’ in negotiating the complex demands of work and nonwork responsibilities (Caligiuri & Givlekian, 2008; Pedersen, Minnotte, Kiger, & Mannon, 2008). The absence of supports results in increased tension that negatively impacts the workplace and the individual’s personal life (Thompson & Prottas, 2005). With respect to the job, lack of worklife resources results in reduced organizational commitment and job satisfaction, absenteeism, and employee turnover (Connelly, DeGraff, & Willis, 2004; Eaton, 2003; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Individual outcomes consist of higher rates of divorce, increased stress and burnout, and reduced mental and physical well-being (Casey & Grzywacz, 2008; Thompson & Prottas, 2005).

Policies and programs beyond FMLA were practically nonexistent to many of our participants. The experiences of respondents who worked on campuses where formal institutional worklife infrastructures were not readily available led to our third theme: lack of institutional support. We identified three subthemes: there’s really nothing (child care), no leave in excess of FMLA, and lack of education or mis-education about policies.

There’s really nothing (child care). Child-rearing responsibilities are one of the primary factors that contribute to workers inability to successfully manage work and family obligations (Usdansky & Wolf, 2008; Williams & Boushey, 2010). Maintaining employment is a challenge for the working parent (Forry & Hofferth, 2010). Sickness of a child and unreliable child care assistance are just two of the primary causes of employee absenteeism and tardiness (Forry & Hofferth, 2010; Kossek & Nichol, 1992). Organizations invest in numerous child care strategies to eliminate these types of work disruptions (Morrissey & Warner, 2009). However, it was evident that several colleges and universities that employed our participants did not offer child care services. When asked about institutional child care resources, Stephanie simply indicated, “There’s nothing.” Sue also revealed the inadequacies of worklife efforts at her institution. She

indicated, “We have nothing like that on campus . . . there’s really nothing.” Sue’s interview highlighted the challenges that administrators face when institutional supports are unavailable. “A lot of people bring their babies to work and I see students just hanging out with them. Or their kids . . . just kind of walking around with college students because their parents need to bring them to work.” Several respondents admitted to bringing their children to the workplace because they could not secure a sitter. While a few respondents made no apologies for doing so, others felt that it was “inappropriate” and “distracting” (Pilar). Child care appears to be the perennial concern of working parents. Their daily lives are structured around whether they have access to high quality, affordable, and reliable child care. Inadequate support and scheduling mishaps such as last minute work commitments, sickness of a child, and unreliable or inconsistent child care are significant sources of stress. In extreme cases where child care assistance is not available, parents are forced to take children to the workplace.

Employer-supported child care positively influenced workers’ attitude about the job, boosted worker productivity, increased employee retention, and enhanced recruitment and retention efforts (Kossek & Nichol, 1992). The absence of policies and programming geared toward helping workers with child care issues leads to a general perception that worklife concerns were not valued at the institutional level. The lack of policies and programming was also thought to demonstrate of a lack of investment in employees’ overall well-being.

No leave in excess of FMLA. Leave in excess of the 12-workweek period mandated by FMLA is almost nonexistent for mid-level student affairs administrators. Using sick time and vacation leave is the only provision offered to workers should a situation occur that involves an ongoing or serious medical condition. Anna was forced to use sick and vacation leave after being unexpectedly placed on bed rest a month prior to the birth of her daughter. Short-term disability is not typically allowed for pregnancy complications. Anna was fortunate in that she had accrued enough paid sick and vacation hours to compensate for the time she needed to take off. The issue, however, is that she exhausted all of her paid leave on medical treatment prior to birth. This is problematic because it makes adjusting to the new role of parent and reentry back into the work environment challenging. Anna was hoping to have paid leave time “to spread out over a couple of months to ease back into [her] transition.” Instead she had to “jump back into” the worker role with no prospect of a day off in the immediate future. Similar to Anna, Chris also

depleted his sick and vacation time in response to a serious medical illness. He returned to the workplace with no available paid leave time. He explained:

It ate up all of my sick time and it ate up most of my vacation time. So I've been trying to build that back up. I don't see any time in the near future where I'll have enough time built back up to take a significant amount of time away, like taking a week away is kind of a pipe dream.

It is evident that there is a need for additional paid leave to support the health needs of employees. The absence of paid leave in excess of FMLA yields negative outcomes such as higher employee turnover, decreased worker productivity, and increased need for health care resources (Lovell, 2004). Research suggests that instead of employers increasing paid sick leave programs, they are actually reducing the amount of time workers can take off to deal with illnesses (Holcomb, 2001; Lovell, 2004; Maloney & Schumer, 2010). The reality is that workers are being forced to choose between income and their health (Maloney & Schumer, 2010). In instances when they forego health, they put themselves and those around them (i.e., families and colleagues) at risk (Maloney & Schumer, 2010).

Lack of education or mis-education about policies. What we found most concerning about the data was the lack of education or mis-education regarding worklife policies. When asked about the types of policies offered, a few respondents were unsure of what was actually available to them. Marcus referred to his institution's alleged compensatory time policy as "hearsay" because he received mixed messages from the human resources department and his supervisor when he asked about it. Similarly, Ellie was unsure of whether her institution offered a formal compensatory policy. When she inquired about the policy she was told that there was no such thing for salaried employees. Yet her colleagues in other departments were supposedly using comp time to make up for time worked in excess of a 40-hour week. It is apparent that employees need information about organizational benefits.

Respondents also expressed the frustrations they faced when trying to obtain information about policies. Oftentimes supervisors are unaware of institutional benefits and state laws. Surprisingly, human resources personnel are also uninformed, at least in the eyes of our participants. Sue said she served as her own advocate when seeking maternity leave information. She sought assistance from HR but to no avail. Sue commented:

Our HR Department did not do a good job at all providing me even information about maternity leave or even knowing what the laws were about. So I was my own advocate and I had to ... I had to advocate for myself, I couldn't just request things. I had to print out things from the [State] Government page about maternity leave, about paid family leave. And so I got what I wanted, what was owed to me, what was my right, but I certainly had to be clear and assertive about that request.

Similarly, Stephanie indicated that her institution's HR personnel did a poor job of educating expectant parents on FMLA and sick and vacation leave policies. She received what was described as "brusque" information. The HR staff member did not take the time to explain the policies available or what forms she needed to complete prior to birth and/or after birth. Furthermore, the information that was disseminated was incorrect. Stephanie left for maternity leave unclear of her rights as an employee. She shared the difficulties she experienced trying to navigate the benefits process while being away from campus. "I was getting calls from someone in Benefits and Human Resources who ... was inappropriate at times and was also giving me wrong and confusing information." It is not enough to have worklife policies and programs if employees are not aware of their existence, are unaware of the benefits that are available to them or are misinformed by institutional personnel about their rights. Institutional leaders create unnecessary stress that can be avoided if proactive measures are taken to educate employees.

Discussion and Implications

The inability to balance professional and personal obligations is one of the primary causes associated with employee turnover among faculty ranks (Jo, 2008). Organizational supports such as worklife policies and programmatic resources can mitigate turnover. However, they must be made available to administrators as well as faculty. Additionally, these mechanisms alone do not alleviate the tensions workers face when juggling work, family, and other life commitments (Allen, 2001). Cultural characteristics such as organizational norms and values have a far greater impact on reducing the conflicts between work and life. Culture of the workplace also influences whether employees will actually utilize worklife policies and programs (Allen, 2001; Hopkins, 2005; Thompson et al., 1999). As such, it is imperative that institutional leaders who wish to retain mid-level student affairs administrators need to not only ensure that organizational support mechanisms are in place, but also that they also address the cultural barriers that impede employees from utilizing these mechanisms.

The results of this study reveal cultural characteristics that assist and/or hinder mid-level administrators in their ability to balance professional and personal obligations. Two findings are central to this discussion. First, the immediate supervisor plays a critical role in reducing the barriers workers face in the juggle of multiple worklife demands. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests worklife-supportive supervisor behaviors shape the culture of an organization (Allen, 2001; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011; Lapierre & Allen, 2006; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). Supervisors also determine how workers perceive and experience the environment (Allen, 2001). Mid-level student affairs administrators involved in healthy supervisor-supervisee relationships are more likely to be satisfied with the work environment. In some instances, mid-level student affairs administrators indicated that the informal support given by supervisors is more important than formal organizational structures. This is a striking finding because it brings to the forefront an often overlooked component in the professional development of mid-level student affairs administrators – effective supervision.

Effective supervision is defined as “a management function intended to promote the achievement of institutional goals and enhance the personal and professional capabilities of staff” (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 42). Managers spend a considerable amount of time developing new professionals. It is apparent that effective supervision is needed at the mid-level as well. Workers do not reach a zenith in their careers where supervision is no longer needed. Efforts to ensure that all supervisors are well equipped to promote worklife balance among staff member are merited.

The second major finding from this study revealed striking inconsistencies in respondent perceptions’ of the availability of worklife policies, programs, and practices beyond FMLA – some respondents had access to them, others did not, and a few were simply unaware of what was available to them. This finding is consistent with a previous study that found that worklife practices were not universally available in higher education (The Center for the Education of Women, 2009). Colleges and universities typically get by with the minimal support mandated through FMLA (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005). The most common policies and programs found were child care assistance, health and wellness resources, and flexible work arrangements. With respect to flexible work arrangements, most often these were informal agreements facilitated by the supervisor.

This finding necessitates further discussion of organizational responsibility. Worklife as the sole responsibility of the individual is the biggest organizational cultural carrier to employees' ability to manage personal and professional obligations (Bailyn, 1997). Worklife balance is not only an individual issue it is an organizational issue. Numerous scholars have found correlations between worklife imbalance and employee turnover (Adkerson, 2000; Dalton, Hill, & Ramsay, 1997; Griffeth & Hom, 2001; Phillips & Connell, 2003; Smith, 2001). Expanded family responsibilities along with the growing challenges of work create role/inter-role conflict for those engaged in care-taking behaviors (Griffeth & Hom, 2001). Time demands are not just indicative of married workers or those with children. Single and childless workers also acknowledge their frustration with the conflicts between work and life obligations (Griffeth & Hom, 2001).

The student affairs profession is at risk of losing talented mid-level student professionals to other academic departments and non-higher education industries. Senior level administrators must provide opportunities to support employees in the management of worklife roles if they wish to increase employee retention and productivity (Batt & Valcour, 2003). We offer the following suggestions that supervisors, human resources personnel, and senior level administrators might consider in shaping workplace practice, policy, and future research.

The first recommendation for practice involves supervision. Supervisors must develop genuine, respectful relationships with supervisees (Janosik & Creamer, 2003). Two-way communication is a key component of the supervisor-supervisee dyad (Janosik & Creamer, 2003). It is indicative of open, honest, and ongoing interaction (Janosik & Creamer, 2003). Additionally, supervisors must set expectations. Cultural norms play a significant role in how much time mid-level student affairs administrators invest in work responsibilities. The nature of student affairs work can be time consuming and oftentimes the number of hours worked is excessive. Since the expected number of hours may not be explicitly reflected in an employees' job description, supervisors must set standards. Moreover, in setting standards, supervisors must also monitor employee working patterns and interrupt unhealthy behaviors. Moreover, supervisors must be fully educated on federal and institutional worklife policies and practices. Supervisors cannot advocate for the needs of employees if they are not abreast of what accommodations are available to workers. Perhaps the biggest challenge is that supervisors vary across campus; some are more flexible in their approach than others. The Bailyn model suggests

that the organizational culture around supervision needs to be one in which all supervisors feel obligated to promote worklife balance.

This leads to our second recommendation that senior level administrators strive to ensure that immediate supervisors are trained to support workers in the management of worklife obligations (Lapierre & Allen, 2006; Hammer et al., 2011). Supervisors may not be aware of how to effectively assist workers. Training interventions may be necessary to increase awareness about the type of support employees need. A training model that is inclusive of dimensions relative to emotional support (listening and showing concern); instrumental support (ongoing management of employee needs); role modeling behaviors (demonstrating how to synthesize worklife commitments); and creative work family management (restructuring work assignments to increase employee effectiveness) is useful for employees who demonstrate higher levels of work-family conflict (Hammer et al., 2011). This training can be delivered by computer or face-to-face interaction (Hammer et al., 2011) but it needs to be delivered if the organizational culture around notions of supervision is to be standardized so that all employees feel they have access to, and can take advantage of, worklife policies and programs.

The third recommendation revolves around performance reviews. Senior level administrators should include “supervision” as a standard that is assessed in annual performance reviews of supervisors. Supervisee feedback should be considered in this process. Multi-rater or 360-degree evaluations are an example of one approach that provides an outlet for workers to anonymously evaluate supervisors. Flexibility, leadership, and interpersonal skills are the types of performance factors that should be considered in the assessment. Senior level administrators must use the information collected as a means to develop supervisors’ skills.

Finally, senior level administrators must ensure that worklife accommodations are available. The absence of resources complicates the worklife juggle. Organizations must provide assistance to mitigate the conflict workers face in managing the work-nonwork interface. For example, child care is a perennial concern for working parents. Child care resources by way of financial assistance or subsidies and on-site day and night care services are just a few of the ways employers lessen the burden for parents who work. Another example of worklife accommodations is support groups for workers involved in elder care responsibilities. Mid-level student affairs administrators are among a growing number of workers aged 30 and over involved in the part-time and full-time care of aging parents (Hammer & Neal, 2008).

Involvement in this type of role can produce significant stress. Elder care support groups, workshops, and seminars can help workers cope with the responsibilities of caring for elderly parents.

The current research also has implications for policy. To start, senior level administrators should consider offering paid leave benefits in excess of FMLA (Holcomb, 2001). Workers should not be forced to rely on sick and vacation leave to accommodate family or personal needs. Workers need sick time to deal with short-term illnesses; they need vacation leave to respond to other personal matters. Furthermore, it is apparent that the combination of FMLA, sick, and vacation leave does not compensate for workers dealing with severe or ongoing medical situations. Policies that offer additional paid leave benefits should long-term medical issues arise would be well advised.

Another recommendation for policy is that senior level administrators should establish reward structures in the design of leave policies. Many institutions have blanket benefits where all workers accrue vacation days, sick days, holiday leave or other hours in defined categories per month. This can be restrictive if an employee needs time to care for a sick child but only has holiday hours to use in term of leave time. Leave policies where all accrued hours are dumped into a single leave account might offer employees greater flexibility in how to use their time to balance their personal and professional lives.

In fact, the findings of this study likely are relevant for populations beyond student affairs practitioners. It is reasonable to suggest that many other American workers are faced with challenges of multiple professional and personal role responsibilities. As such, these recommendations may help managers in all types of enterprises shape practices and design policies to promote worklife balance.

In addition to suggestions for future practice and policy, our findings serve as a springboard for future research. First, this study was based on supervisee perceptions of supervisor behaviors. It would be interesting to explore supervisor perceptions of their own behaviors to see how the two perspectives contrast. Certainly a study on what worklife policies are in place at institutions around the country is merited. Additionally, although the sample included participants from different institutional types and functional areas, we did not explore whether support differed based on these characteristics, nor did we examine whether perceptions differed by gender, race, or other demographic characteristics. More research is warranted to

explore how institutional types and functional area influence culture and how personal characteristics influence perceptions of culture.

This study was not without limitations. The first limitation is the sample. The focus of this inquiry was on the experiences of mid-level student affairs administrators. It is reasonable to suggest that a study of entry or senior-level administrators may have yielded different results. Therefore, generalization to other populations must be taken with caution. The next limitation refers to the nature of participation. Participants volunteered to be a part of the study. Individuals who were invited but declined to participate may have contributed to the findings of this study in a significant way that differed from actual participants. The last limitation refers to candidness of responses. Since data were produced via telephone interviews, it is possible that respondents were not open in their disclosure of information. Findings may have been influenced by any of these limitations.

In closing, employee turnover impacts every level of the institution, from teaching, research, and service, to institutional governance (AFT Higher Education, 2009). Voluntary employee turnover is costly to colleges and universities (Jo, 2008). In the case of mid-level student affairs professionals, a culture that is inclusive of time flexibility, supportive supervisors, and organizational support mechanisms (e.g., worklife policies and human resources programs) assist in the management of multiple roles. Given the amount of time and money institutions invest in the recruitment of staff, they must also focus on proactive retention measures. Campuses that foster a supportive organizational culture, one in which worklife policies and practices are not only available, but workers are also encouraged to take advantage of those policies, are more likely to retain a qualified, competent workforce.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample E-mail Invitation

Dear [Name of Mid-Level Student Affairs Administrator]:

My name is Tracey Cameron and I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Administration program at Virginia Tech. I am currently working on my dissertation in which I am exploring how student affairs administrators juggle their busy work schedule with their personal lives. I feel that there is also a need to understand the challenges that student affairs professionals confront when faced with the conflicting demands of career and personal/family life.

I retrieved your contact information from the ACPA directory. I would like to extend to you an invitation to participate in this study. If you meet the study's criteria, your commitment will consist of a 50-60 minute telephone interview. Also, in preparation for the telephone interview, you will be asked to complete two brief exercises. As an incentive, you will receive \$10 for your time.

I would really like to hear about your experiences. If this study is of interest, please complete and submit the questionnaire at [URL ADDRESS]. Your participation is voluntary and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. This study has been approved by the Institutional Research Board at Virginia Tech.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at tcameron@vt.edu or 540-231-5866. Thank you in advance for considering participation.

Sincerely,
Tracey Cameron
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Appendix B: Pre-Screening Questionnaire
Mid-Level Student Affairs Administrator
Worklife Balance Experiences

Please respond to the questions below using the drop down menu. Your responses are confidential.

The following questions are about you.

1. Number of years in the student affairs profession: _____
2. Please indicate your gender:
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
3. Please indicate your age:
 - a. 20-30
 - b. 31-40
 - c. 41-50
 - d. 51-60
 - e. 61 or older
4. Please indicate your ethnicity. Check all that apply.
 - a. African American
 - b. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - c. Caucasian/European American
 - d. Hispanic/Latino(a)
 - e. Native American
 - g. Other (specify): _____
5. Marital Status:
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Domestic Partnership
 - d. Divorced
 - e. Separated
 - f. Other (specify): _____
6. Number of children:
 - a. None
 - b. One
 - c. Two
 - d. Three or more

The following questions will ask about your current employment situation.

7. Are you employed full time (35+ hours or more a week)?

Yes	No
-----	----

8. Current position title:

--

 - a. Primary functional area:

--

9. Institutional Type

a. Private 2-yr	b. Private 4-yr
c. Public 2-yr	d. Public 4-yr

The following questions will ask about your work responsibilities/obligations.

10. About how many hours a week are dedicated to paid work activities? _____
11. Do you accomplish all your work-related responsibilities while at work?

Yes	No
-----	----
12. Do you ever take work home?

Yes	No
-----	----

* If you answered "yes" to the above question, how often do you take work home?

 - a. Seldom
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Very Often

13. Do your home responsibilities ever interfere with your work obligations?

Yes	No
-----	----

* If you answered "yes" to the above question, how often do you take work home?

 - a. Seldom
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Very Often

Appendix C: IRB Approval Letter



Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board
 2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
 Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
 540/231-4991 Fax 540/231-0959
 e-mail moored@vt.edu
 www.irb.vt.edu

DATE: December 18, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joan B. Hirt
 Tracey Cameron

FROM: David M. Moore 

Approval date: 12/18/2009
 Continuing Review Due Date: 12/3/2010
 Expiration Date: 12/17/2010

SUBJECT: **IRB Expedited Approval:** "The Professional & The Personal: Worklife Balance and Mid-Level Student Affairs Administrators", IRB # 09-1057

This memo is regarding the above-mentioned protocol. The proposed research is eligible for expedited review according to the specifications authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. As Chair of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, I have granted approval to the study for a period of 12 months, effective December 18, 2009.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.
3. Report promptly to the IRB of the study's closing (i.e., data collecting and data analysis complete at Virginia Tech). If the study is to continue past the expiration date (listed above), investigators must submit a request for continuing review prior to the continuing review due date (listed above). It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain re-approval from the IRB before the study's expiration date.
4. If re-approval is not obtained (unless the study has been reported to the IRB as closed) prior to the expiration date, all activities involving human subjects and data analysis must cease immediately, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.

Important:

If you are conducting **federally funded non-exempt research**, please send the applicable OSP/grant proposal to the IRB office, once available. OSP funds may not be released until the IRB has compared and found consistent the proposal and related IRB application.

cc: File

Invent the Future

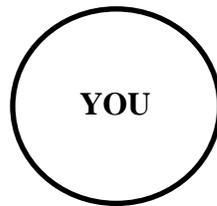
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY AND STATE UNIVERSITY

An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix D: Projection Technique Exercise 1

Who Am I?

Instructions: The purpose of this exercise is to elicit data about the many roles you fulfill in life (e.g. spouse, partner, parents, church member, civic organization committee chair) The circle in the middle represents you. Please draw other circles and label them with the other roles you fulfill. Draw the circle close to your name if it is a most significant role and farther away from your name if it is less significant. Try to make the size of the circle represent the importance of this role. Larger circles would represent the most important roles. Return to tcameron@vt.edu or 540-231-7211 (fax). Thanks!

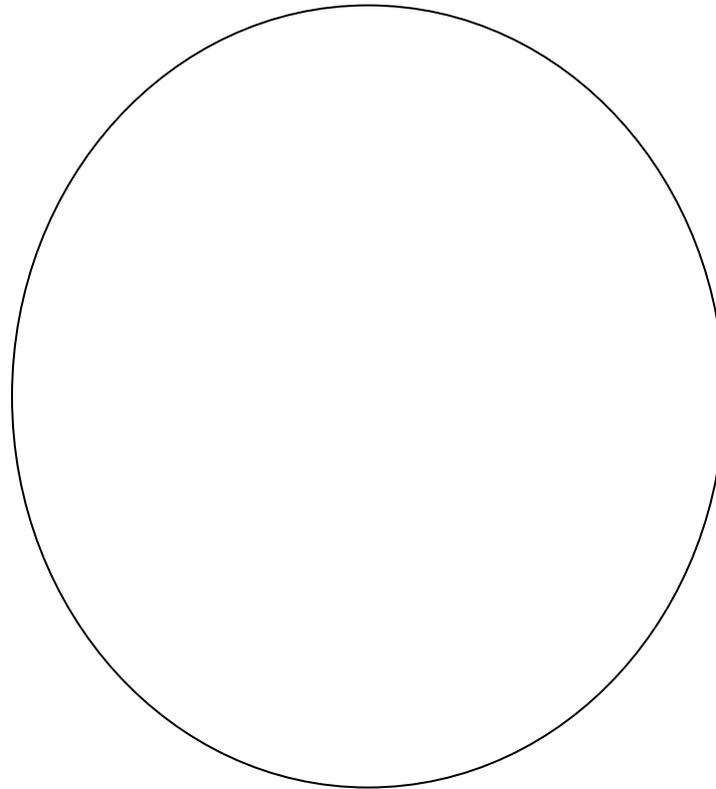


Appendix E: Projection Technique Exercise 2

Weekly Worklife Activity

The purpose of this exercise is to elicit data about your weekly routine. The pie chart below is a visual illustration of the hours in a 7-day week. Please complete the pie chart to represent the amount of time (in hours) spent on each work and nonwork activity per week. Be sure to label every “slice” with the number of hours spent AND the type of activity (possible activities, but not limited to: work, sleep, community service, entertainment, professional association involvement, family, health/fitness). Return to tcameron@vt.edu or 540-231-7211 (fax). Thanks!

PERCENT OF HOURS SPENT DURING A TYPICAL WEEK ON WORK AND NON-WORK ACTIVITIES
(7 Days a Week = 168)



Appendix F: Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: MID-LEVEL STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS

Real Name: _____ Pseudonym: _____

RQ1: How do mid-level student affairs administrators describe their worklife experiences?

RQ2: What environmental infrastructures do mid-level student affairs administrators identify as assisting and/or hindering in their ability to balance their worklife responsibilities?

I. PROFESSIONAL LIFE [RQ1]

I want you to talk to me about your professional life. How did you become a part of the student affairs profession?

What is it like to be a student affairs professional? If I followed you through a typical day, what would I see you doing?

II. WORKLIFE EXPERIENCES [RQ1]

In the Who Am I exercise you were asked to name the roles that you identify with most. I see that your role as a PARENT is the most significant. How do you balance your work responsibilities with being a parent? Caregiver? Spouse?

What are the challenges you face as a student affairs administrator and a parent? Can you give me an example of an occasion when work-related obligations interfered with your role as a parent or your relationship with your child? Can you give me any more examples of similar incidents of this type? How about occasions when personal demands interfered with work?

Do your work responsibilities interfere with other non-work related obligations (refer to Weekly Worklife Activity Exercise 2)? Tell me about an episode or situation where your work responsibilities interfered with your non-work related activities. Can you give me any more examples of similar incidents of this type? How about occasions when your non-related activities interfered with work?

III. ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTIONS [RQ2]

Let's talk about your current work environment. Can you give me an example of a time people or policies on your campus helped you meet your personal (non work) needs? Can you tell me about a time when people or policies at work really complicated your ability to meet personal and (non-work) obligations?

IV. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS [RQ1]

Given what you have said about your experiences, how do you understand this notion of worklife balance? What sense do you make of it?

How has your worklife situation changed and/or remained the same since the beginning of your career? How do you imagine your worklife situation will be as you look towards the future?

Is there anything else on these issues that you would like to add, that I did not cover in this interview?

May I follow up with you if I have additional question?