

PSYCH 373/378: CONTEMPORARY WORK-LIFE CHALLENGES

Fall, 2010

INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Robert Brill	Office Phone #:	(610) 861-1561
Office Location:	PPHAC Room 225	FAX #:	(610) 625-7879
E-Mail:	brillr@moravian.edu		
Office Hours:	M & W 9 :45am – 10 :45 am T & TH 10 :15am – 11 :15am (or by appointment)	Class Meeting Location:	PPHAC 338
		Time:	T / TH 2nd period

Course Overview:

This course will explore the emerging theories regarding the relationship between work and family roles. Both the employee and employer perspective will be discussed within an organizational context. Students will also consider and react to the psychological adjustment and decision-making issues posed by the impact of work on one's family and life roles. Other contemporary trends woven into the course include gender ideas, legal issues, cross-cultural perspectives, and technology-driven flexible work arrangements. Assignments will facilitate greater personal exploration and moral discernment on topics, as well as research applications for further investigation of these issues.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

1. To provide you with a thorough **knowledge base** of the relevant challenges of work-life roles, as well as the theoretical, moral and practical issues pertaining to this area.
2. In particular, students should have a greater **awareness of the complexity of moral issues** and the **need for interdisciplinary understanding** for informed moral decision-making.
3. In this course you are to grapple with your own values and moral position-taking. The course should enhance your ability to use the knowledge to **make good decisions** regarding these challenges in your own personal context.
4. To stimulate and challenge you to **think critically** and independently about the course material, and subsequently about information presented in studies and the media so that you will be educated consumers of subsequent knowledge disseminated about this area. In particular, students should have an enhanced capacity for moral discernment, criticism and argument in this and other areas of the personal life.
5. To improve your **communication skills** (written, verbal, & listening) through various opportunities provided during the course. Particularly, you should develop greater skills in writing research reports in a "scientific" style, and in compliance with APA format.

The rest of the syllabus is designed on the basis of creating the proper learning environment and scholarly opportunity to achieve these outcomes. Your commitment to these is an essential prerequisite for the course to be successful. Given the dynamic nature of learning, this syllabus is subject to change during the semester.

Required texts:

Hamper, B. (1991). *Rivthead: Tales from the assembly line*. New York, NY: Warner Books.

Hochschild, A. R. (1997). *The time bind: When work becomes home and home becomes work*. New York, NY:Metropolitan Books.

Miller, A. (1949) *Death of a salesman*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Thompson, G. (2010). *Working in the shadows: A year of doing the jobs most Americans won't do*. New York, NY: Nation Books

In addition, there will be weekly sets of readings distributed in class, provided by internet link, or put on Reserve in Reeves Library.

Other requirements:

1) Registering for the course in Blackboard.

2) A **BINDER** in which to organize your Integrative Life Plan:

Keep all the above materials in the folder at all times as they will be collected periodically.

Course Graded Requirements:

INTEGRATIVE LIFE PLAN (20%):

The main product that will bring together the course objectives and promote your understanding and ability to in the area of work-life challenges will be the integrative life plan. This will be a portfolio type of product that will require you to create a series of small written reactions structured exercises or prompts to help you think more deeply and personally about your own potential work-life challenges.

REVIEW and REACTION Papers (4 @ 10% each – 40%):

For each text we will be studying in the class, you will write a short reaction paper. Each paper will involve additional specific guidelines distributed and discussed in class. You are **HIGHLY** encouraged to use the writing center in Zinzendorf Hall and other sources of feedback for revision before submitting these book reviews. Each paper will be 3 – 4 pages (not including Reference page, if relevant) long, double-spaced with one inch margins around. The **ONLY** lead in is to be a title and your name centered at the top of the first page, **NO COVER PAGE**. Supporting sources are encouraged to support your ideas and opinions. Sources should be cited and referenced using APA style.

CHANGE INITIATIVE PROPOSAL (15%) and PRESENTATION (5%):

For this paper, you will complete a 10 page *literature review* of a topical area. Topics and guidelines will be distributed and discussed in class. Your references will need to be collected and submitted for approval. You will be the class' "subject matter expert" for that particular topic; as such, you will be part of a presentation panel at the end of the semester in which you will be a contributor depending on which panel theme your paper topic belongs.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PROJECT (8%)

As a class, we will employ the scientific method to explore one or more hypothesis(es) related to the

course focus, contemporary work-life challenges. This project will be managed by the instructor and all members of the class will contribute to various aspects of the research project (divide and conquer approach); while all members will be involved in the collection of the actual data.

ACTIVE LEARNING & DISCUSSION (12%)

Active learning involves questioning the readings and lecture material, contributing to discussion, sharing ideas and alternative perspectives. As a prerequisite to the active learning that will take place in the classroom, please arrive to class prepared by having read the assigned readings, and completing any assignments. Class participation is expected and highly encouraged. This is the best strategy for achieving many of the objectives laid out for the course. ***For this reason, we must get comfortable being called upon. If you do not know how you think or feel about an issue then say so and I will accept that so long as you then commit to formulating a belief or opinion about it. You are likely used to passive learning where you sit without thinking. That will be the main obstacle to fulfilling our potential within this course, and could potentially make this course a painful experience for all of us – please overcome it.*** Those who commit themselves to such active learning are scholars. It is for this reasoning that excessive absences will impact upon this grade AND be penalized as stated in policy #3 below.

Course Policies:

1) **LATE ASSIGNMENTS** - Assignments and projects may be handed in up to two days late (points deducted from the grade each day late). When handing in an assignment late please indicate the amount of days late on the front cover along with your signature – without this late assignments will be considered incomplete (I). Assignments may not be handed in after the third day late, and due to this policy – **late assignments may NOT be faxed or e-mailed.** Please, do not ask me to deviate from this policy. If you must miss class, drop off the assignment earlier, send it with a classmate, e-mail or fax it to me BEFOREHAND. In other words, there should be no valid excuse for a late assignment. I encourage you not to procrastinate. Be sure to back up your work!

2) ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is expected. Class experiences and discussions will supplement text material. Excessive absences will impact directly on your final grade. After two missed classes, each class missed will reduce your overall final grade by two points. You are responsible for getting missed notes, assignments, and relevant in-class announcements in a timely manner. If you miss a day when we are meeting as research groups without a valid excuse, your final grade will be deducted by five points. PLEASE USE STUDENT SERVICES IF YOU MUST MISS MULTIPLE CLASSES FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

3) Excuses and Communication

As articulated in Policy #3, I operate on the assumption that you are mature adults, and therefore, the decision to attend class or not is up to you. You need not e-mail me if you must miss class. Be sure to work with a classmate to get any materials you miss and feel free to make an appointment or come by during office hours to go over material after you get the notes from a classmate. I understand and respect life stressors you may be faced with; but keep in mind that grades reflect essential standards and cannot be adjusted based on extenuating circumstances. Valid obstacles/setbacks may understandably inhibit

your performance, but they are not able to influence the course and college standards. I cannot pardon work nor substitute/supplement extra credit other than that which has been built into the course and offered to all. In the spirit of fairness to ALL students I must be consistent with the policies laid out in this syllabus and ask you to be familiar with and respectful of them. If you are thinking of asking for an exception to my policies; first ask yourself – “Am I willing to ask my classmates to support my exception to the rules of the course?”

4) **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Academic integrity is a core value of the college and is expected. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is **my contractual agreement** with the college that I am to report all **suspected** cases of plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes transcribing sentences or paragraphs belonging to another author directly from another written source and suggesting they are your own words, quoting directly from a published work without giving the author credit (i.e. proper citation), using or "borrowing" another student's work, buying a paper from a professional service, etc. The policy of the department is that the student must keep all note cards and rough drafts until given a grade for that course!!! Again, be sure to back up computer disks. Evidence of plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with in accordance with the college policy on academic honesty in the *Student Handbook*.

5) **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Should you require special accommodations for a disability, please arrange an appointment with the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Documentation of a disability will be required for special accommodations to be arranged in conjunction with the Learning Services Office.

Students with Disabilities

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for support of learning disabilities and/or ADHD, should contact Mrs. Laurie Roth, Director of Learning Services, 1307 Main Street (ext. 1510). Students who wish to request accommodations for support of other disabilities, should contact Dr. Ron Kline, Director of the Counseling Center, 1307 Main Street (ext. 1510).

Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the appropriate disability support provider on campus.

6) **Summary of Grading System:**

REVIEW & REACTION PAPERS	40% (4 @ 12% each)
INTEGRATIVE LIFE PLAN	20%
CHANGE PROPOSAL/PRESENTATION	15%
& PRESENTATION	5%
EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PROJECT	8%
ACTIVE LEARNING & DISCUSSION	12%

7) **Technology** – Unless specifically and directly instructed to by the professor, students may NOT engage with any form of technology during class, lectures, and especially during exams (as stated above, but reiterated here).

8) As previously stated, this syllabus is subject to modification so as to be reactive to the dynamics of learning.

Relevant Quotes:

What America needs is not to be more competitive, but more cooperative

-- Ed Freeman, Darden School of Business

A superior person thinks of what is right, an inferior person thinks only of what is profitable

-- Confucius

It staggers me that for whatever reason being nice is seen as being inconsistent with being tough

-- Weatherup, CEO of Pepsico

It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.

--Karl Marx

Work is a mysterious thing; many of us claim to hate it, but it takes a grip on us that is so fierce that it captures emotions and loyalties we never knew were there.

--Bob Greene

The shift in the structure and character of work has created a demand that work produce more than purely economic benefits. To make a living is no longer enough. Work also has to make a life.

--Peter Drucker

The principle object of management should be to secure the maximum prosperity for the employer, coupled with the maximum prosperity for each employee.

--Frederick Taylor

If work was really good, the rich would have found a way to keep it to themselves.

--Haitian Proverb

This book, being about work, is by its nature, about violence – to the spirit as well as to the body . . . It is about a search, too, for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying.

-- Studs Terkel, Working

The seam is split, the coal face cracked, the lines are drawn; there's no going back . . . We're wounded by fear, injured in doubt, I can lose myself, you I can't live without. Yeah you keep me holding on - in Red Hill Town, see the lights going down in Red Hill Town . . . I'm hanging on..

--Bono of U2 from Red Hill Mining Town, The Joshua Tree

You never expected justice from a company, did you?

They have neither a soul to lose, nor a body to kick.

--Rev. Sydney Smith

PS 373/78: Contemporary Work-Life Challenges

Course Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS* (subject to change)</u>
WEEK ONE: Tuesday, August 31st Thursday, Sept. 2nd	Introductory Sessions What are the contemporary Work-Life Challenges? What are the research questions and needed proposals?	<i>ILP#1: Identifying the Challenges</i> Begin reading Hochschild's <i>Timebind</i>
WEEK TWO Tuesday Sept. 7 th Thursday, Sept. 9 th	Moral Frameworks for Consideration Values: Guideposts for Work-Life Challenges Discuss the Research Project this week as well	Readings Distributed <i>ILP#2: Identifying your Personal Values</i>
WEEK THREE Tuesday, Sept. 14th Thursday, Sept. 16th	Psychological Theories & Research <i>Timebind</i> : Group Discussion & Reflection	Proposal Topic and Outline Due
WEEK FOUR Tuesday, Sept. 21st Thursday, Sept. 23rd	Work Interventions Government Role: FMLA and other relevant laws	<i>ILP#3 – Translating Your Values into a Career Path</i> Analysis Paper #1 Due (<i>Timebind</i>) <i>ILP #4 – Preparing <u>Your</u> Future Interviews</i> Begin reading Miller's <i>Death of a Salesman</i>
WEEK FIVE Tuesday Sept. 28 th Thursday, Sept. 30 th	Film: <i>ALL MY SONS</i> Miller's Dramatic Plays on Work: Group Discussion & Reflection	View film: <i>All My Sons</i> on Blackboard (up to Intermission, Chris & Ann driving off) Proposal Draft and References Due