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Work-life Balance for Administrators in the Academy: under Ideal Worker Pressure

Kelly E. Wilk

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WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR ADMINISTRATORS IN THE ACADEMY:
UNDER IDEAL WORKER PRESSURE

BY

KELLY E. WILK

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
Seton Hall University

2013

Abstract

Work-life balance is an issue for all employees. Within the academy, much research has focused on the work-life balance experiences of faculty and the ways in which workplace norms and subcultures can pressure faculty to conform to the ideal worker model. Less is known, however, about these influences on the remainder of the higher education workforce, particularly administrators, who comprise a growing segment of the academy's employee population.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the work-life balance experiences of administrators at one institution of higher education and how those experiences varied based on workplace norms and subcultures. Participants were recruited from the population of administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology and in the Division of Student Affairs at Plains University, a private, doctoral-granting institution in the Northeast. All 32 participants were between the ages of 25 and 60 and had worked at the university for at least two years. The study employed a qualitative methodology that utilized constructivist grounded theory to answer the research questions. The ideal worker model was used as a lens to understand workplace norms and subcultures in the Division of Finance and Technology and in the Division of Student Affairs.

Results indicate that work-life balance is problematic for administrators and that ideal worker norms impact and influence administrators' experiences of balance. In the absence of formal work-life policies at Plains University, work-life balance for administrators was supervisor-driven; administrators who worked in different divisions and in different areas within those divisions had varied work-life experiences. The findings suggest the need for greater research regarding the work-life balance experiences of administrators in the academy. They

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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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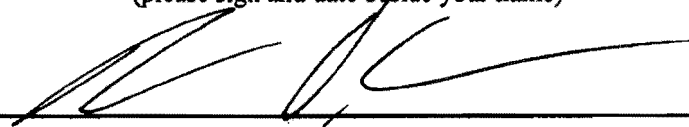
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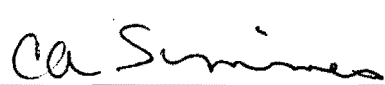
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Work-life balance is an issue for all employees. Within the academy, much research has focused on the work-life balance experiences of faculty and the ways in which workplace norms and subcultures can pressure faculty to conform to the ideal worker model. Less is known, however, about these influences on the remainder of the higher education workforce, particularly administrators, who comprise a growing segment of the academy's employee population.

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also provide an indication that work-life balance policies may be an important tool that the academy can use to support and to retain a diverse administrative workforce.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my husband, Frank. As we worked our way through school over the last four years, you were the ultimate example of work-life balance. Your ability to keep everything in perspective inspired me and grounded me. You were my indefatigable champion and an invaluable proofreader. Thank you for your endless support and constant motivation.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Since the middle of the 20th century the American workforce has changed dramatically, becoming far more diverse and increasingly composed of women. The proportion of women between the ages of 25 and 34 who worked increased from 36% in 1960 to 69% in 2009 (U.S. Department of Labor [DOL], 2010). In 2009, of the 66 million women in the United States (US) who were employed, 73.5% worked full-time (DOL, 2010). Women are now slightly more than 50% of the U.S. workforce (Harrington, Van Deusen, & Ladge, 2010).

Couples in which both partners work, commonly referred to as dual-career or dual-earner couples, have become the norm in the US. Galinsky, Aumann, and Bond (2008) reported that in 2008, 79% of married/partnered employees lived in dual-earner couples. In more than 70% of two parent households with children, both parents now work outside of the home (Harrington et al., 2010). In addition to the influx of women into the workplace and the prevalence of dual career couples, rising divorce rates have contributed to a growth in the number of single parent households. In 1960, 9% of children under the age of 18 lived in a single parent household compared to 27% of children under the age of 18 by 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

As a result of these changes in the demographics of the American workforce, work-life programs and policies have been implemented in some corporate workplaces across the US. since the 1970s, purportedly to better address employees' needs (Quinn, Lange, & Olswang, 2004). Popular employer-sponsored work-life programs include telecommuting, in which employees work from home; flexible leave programs in which employees receive a pool of leave that they can use for vacation or sick time as they deem appropriate; flexible work schedules; and

job sharing, in which two employees typically split the responsibilities of one position. Other work-life programs also include onsite childcare, dependent-care, and eldercare supports (Quinn et al., 2004). Work-life balance policies have been found to improve employee productivity, engagement, commitment, and retention in the corporate workplace (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Colley, 2010; Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Porter & Ayman, 2010).

Despite these policy developments and changes in the demographics of the American workforce over the last 50 years, many workplaces remain relatively unchanged in their expectations for employees and their conception of the ways in which employees will accomplish work. Many workplaces remain organized around “the ideal of a worker who works full time and overtime and takes little or no time off” and there is a sense that employers are entitled to workers with limited responsibilities outside of the workplace (Williams, 2000, p. 1). Often, the ideal employee is viewed as one who places work before all other responsibilities in life. The American workplace remains focused on time; employees who work longer hours are viewed as team-players and more dedicated employees (Bailyn, 1993). Time spent at work is seen as an indicator of employee productivity and commitment (Bailyn, 1993). Many offices still have expectations in terms of employee face-time or physical presence during normal business hours, despite the fact that technology has made the necessity of working the typical nine to five schedule obsolete (Allen, 2008; Bailyn, 1993; Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000).

While some organizations might tout their work-life policies in order to recruit employees, those employees who elect to take advantage of flexibility and to stagger their hours or to vary their schedules are sometimes viewed as less committed workers. The ideal worker

model that has prevailed and continues to linger in the American workplace exalts the employee who can compartmentalize work and life outside of work (Hewlett, 2007; Thompson, 2008). The shifting landscape of the American workforce accompanied by a lack of marked change in the workplace has created challenging conditions for many individuals as they try to balance work with their responsibilities outside of work while conforming to the ideal worker model.

Changing workforce demographics and employees' demands for flexibility have impacted U.S. workplaces, including the academy. However, while business and industry have increasingly adapted to employees' demands, the academy has been slower to do the same (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Grant, Kennelly, & Ward, 2000).

Work-Life Balance in the Academy

It took until the 1990s before researchers began to explore the topic of work-life balance in the academy (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a). Since then, most work-life studies of the academy have focused on the faculty experience. Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin (2000) conducted structured interviews with early career faculty from across the country and found that the percentage of new faculty who reported work-life as very stressful rose in the first five years on the job. Further, many new faculty worried about juggling competing priorities at work and reported a lack of time and an inability to balance the demands of their jobs with their personal lives. Workplace norms and subcultures pressure faculty to conform to the ideal worker model (Grant et al., 2000; Thompson, 2008).

Work-life policies are believed to be a way to remedy the structural inequities faced by female faculty and to improve the work experience for all faculty (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Mason & Goulden, 2004; Sallee, 2012). Researchers have concluded that the academy needs to expand its definition of flexibility in order to recruit and retain the best faculty (Bristol, Abbuhl,

Cappola, & Sonnad, 2008; Gappa et al., 2007; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Wolf-Wendel, Twombly, & Rice, 2003). Thus, the academy has begun to slowly adopt work-life policies for faculty (Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August, & Hamilton, 2005).

Despite these work-life developments for faculty, non-faculty employees comprise nearly half of today's workforce in the academy (Rhoades, 2007). While a large body of research has amassed regarding work-life balance for faculty, a much smaller pool of work has been devoted to research on all employees in the academy. Most of the work-life studies that include administrators explore the experiences of both faculty and staff at one institution and attempt to gauge which group of employees experiences greater conflict between their work and personal lives (Anderson, Morgan, & Wilson, 2002; Herman & Gyllstrom, 1977). Because these studies often are based on the experiences of faculty and staff at one institution, such studies typically present conflicting findings regarding which group of employees experiences greater conflict. Research on administrators is limited and has serious shortcomings.

Administrators play an important role in the work of the academy, performing much of the planning, decision-making, and goal-setting for each institution. The corporate world has adopted work-life policies as a way to improve the employee experience and to enhance workplace productivity and employee retention. Within the academy, work-life policies have been implemented to remedy structural inequities faced by female faculty. Yet, we know little about the need for or the existence of work-life policies for administrators (Lester & Sallee, 2009). What are the work-life balance experiences of administrators in the academy? Do administrators experience pressure to conform to the ideal worker model? As this segment of the academy's workforce continues to grow, it is vital that we know more about the work-life balance experiences of administrators because their experiences may have important implications

for productivity, retention, and the development of a more equitable work environment in the academy.

What is Work-Life Balance?

Over the last several decades, researchers in a variety of fields from management, to medicine, to psychology have reported on employee work-life balance. While some researchers used the term work-family balance, more recently, other researchers have coined the term work-life balance to recognize the wide variety of responsibilities that individuals hold outside of the workplace (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Although much has been written about work-life balance, there is no one accepted, clear definition of the concept in the literature or in practice (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Work-life balance remains ill-defined and abstract, perhaps in large part because the concept is an individually experienced and interpreted phenomenon. Each individual will perceive the optimal combination of work and responsibilities outside of work differently. Some individuals may be comfortable working 80 hours per week while juggling other outside commitments; others may be comfortable working fewer hours and dedicating more time to responsibilities outside of work (Ironson, 1992).

For this study, I defined work-life balance as the optimal blend of work and responsibilities outside of work that enabled an individual to feel that he/she led a satisfying, manageable life. Work encompassed any paid labor or activities that an individual performed for an organization while responsibilities outside of work, or the *life* in work-life balance, included a variety of activities such as household chores, commitments to family and friends, personal interests, and social activities. Although work-life balance is an individually interpreted concept, it merits investigation because individuals who do not possess a satisfactory level of work-life balance have been found to experience job burnout and stress which impacts their personal lives

as well as their employers through lower workplace productivity and decreased work satisfaction (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987).

Who is an Administrator?

Administrators work in divisions and departments across the academy. They are present in the president's office, student affairs, athletics, development, academic departments, and other areas. While faculty have academic and instructional responsibilities, administrators are responsible for addressing students' non-instructional needs, engaging in day to day problem-solving, and facilitating long-term institutional planning.

While a meager amount of research regarding the work-life balance experiences of administrators exists, such studies often refer to all non-faculty employees as either staff or as administrators. I assert that there are actually two groups of non-faculty employees in the academy: administrators and staff. Studies that combine these two groups of non-faculty employees together and refer to them as one conflate the experiences of these employees who occupy fundamentally different jobs.

For this study, I defined an administrator as one whose position was exempt or salaried under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA requires employers to classify their employees' positions into two groups: exempt from overtime and not exempt from overtime. In order for a position to be classified as exempt, the position must have a significant level of discretion and responsibility for making independent judgments. Examples of titles of exempt positions vary on an institutional basis, however, job titles that are commonly classified as exempt may include director, assistant director, or manager. Non-exempt or hourly paid staff positions, in contrast, do not require significant levels of discretion or independent decision-making. Examples include secretarial and clerical positions. Expectations for exempt and non-

exempt employees and their job duties vary significantly. Exempt employees are not compensated if they work more than the standard number of full-time hours per week designated by the institution; they are expected to do what is necessary to accomplish their work. Exempt employees also have responsibility for more of the professional, strategic work of the institution.

Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, and Stough (2001) defined the non-faculty employees in their study as general, non-academic staff who held positions in academic support, administrative support, library, and technical areas. It is unclear whether Gillespie et al. only interviewed support employees or if higher level decision-makers also were included in the study. Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, Hapuarachchi, and Boyd (2003) defined the general staff in their study as employees in professional, administrative, technical, and cleaning or trades occupations. It appears that both of these studies included exempt and non-exempt, non-faculty employees but neither study clearly described which non-faculty employee group or groups were involved.

Since administrators, or exempt employees, perform strategic work and fewer finite, routine clerical tasks than non-exempt staff, it seems logical to hypothesize that their work-life experiences may be very different from those of non-exempt staff. Further, since the nature of the work performed by administrators differs dramatically from the work performed by faculty, we also can reason that the work-life balance experiences of administrators and faculty may differ. If workplace norms and subcultures impact the corporate employee experience and the faculty experience in the academy, do they also impact administrators' experiences and perceptions of the ideal worker?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the work-life balance experiences of administrators at one institution of higher education and how those experiences varied based on workplace norms and subcultures as measured by administrators' perceptions. Workplace norms were defined as the behaviors endorsed by the culture of the organization (Bess & Dee, 2008). Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood, and Lambert (2007) suggested that work-life research needs to move beyond the individual level to a greater examination of work-life at the group, department, or organizational level. Little is known about how perceptions of work-life balance vary across departments and divisions within institutions. In order to assess how workplace norms and subcultures regarding work-life balance differed for administrators across one institution of higher education, I solicited participation from two very different groups of administrators—those who worked in the Division of Finance and Technology and those who worked in the Division of Student Affairs.¹

Findings from research on the corporate world show that employees often feel compelled to conform to the expectations of the ideal worker model which impacts the ways in which they experience work-life balance (Bailyn, 1993; Thompson, 2008; Williams, 2000). I elected to include administrators who worked in Finance and Technology in this study because those workers occupied the positions in the academy that were the most comparable to those in the corporate world. The job responsibilities of an accountant, for example, are similar regardless of whether that individual works in the academy or in the corporate world. In this study, Finance and Technology administrators performed work that involved accounting, budgeting, website design, and information technology systems administration.

¹ Hereafter, the term *Finance* will be used to refer to participants from the Division of Finance and Technology who have a specialization in finance; the term *Technology* will refer to participants with a specialization in IT; and the term *Student Affairs*, will be used to refer to those participants from the Division of Student Affairs.

In contrast, student affairs professionals face different job demands based upon the student-oriented nature of their jobs and duties. Student affairs administrators work in positions that are unique to higher education; their positions rarely exist in organizations outside of the academy (Winston, Creamer, & Miller, 2001). Student affairs administrators are deeply involved in the day to day lives of students. Student Affairs administrators in this study performed work related to student housing, academic advising, career and personal counseling, and student activities. As previous researchers have found, these administrators often had to make themselves available to students by working evening and weekend hours (Forney, Wallace-Schutzman, & Wiggers, 1982; Lorden, 1998).

The very different jobs and workplace contexts for administrators in Finance and Technology and in Student Affairs enabled me to explore how administrators with jobs that were similar to those in the corporate world fared in terms of their work-life balance, and how administrators with student-oriented jobs that were unique to higher education experienced work-life balance in the academy. Through these two groups of participants, I investigated how administrators understood work-life balance at one institution and how their experiences compared and contrasted based on workplace norms, divisional subcultures, and ideal worker expectations.

Research Questions

Through this study, I explored two major research questions. Selection criteria for the research questions are described in greater detail in Chapter III.

1. How do Finance and Technology and Student Affairs administrators describe their work-life balance experience at Plains University?

2. How does an administrator's understanding of workplace norms and ideal worker expectations in his/her division impact his/her work-life balance experience and behavior? How do the work-life balance perspectives of administrators who work in Finance and Technology diverge and converge with those of administrators who work in Student Affairs?

The Study

Plains University is a private, doctoral-granting institution in the Northeast. I selected Plains University as the research site for this study because the number of work-life policies in existence at the university averaged those at a typical doctoral-granting institution (Hollenshead et al., 2005). In order to understand administrators' experiences and perspectives on work-life balance, I designed a qualitative study that utilized constructivist grounded theory. As described in the Chapter III, constructivist grounded theory maintains that theory must be developed based on participants' perspectives or existing grounded theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The ideal worker model was used as a starting point to generate theory and subsequently, as theory developed, as a lens to understand workplace norms and subcultures in Finance and Technology and in Student Affairs. However, I also remained open to other theories as they emerged from the data.

I recruited participants from the Division of Finance and Technology and the Division of Student Affairs at Plains University. Through interviews, I constructed an understanding of participants' work-life balance experiences as administrators. I analyzed and coded the interviews through an iterative process as new themes emerged from the data and from the literature.

The Researcher

Use of constructivist grounded theory required me to examine my own presuppositions about the topic of work-life balance in the academy prior to beginning the study. My interest in this area emerged from my strong belief in the importance of both family and work and my own experiences balancing work with my life outside of work as an administrator in the academy. I chose to build a career in the academy because I believe in the importance of higher education. I also was initially attracted to employment in the academy because of its general reputation as a good work environment with generous benefits and shorter work hours. After seven years at postsecondary institutions, however, the higher education workplace did not seem as flexible or as work-life balance friendly as I once thought that it was or as I think that it has the potential to be. My belief in the importance of work-life balance and the lack of research regarding work-life balance for administrators motivated me to study this topic.

Significance of the Study

Although many work-life studies focus on the experiences of parents in the workplace, work-life balance is an issue for more than just employees who have children (Harrington et al., 2010; Sullivan, Hollenshead, & Smith, 2004; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a, 2005). Every individual, at some point in his/her life, is likely to have responsibilities outside of the workplace that will distract him/her and will require a significant time commitment. Two out of every five employees, both male and female, report problems managing the conflicting demands of work and their life outside of work (Raabe, 1997).

A small body of literature has explored work-life balance for administrators, however, this work tends to offer limited insight into how administrators experience work-life balance. Further, researchers typically lump all non-faculty employees together without acknowledging

the inherent differences in the types of work performed by non-faculty employees who work in non-exempt positions and non-faculty employees who work in exempt positions. In 1970, faculty were two-thirds of the professional employees at most institutions of higher education in the US, but by 2000, their representation had shrunken to 53% of professional employees as the number of non-faculty employees increased (Rhoades, 2007). Despite rapid growth in the number of administrators on campuses, the higher education literature has failed to recognize or to investigate this new cadre of professionals (Rhoades, 2007). These professionals merit investigation because they account for an increasing proportion of the academy's workforce and they are active in the production of education. This study addresses a gap in the existing research by offering a new definition of an administrator as an exempt employee and provides an important look at how this essential and growing group of employees experiences work-life balance.

Administrators are the backbone of institutions, handling the day to day operations and problems as well as long-term strategic planning. As tenure-track faculty jobs shrink on campuses across the country, it is important that we know more about the growing administrative component of the academy's workforce. Since faculty and administrators perform different types of work, the work-life balance experiences of administrators will not necessarily be the same as those of the faculty. If researchers have found that the academy needs to expand its definition of flexibility in order to recruit and retain the best faculty, does it also need to do so in order to recruit and retain the best administrators? Investigation of administrators' work-life balance needs has important implications for administrators as individuals and for the institutions in which they work.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Work-life balance is a well-documented problem for employees in corporate America. Indeed, most of the research regarding work-life balance issues has focused on the employee experience in the corporate workplace. The academy has been much slower than the corporate world to study employee work-life balance and to realize the benefits of developing an environment that promotes employee work-life balance (Anderson et al., 2002). Researchers did not begin to study work-life balance in the academy until the late 1990s (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a). Since then, many studies have documented the tension between the demands of faculty members' personal and professional lives (Colley, 2010; Sallee, 2008; Sorcinelli & Near, 1989).

I begin this review of the literature with a brief discussion of the corporate work-life balance literature and the ways in which work-life balance has been found to be problematic for corporate employees. I then turn to a discussion of the faculty work-life balance literature and the problematic faculty work-life balance experience in the academy. Following a review of the literature regarding the corporate employee and faculty work-life balance experiences, I highlight the small body of work that has explored work-life balance for all employees in the academy. Appendix A summarizes the work-life balance studies featured in the Corporate Employees', Faculty, and Administrators' Work-Life Balance Experiences sections of this chapter.

Since researchers first began to investigate work-life balance in the academy, institutions have introduced work-life balance policies as a way to improve conditions for faculty and to remedy gender inequities. Although the purpose of this study was not to focus on work-life balance policies, many administrators, as described in Chapter IV, expressed a desire for such

policies. Therefore, in this review of the literature, I also examine the status of work-life balance policies in the academy as they pertain to all employees.

I close the chapter with a discussion of the theoretical frameworks in the work-life balance literature. I place special emphasis on the framework selected for this study, the ideal worker model. While other themes and topics have been addressed in the broader body of work-life literature, the topics addressed in this chapter were the most closely related to the purpose of this study—to explore the work-life balance experiences of administrators in the academy.

Corporate Employees' Work-Life Balance Experiences

In this section, I review the ways in which work-life balance has been found to be problematic for corporate employees. Because this dissertation focuses on work-life balance in the academy, specifically for administrators, I only briefly discuss work-life balance research in the corporate environment. The problems that such employees face, however, led me to question whether administrators who work in the academy in jobs that are similar to those in the corporate world encounter similar work-life balance issues; hence, the exploration of the experiences of administrators who work in Finance and Technology in this study.

The body of the literature on the work-life balance experiences of corporate employees is so vast that studies have employed a variety of methods to explore the topic. Both quantitative and qualitative studies have examined whether employees experience conflict between their personal and professional lives. Matos and Galinsky (2011) analyzed data from the 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce and the 2008 National Study of Employers to draw conclusions about work-life balance for employees across four industries: health services; hospitality, restaurant, and tourism; manufacturing; and retail. They found that the majority of employees, 60-69%, reported that they lacked time for themselves and for their spouses/partners.

Fully 71-75% of employees with children reported experiencing a shortage of time. Across all industries, a little more than one-third of employees reported that they had to choose between advancing their career and devoting attention to their personal life.

Matos and Galinsky (2011) also found that employees who were employed in flexible work environments reported that they had greater amounts of time to spend with their spouses/partners and children. Research by Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) substantiates this finding; they surveyed 860 employed business school alumni from two institutions in an attempt to investigate the relationship between work and home for corporate employees. Respondents, particularly those who were parents, reported a lack of time for family. Those who worked for employers that they identified as family-friendly, however, reported lower levels of conflict between their personal and professional lives. Friedman and Greenhaus concluded that support at home and family-friendly workplaces can help to ease work-life integration.

Winslow (2005) analyzed data from a sample of respondents from the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey and the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce survey. All of the respondents whose data were included in Winslow's analysis were between the ages of 18 and 65 and were married or the parent of a child younger than age 18. Work-family conflict was measured by the question, "How much would you say your job and your family life interfere with each other?" Winslow (2005) found that the mean level of reported work-life conflict was higher in 1997 than in 1977. Conflict was most acute for respondents who were parents.

While quantitative studies like those by Matos and Galinsky (2011), Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), and Winslow (2005) are useful in that they affirm the existence of work-life balance problems for employees in the corporate world, they provide little information regarding how employees experience work-life balance or what types of specific problems they face. The

quantitative body of work-life balance research has been criticized for an overreliance on self-reported survey data (Barnett, 1998; Zedeck, 1992). Quantitative data do not reveal the ways in which individuals “understand and negotiate the intersections between work and home life” (Emslie & Hunt, 2009, p. 154). Further, some quantitative studies, like Winslow’s, continue to measure the relationship between respondents’ personal and professional lives as a single construct despite the fact that research has shown that the relationship is multidimensional (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Qualitative studies of the personal and professional lives of corporate employees seek to understand employees’ experiences balancing work with their lives outside of the workplace and employ a more inductive approach. Emslie and Hunt (2009) conducted 23 semi-structured interviews with men and women between the ages of 50 and 52 who worked in a variety of occupations including IT, nursing, engineering, and media. Emslie and Hunt sought to understand how both men and women balanced paid work with other areas of their lives. They found that work-life balance was problematic for men and women but that work-life balance issues extended over a longer period of time in women’s lives than in men’s lives. Harrington, Van Deusen, and Ladge (2010) also conducted semi-structured interviews with employees who worked in a variety of professions. Harrington et al. limited their study to fathers with children under the age of five and found that half of their participants found it difficult to juggle work with family. Qualitative methods enable researchers to understand what techniques corporate workers employ as they attempt to integrate their personal lives with their professional lives. They also allow researchers to conduct exploratory research on different segments of the corporate population to understand the experiences of these groups.

Quantitative and qualitative research has documented that work-life balance is problematic for corporate employees. However, work-life balance research on the corporate workplace, as depicted in the preceding studies, often draws conclusions from studies of employees across different industries. While such research offers insight into broad workplace trends, Anderson, Morgan, and Wilson (2002) noted that we know little about the work-life experiences of employees by industry. Varied organizational cultures exist across industries. Thus, employees in different industries may experience different work-life balance problems. These cultures make the validity of extending conclusions from the corporate workplace to the academy questionable (Anderson et al., 2002). In the succeeding section, I describe research regarding the faculty work-life balance experience in the academy.

Faculty Work-Life Balance Experiences

While the preceding studies concluded that work-life balance is problematic for corporate employees, other research has examined the specific ways in which work-life balance is problematic for faculty. Most studies that examine the faculty work-life balance experience do so through the use of qualitative methods. Qualitative methods enable researchers to explore how and why work-life balance is problematic for faculty. Qualitative methods give participants a voice and allow them to describe their experience in rich detail (Armenti, 2004).

Quantitative research in the area of faculty work-life balance tends to focus on outcomes (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a). However, the intersection of a faculty member's personal and professional life is complex and quantitative methods can ignore the totality of a participant's experience (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004a). Further, structural and contextual differences within and across departments and institutions can shape faculty members' work experiences (Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006). Qualitative research is uniquely positioned to explore these differences.

In order to highlight the particular challenges that faculty face as they balance their work with their lives outside of the workplace, this section focuses solely on findings from qualitative studies.

As more women enter the academy and assume faculty positions, more women are choosing, or perhaps being forced to choose by their biological clocks, to combine work and children (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004b). Some researchers, like Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004a) have focused exclusively on the experiences of female faculty and documented the challenges that female faculty face as they balance their professional and parental roles. Ward and Wolf-Wendel interviewed 29 female faculty from nine research universities. All of the study participants had children under the age of five and were assistant professors or recently promoted associate professors. Ward and Wolf-Wendel found that the women in their study felt that their jobs were never-ending; they were always under pressure to produce and publish. Participants maintained a difficult yet often satisfying balance between work and home. The quality of the participant's faculty role was an important aspect of her ability to balance; flexible work environments with realistic expectations and requirements made a difference in women's ability to balance the competing demands of the academy and motherhood.

In a 2006 study, Wolf-Wendel and Ward studied how the work-life balance experiences of female assistant professors varied by institutional type. Through interviews with 117 faculty who had children under the age of five, they found that the type of institution at which the women were employed impacted their academic work requirements and their job flexibility. Participants who worked at research institutions were under greater pressure to research, publish, and teach than women at other institutions. Most of the participants were conflicted about where and how to spend their time.

While both of these studies provide important information about the experiences of female assistant professors in the academy, they offer no information about the experiences of female faculty of other ranks such as full professors, visiting faculty, and adjunct faculty. There is a dearth of literature on this topic. Indeed, findings from Emslie and Hunt's (2009) study of corporate employees ages 50 to 52 offer clues that female faculty may face work-life balance challenges throughout their lives, not just as assistant professors, although it is unclear whether those findings are directly translatable from the corporate workplace to the academy.

The preceding studies also fail to address the experiences of male faculty in the academy. With the rise of dual-career couples across the country, 80% of all faculty today have spouses who work outside of the home, a percentage comparable to that of the general population (Wolf-Wendel et al., 2003). This development has created work-life balance challenges for both male and female faculty. Some qualitative researchers have investigated the work-life balance experiences of both male and female faculty.

Sorcinelli and Near (1989) explored the relationship between faculty members' academic and personal lives. Sorcinelli and Near interviewed 112 faculty at a large research university and found that 50% of male and female faculty experienced stress when balancing time and their families with their careers. Faculty of all ranks reported a lack of time for exercise, hobbies, and community activities. Sorcinelli and Near concluded that the incidence of spillover between work and responsibilities outside of work should not be ignored. The seamlessness between work and home life for faculty can have a tendency to make work seem all-consuming. Although Sorcinelli and Near only interviewed faculty at one large research institution, they included faculty of all ranks in their study. The findings reveal that work-life balance may be problematic for all faculty, not just for junior faculty or for female faculty.

Later studies built upon the work of Sorcinelli and Near (1989) through interviews with faculty who worked at varied types of institutions across the country. Rice et al. (2000) conducted structured interviews with over 350 faculty from a range of institutional types and disciplines. Grant, Kennelly, and Ward (2000) interviewed faculty at doctoral-granting institutions across the country as a part of a larger survey of 602 faculty. While Grant et al. failed to specify the number of faculty that they interviewed, their research examined how scientific careers in the academy impacted faculty members' personal lives. The work of Rice et al. and Grant et al. revealed that faculty across the country struggled to balance their personal lives with their professional careers in the academy. The faculty in Rice et al.'s study reported that they lacked an integrated life and constantly juggled competing priorities. Faculty in Grant et al.'s study reported considerable conflict between their careers and their lives outside of the workplace. They felt that their jobs were greedy and that they had to make their personal lives fit within the norm of an undivided commitment to scientific work.

These studies reveal that male and female faculty of all ranks struggle to balance their personal and professional lives. A large body of research regarding work-life balance in the academy has accumulated. The majority of the research, however, has focused on the faculty experience. In fact, researchers have encouraged institutions to consider the varied needs of faculty and to engage in work-life policy design for faculty. Perna (2001) advised, "by adopting and encouraging the use of policies, practices, and initiatives that recognize that many faculty are also spouses and parents, colleges and universities will create an environment that fosters the success of both women and men faculty" (p. 608). While the current body of research has documented important findings regarding the quality of life for faculty in higher education,

Perna's conclusion exemplifies the scope of the work-life balance research in the academy and its nearly singular focus on faculty.

Relatively little is known about how non-faculty employees within the academy balance work and life outside of the workplace. The paucity of research regarding non-faculty employees, in general, and administrators, specifically, raises questions about the work-life balance experiences of non-faculty employees in higher education. The work-life balance experiences of faculty have been well-studied but only a small body of literature explores the work-life balance experiences of administrators. This is the research gap that my work addresses.

Administrators' Work-Life Balance Experiences

Administrators, as stated in Chapter I, comprise a growing minority of professionals on college and university campuses. "At the national level, one sees the rise of managerial professionals...when the analysis moves to the campus, one sees that the 'periphery' has numerically become the centre" (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002, p. 24). Despite the rise of administrators on campuses, work-life research on this group of employees is limited and possesses serious shortcomings.

Bailey (2008) conducted qualitative interviews with nine occupational deans at community colleges in the Midwest to understand how the deans managed their work and personal lives, the issues that they faced, and whether they struggled to manage their multiple roles. Many of the deans reported tension between their personal and professional lives, however, the study's findings are limited due to the small pool of participants and the representation of only one level of administration. Thus, the findings have limited applicability to other administrative positions.

Other researchers have studied the work-life balance experiences of both faculty and non-faculty employees in the academy. Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) surveyed 500 employees in varied faculty and non-faculty positions at a major Midwestern university in an effort to explore role conflict, theorizing that individuals may have difficulty juggling the demands of multiple roles in their lives. They found that employees in non-teaching and administrative positions experienced the most conflict between work and family and work and personal life. Herman and Gyllstrom's research and Bailey's (2008) research offer insights regarding the experiences of administrators and the difficulties that they face balancing their lives at work with their lives outside of work. While the utility of these studies as they related to this research was limited, their focus on the work-life experiences of non-faculty employees provided a foundation for my exploration of the topic.

Other researchers have studied work-life balance for faculty and non-faculty employees but have done so with more of a psychological focus on job stress and strain. Gillespie et al. (2001) concluded that both administrators and faculty in Australian higher education may share the same set of causes, consequences, and moderators of occupational stress, despite the vast differences in each group of employees' job roles. All of the participants in Gillespie et al.'s study indicated that stress in the workplace had impacted them both personally and professionally. Half of the participants described the ways in which stress had impacted their family life as they forewent time with their families in order to meet the expectations required of them in their jobs. Other staff reported that workplace stress had negatively impacted their job performance, relationships with their coworkers, commitment to the institution, and willingness to assume additional responsibility (Gillespie et al., 2001). Many participants also reported

feeling less goodwill towards management than they had previously felt; they adopted the opinion that their employer was not a caring employer (Gillespie et al., 2001).

Winefield et al. (2003) surveyed 9,732 employees at 17 Australian universities. Winefield et al. found that academic staff showed greater levels of psychological strain and lower levels of job satisfaction than general staff. Winefield et al.'s and Gillespie et al.'s (2001) research were based on studies of the academy in other countries and measured occupational stress. While job stress is one component of work-life balance, there is a dearth of research regarding the overall status of work-life balance for administrators. Further, the focus of two of the four studies identified in this section was on Australian higher education. This gives the results limited applicability to the academy in the US.

On the whole, there is little research on administrators in higher education and even less research that is exclusively dedicated to exploring work-life balance for this growing segment of the academy's workforce. Research on the status of administrators in the academy is limited and would benefit from greater quantitative and qualitative study. The succeeding section depicts the status of work-life policies in the academy in order to explore whether institutions have responded to demands for faculty work-life policies by implementing and adopting policies geared towards all employees.

Work-Life Policies in the Academy

Policy Background

In 1993, the passage of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) marked a stated change in the beliefs of the federal government regarding work and family in the US (Quinn et al., 2004). The FMLA established a minimum baseline of family leave policies that employers with more than 50 employees were required to follow; employers had to offer employees who had

worked for the employer for a specific amount of time up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child, to care for a seriously ill family member, or to care for one's self (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005). As a result, many colleges and universities were bound to provide employees with family leave. Suddenly, the academy needed to recognize an issue that historically had received little attention (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005).

Following the passage of the FMLA, work-life policies were introduced in the academy as a way to address and to alleviate gender and structural inequities for faculty. Some institutions adopted work-life policies beyond the required federal FMLA on their own accord. Typical work-life policies include privileges designed for new parents such as paid maternity or paternity leave and paid adoption leave. Other work-life programs also include onsite childcare, dependent-care, and elder-care supports (Quinn et al., 2004). Popular work-life programs also include telecommuting, flexible leave programs, and job sharing. The establishment of a part-time tenure track and work-life policies designed to create flexibility in the tenure process are thought to encourage and to retain female academics (Drago & Williams, 2000; Wolf-Wendel & Ward, 2006).

Although work-life policies have achieved a presence in the academy in recent years, many institutions offer only a limited number of work-life policies, if any (Hollenshead et al., 2005). In Hollenshead, Sullivan, Smith, August and Hamilton's (2005) study, 25% of institutions offered paid maternity leave and 31% offered employee assistance programs (EAPs) which provide free counseling over the phone or in person to employees on a variety of topics.

While some institutions have implemented work-life policies, others continue to offer employees little assistance beyond the federally required FMLA provisions. These institutions have done little else to help their workforce balance their personal and professional lives (Ward

& Wolf-Wendel, 2005). Balancing the responsibilities of work and life has historically been the responsibility of the employee, not the employer (Bailyn, 1993), but the changing dynamics of work and the diversity of the 21st century workforce may necessitate that institutions of higher education adopt meaningful work-life policies (Bailyn, 1993; Gappa et al., 2007; Williams, 2000).

Policy Research

Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2004b) reported that the existing policy research on work-life balance in the academy typically takes one of three angles: an examination of policies that have been implemented, an analysis of the extent to which such policies have been and continue to be utilized, and recommendations for policy improvement. The following sections explore work-life policy existence and policy utilization. This review does not detail the literature that describes work-life policy recommendations because few studies actually explore whether the often proposed recommendations such as improving policy communication and educating institutional officers actually facilitate the desired change in policy participation. More longitudinally designed research and a greater number of follow up studies would improve the literature on work-life policy recommendations.

Policy existence and examination. Much of the existing policy research recounts the different types of work-life programs that institutions can offer to their employees. When researchers study work-life programs in the academy, they characteristically survey different institutions to determine the number and type of policies in place at the typical institution. This literature tends to focus strictly on policy counts and types of policies, with a particular emphasis on faculty-oriented policies.

Hollenshead et al. (2005) surveyed 648 institutions across the country about their work-life policies to assess whether the policies were formally written or existed as informal practices, as well as eligibility and entitlement criteria for the policies. Hollenshead et al. found that research institutions offered the greatest number of work-life policies at 2.99 policies per campus, while community colleges offered .80 policies per campus. Sallee's (2008) research concurred; over the last several years, work-life policies have become more common at research universities but are not widespread amongst community colleges. While research institutions are more likely to offer work-life policies than other types of institutions, merely offering the policies does not guarantee that faculty will know of their existence. Sallee surveyed faculty at one community college and found that 47% of respondents were unaware of the existence of any type of work-life policy or program at their institution.

One of the most common work-life policies is a stop the tenure clock policy for faculty that allows new parents to pause the tenure clock for up to one year, one to three times, while on the tenure-track. The faculty member's tenure application is then evaluated as though he had a normal probationary period. Hollenshead et al. (2005) found that 43% of participating institutions in their national survey offered this policy. Doctoral universities were more likely than comprehensive or baccalaureate colleges to offer stop the tenure clock policies (Thornton, 2005).

Many of the work-life policies in existence appear to have been designed to be gender neutral, like tenure clock stop policies (Hollenshead et al., 2005). Sullivan, Hollenshead, and Smith (2004) surveyed 256 predominantly four-year institutions and found that only 25% of institutions had separate maternity leave policies for women that enabled them to take leave without using sick time, vacation time, or disability leave. Yoest's (2004) nationwide survey of

paid parental leave for faculty confirmed a lack of paid maternity leave; 8% of institutions offered paid leave only for women. Eighteen percent of institutions offered a gender-neutral parental leave policy (Yoest, 2004). Clearly, the majority of institutions do not offer female-oriented policies, like paid maternity leave. Despite the lack of female-centric policies and the focus on gender neutrality, a stigma sometimes surrounds work-life policies; the perception that work-life policies are just for female faculty impacts their utilization by both men and women, a topic which is explored in the succeeding section.

Although the research on policy existence tends to be quantitative and conducted through national surveys, such methods usually are appropriate for the aims of this research. These studies are useful in that they help researchers and the academy to understand the prevalence of work-life programs and policies; they have given researchers a strong understanding of the work-life policy landscape in higher education across the country and by institutional type. Because of their singular focus on quantifying work-life policies, however, these studies have provided little information regarding the details surrounding the policies or their success. Such research also has ignored administrators; studies do not discern whether the work-life policies offered by an institution are available to the broader university community or if they are designed exclusively for faculty. The next major theme in the policy research, policy usage, provides greater detail about the popularity of work-life policies and highlights some of the problems with the existing policies.

Policy usage. Many researchers have documented the reticence that faculty show towards taking advantage of work-life policies (Finkel, Olswang, & She, 1994; Grant et al. 2000; Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005). Some faculty fear that use of the policies will hinder them professionally or damage their reputation as a scholar. Some

institutions also are hesitant to implement work-life policies for fear that they will privilege one group of employees over another, such as faculty with children over childless faculty. Other institutions are concerned that the policies will limit their flexibility to respond to particular circumstances; thus, some institutions prefer to address situations on a case by case basis instead of with a formal, written policy (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004b).

A substantial amount of qualitative research, along with a lesser amount of survey-based research, has shown that the mere existence of work-life policies in the academy is not enough to ensure their utilization or their success (Colley, 2010; Poelmans, Patel, & Beham, 2008). Researchers who are interested in policy utilization sometimes use surveys to understand how many faculty at a particular institution utilize or would utilize work-life policies and interviews to explore why utilization of the policies is low. Sallee (2008) surveyed faculty at a community college and found that only 19% of the respondents reported utilizing work-life policies. Finkel, Olswang, and She (1994) surveyed faculty at one large, public, research university and found that although support for childbirth and infant care leave was strong, only 30% of women who gave birth while working at the institution took the full amount of paid leave offered by the university; 40% took no paid leave at all. Clearly, despite their desire for work-life balance and flexible leave policies, something holds faculty back from fully participating in the policies. Surveys can neither fully account for, nor explain, this phenomenon.

In their qualitative study of work-life policy usage, Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2005) interviewed 30 female faculty with children under the age of five at research institutions and found that many of the institutional work-life policies that they examined were vague and that several of the faculty in their study did not know what leave policies were available to them, if any. The female faculty who were aware of the existence of such policies at their institutions

expressed concern regarding whether using the policies would penalize them in terms of their reputation as a scholar or impact their success when they applied for tenure. In a case study at the University of Washington, interview participants noted that their institution failed to effectively communicate work-life policies; faculty did not know that the policies existed or knew about them but did not fully understand the details (Quinn et al., 2004). Grant et al. (2000) found that faculty in their study relied less on formal policies and more on department supervisors for flexibility; faculty with children talked about the extreme balancing act in which they had to engage in order to find success in the workplace and at home. Qualitative research is particularly helpful in enabling researchers to understand why work-life policy utilization rates at a particular institution may be low.

Other researchers have found that fear and stigma can sometimes surround work-life policies (Gappa et al., 2007; Mason & Ekman, 2007). Finkel et al.'s (1994) work showed that faculty believed that taking advantage of such policies would damage their careers. Quinn, Lange, and Olswang (2004) concluded that if work-life policies are not widely used, stigma may surround their use, which can further discourage participation. Overt disapproval and subtle cues can make even the best policies off-limits to ambitious, talented employees (Hewlett, 2007). Because of the long entrenched ideal worker model, as described in the following section of this chapter, employees often are concerned that use of work-life policies will damage their professional reputation; they worry that they will be perceived as less committed to the institution (Hewlett, 2007; Thompson, 2008; Williams, 2000). Faculty are hesitant to utilize work-life programs due to fear that they will be passed over for tenure, future promotions, and other opportunities (Finkel et al., 1994; Mason & Ekman, 2007; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2005).

Since work-life policies have been in effect at some institutions for several years, the body of research on policy usage has been beneficial in that it has drawn attention to some of the shortcomings of the policies for faculty and has led researchers to call for institutions to further study the ways in which work-life policies are utilized and by whom. Only Quinn et al. (2004) mentioned that work-life policies were available to all employees on the University of Washington's campus, not just faculty, but did not specify or discuss which policies were available to administrators. The current body of research on work-life policy usage in the academy neither focuses on nor addresses the needs of anyone other than faculty.

Together, the literature on work-life policy existence and usage in the academy reveals that we know little about the prevalence or usage of such policies by administrators. This information would enrich the literature. In the following section of this chapter, I outline three of the theoretical frameworks used in the work-life balance literature in order to rationalize the framework that I selected for this study, the ideal worker model.

Theory in Work-Life Balance Research

Work-life researchers typically utilize different theoretical or ideological frameworks based on the goals of their study. Researchers who seek to measure the incompatibility between personal life and professional life often employ role conflict theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Other researchers, who believe in the benefits of personal and professional roles, make use of expansionist theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). In this section, I briefly outline the tenets of each of these theories and highlight several studies that have employed these theories. I then describe the ideal worker model, the use of this framework in current work-life balance research, and the applicability of this model to the present study.

Role Conflict Theory

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work and family conflict as “a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (p. 77). For example, the expectations associated with an individual’s role as a supervisor in the workplace may conflict with the demands of his/her role as a parent. In their review of the literature on role conflict, Greenhaus and Beutell noted that there were two common forms of work-life role conflict. Time-based conflict in one role can make it difficult to meet the expectations of another role. Strain-based conflict can be identified through symptoms such as tension, anxiety, fatigue, and irritability.

Surveys are one of the most common methods that researchers utilize to test role conflict theory. Nair and Gaither (1999) surveyed 68 faculty who worked in a college of pharmacy at a large Midwestern university and found that the faculty experienced both time-based conflict and strain-based conflict but most experienced more strain-based conflict than time-based conflict. A majority of faculty experienced symptoms of irritability and distraction when they arrived home from work. Longer amounts of time spent at work were associated with increased levels of role conflict (Nair & Gaither, 1999). O’Laughlin and Bischoff (2005) surveyed 264 faculty in tenure-track positions at institutions across the country and concluded that work hours significantly predicted faculty stress and role conflict.

In one of the few studies of role conflict in the academy that included non-faculty employees, Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) surveyed 500 employees of a major midwestern university and found that women experienced greater role conflict than men. The number of roles held by the individual also increased his/her role conflict. Faculty reported the least job-related tension of all participants while academic professionals reported the most job-related

tension. Although Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) failed to define the employee to whom they referred as an academic professional, their research provides an indication that administrators in the academy may struggle to balance life at work with life outside of work. Few studies, however, have examined the application of role conflict theory to administrators' personal and professional lives.

Role conflict theory was not the primary theoretical model used to examine work-life balance for administrators in this study, however, as described in the succeeding chapters, it was applicable to this study since some participants expressed feeling overwhelmed by the multiple roles that they held. The increased, unhealthy pressure that arises from role conflict can make it difficult for individuals to successfully perform in all of the roles that they occupy.

Expansionist Theory

Role conflict has dominated much of the theory in work-life balance research (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). In recognition of this and the limiting nature of the theory, in the late 20th century and early 21st century, researchers also began to utilize a different theory that acknowledges the positive effects of multiple roles (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). In contrast to role conflict theory, expansionist theory claims that multiple roles can be beneficial to an individual as long as the time demands of the roles are not excessive; multiple roles can energize an individual (Lee & Phillips, 2006).

According to Greenhaus and Powell (2006), participation in multiple roles can have three positive outcomes for individuals. First, positive personal and professional life experiences can improve an individual's overall wellbeing, happiness, and life satisfaction. Second, participation in personal and professional roles can act as a buffer; success in one role may protect an individual from experiencing stress in another role or modify the individual's perception of stress

in another role. Third, experiences in one role can produce positive experiences in another. For example, individuals who learn the skill of patience in their parental role may apply the skill to their professional role and as a result become a better team player (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

Like researchers who study role conflict theory, researchers who study expansionist theory frequently employ surveys to test the theory. Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) surveyed 860 employed alumni from two business schools and found support for expansionist theory. “Work-family linkages can act as bridges that help people travel successfully in and between the two worlds...resources, involvement, and emotional gratification are derived from each role” (p. 8). Lee and Phillips (2006) analyzed survey data from 270 respondents at one institution of higher education. Lee and Phillips found evidence for expansionist theory but noted that the quality of the role occupied by an individual was an important predictor of the individual’s role conflict—more important than the number of roles held by that individual. Role quality also played a key part in allowing the female participants in Ward and Wolf-Wendel’s (2004a) to balance their personal and professional lives.

Several studies have examined the benefits of occupying multiple roles and found evidence for expansionist theory (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Lee & Phillips, 2006; Sieber, 1974). Expansionist theory, however, is a reactive theory, as it fails to provide information about how individuals proactively negotiate and shape their personal and professional lives (Clark, 2000). Multiple roles can be beneficial to an individual depending upon role quality, but we know little about how, specifically, individuals manage multiple roles. The ideal worker model described in the succeeding section offers a richer explanatory framework for investigating the research questions of this study.

Ideal Worker Model

Since this study neither sought to measure the amount of conflict between administrators' personal and professional lives nor attempted to measure the benefits of personal and professional roles, it employed a third ideological framework, the ideal worker model. The goal of this study was to examine how administrators experience work-life balance at one institution and how workplace norms impact that experience. Thus, as outlined below, the ideal worker model offered an initial lens through which I was able to examine these issues.

The ideal worker model was derived from the segmentation model. The segmentation model held that there was no relationship between work and non-work roles. Work and non-work roles did not influence one another. Researchers have since found evidence to disclaim the segmentation model (Barnett, 1998; Rothbard & Duma, 2006, Sorcinelli & Near, 1989). It is impossible for individuals to fully separate their work and non-work roles.

The ideal worker model that has prevailed and continues to linger in the American workplace is an example the segmentation model. The workplace is still organized around the ideal of a worker for whom employment is the only responsibility in his/her life (Bailyn, 1993; Bailyn, Drago, & Kochan, 2001). Thus, work is organized around traditional male life patterns of decades past in which the woman tended to responsibilities in the home (Williams, 2000).

Workplaces continue to be structured around the image of an ideal worker who starts to work in early adulthood and continues uninterrupted for forty years, taking no time off for child bearing or child rearing, supported by a spouse or family member who takes primary responsibility for family and community. (Bailyn et al., 2001, p. 6)

Historically, these patterns have discriminated against women in the workplace who must perform as ideal workers without a flow of family work from men or recognition of parental status (Williams, 2000). With the prevalence of dual-career couples today, however, the ideal worker model disadvantages both men and women. Men have been found to be dissatisfied with

the model and it no longer fits with the reality of today's workers' lives (Gappa et al., 2007; Williams, 2000). Although research has shown that individuals cannot fully separate their personal and professional lives, the model of an ideal worker who has few responsibilities outside of work persists in today's workplace.

While some organizations have adopted work-life balance policies in an attempt to help employees manage their personal and professional lives, many of the policies assume that individuals want to fit the ideal worker model but need assistance in order to juggle competing demands (Gappa et al., 2007). The results have been disappointing; the policies tend to be marginalized and those who take advantage of them are the exception, rather than the norm (Hewlett, 2007). If an organization's culture does not support work-life flexibility, despite the existence of work-life balance policies, employees may still feel pressure to conform to the ideal worker model (Thompson, 2008). According to Harrington and Ladge (2009), corporate cultures continue to value time spent at work over individual efforts which hampers the retention and promotion of women and other employees who demand greater flexibility over their schedules. This allows organizations to ignore the contributions of employees who may not put the organization before all needs but remain productive, valuable, reliable employees (Thompson, 2008).

Several researchers have examined the ideal worker model as understood by faculty in the academy. Much of the research employs qualitative methods to understand the experiences of female assistant professors and their perceptions of the relationship between children and tenure. Armenti (2004) conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews with 19 female professors at one institution and found that academic careers remained structured around a male lifestyle in which a stay at home wife tended to all familial concerns. Female participants

believed that the ideal faculty member devoted himself to his work with few other concerns in life. Despite increasing numbers of women in the academy, the structure of the academic career continues to be modeled around historical male life patterns; women have had to adopt these patterns. “Women professors must behave like men by conforming to the expectations of the university which assume that family commitments and biological differences should remain separate from academic careers” (Armenti, 2004, p. 78).

Grant et al. (2000) conducted interviews with female faculty at doctoral-granting institutions to examine how the structure of scientific academic careers impacted participants’ personal lives. Grant et al. found that careers in science in the academy demanded a faculty member’s full commitment. The timeline of those careers followed a male-centered model that failed to address familial responsibilities. Female faculty believed that having children was incompatible with an academic career in science. Grant et al. concluded that the structure of scientific academic careers “cumulatively disadvantages” women with families (p. 4). In a study of 117 female assistant professors with children age five and under, Wolf-Wendel and Ward (2006) concluded that the clockwork of the academic career was patterned around an ideal worker who was free from responsibilities outside of work.

While the preceding three studies examined the perspectives of female assistant professors, a limited number of studies have explored men’s perceptions of the ideal worker model. Sallee (2012) conducted interviews with 70 faculty fathers at four research universities. Sallee explored the problems that men faced navigating their personal responsibilities while conforming to the norms of the ideal worker model in the academy. Male participants talked about the strain that the time demands of their jobs and their responsibilities outside of work placed on them. They felt that ideal worker norms expected them to always be ready and able to

work and to have few responsibilities outside of the workplace. Thus, Sallee concluded that organizational structures and ideal worker norms prevented men from being as involved in their responsibilities outside of the workplace and in the home as they would have liked. These findings align with previous research by Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) and Williams (2000) who concluded that men are dissatisfied with the ideal worker model.

The studies outlined in this section are useful because they reveal that both male and female faculty in the academy are dissatisfied with the ideal worker model and the unrealistic expectations that it places upon them. They also highlight that the ideal worker model is still a reality in the workplace. Most of the studies, however, examined the experiences of either male or female faculty. We know little regarding the work-life balance experiences of administrators in the academy and whether the ideal worker model pertains to administrators.

Through this study, I advance the work-life literature in two ways. First, I examine work-life balance for administrators, using a clear definition of an administrator, in attempt to understand how this group of employees in the academy experiences work-life balance. Second, I employ the ideal worker model as an initial way to examine administrators' work-life balance experiences and behavior. I do so by recognizing that administrators are employees embedded within the larger organizational context of their department, division, and institution. Thus, I investigate whether and how workplace norms and ideal worker norms impact administrators' work-life balance experiences. In the following chapter, I outline the methods that I employed in this study to examine the research questions.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand the work-life balance experiences of administrators at Plains University and how workplace norms and the ideal worker model may influence that experience. I sought to answer the following research questions: (a) How do Finance and Technology and Student Affairs administrators describe their work-life balance experience at Plains University? (b) How does an administrator's understanding of workplace norms and ideal worker expectations in his/her division impact his/her work-life balance experience and behavior? How do the work-life balance perspectives of administrators who work in Finance and Technology diverge and converge with those of administrators who work in Student Affairs?

I designed a qualitative study at a doctoral-granting institution, Plains University, to answer the research questions. A total of 32 participants, 18 males and 14 females, shared their time, experiences, and perspectives through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. All participants were administrators between the ages of 25 and 60 who had worked at Plains for at least two years. I transcribed all of the interviews and uploaded them into a software program for analysis. I also coded and analyzed the interviews using the constant comparative method. I followed several steps to ensure the validity of the study's findings, including conducting member reflections. The study produced information regarding administrators' work-life balance experiences and the ways in which those experiences differed based on administrators' understanding of the ideal worker and departmental and divisional norms. In this chapter, I describe the methodology of the study in greater detail.

Design

I selected a qualitative design for this study since qualitative research is useful when there is a paucity of research in an area (Reddick, Rochlen, Grasso, Reilly, & Spikes, 2012).

Moreover, the goal of the study was to explore the ways in which administrators experienced and understood work-life balance in higher education and the goal of qualitative research is to “grasp the processes by which people construct meaning and to describe what those meanings are” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 43). Through qualitative methods, I was able to go beyond researching whether work-life balance was problematic for administrators and to construct how participants understood work-life balance in their own lives. Through interviews, I sought to understand participants’ opinions about their work-life balance and the ways in which participants’ interpretations of their work environment guided their understanding of work-life balance.

The study was grounded in the interpretive tradition, specifically, constructivist grounded theory. Constructivist grounded theory is a technique that is used to develop theory from existing grounded theories or from data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The approach “places priority on the phenomena of the study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants and other sources of data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130). Constructivist grounded theory maintains that the development of theory depends upon participants’ perspectives and the researcher’s interpretation of those perspectives. The researcher’s interpretation of those perspectives is informed by the researcher’s presuppositions and experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Through constructivist grounded theory, I explored how and why participants constructed meaning from a situation. While my own experiences undoubtedly influenced the ways in which I interpreted participants’ responses, I attempted to

build theory throughout the study by using the constant comparison method and cycling between data analysis and data collection (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

I utilized the ideal worker model as an initial way to frame participants' work-life balance experiences. According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), "if existing (grounded) theories seem appropriate to the area of investigation, then these may be *elaborated* and modified as incoming data are meticulously played against them" (p. 273). In order to stay true to the nature of grounded theory, I initially utilized the ideal worker model as a lens through which to view and to understand participants' experiences. However, I remained open to nuances in the model as they developed and to other theories as they emerged from the data that I collected since theory must be grounded through its relationship with data and developed over the course of the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). In order to allow theory to emerge and to evolve, I wrote thick descriptions of conceptual relationships and sought multiple perspectives while looking for patterns in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). As described in the data analysis section of this chapter, I collected, coded, and analyzed data and then decided what to data to collect next in order to develop theory as it emerged from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As data emerged, it both affirmed and enabled me to enhance the ideal worker model.

Research Site

I recruited participants from the population of administrators at one private, four-year institution in the Northeast, Plains University. Rhoades (2007) noted that across the higher education literature, there is a dearth of information on non-elite four-year schools including public comprehensive colleges and universities and private liberal arts institutions. The same is true of the work-life balance segment of the higher education literature; most researchers have focused on the experiences of faculty at research institutions. Fewer researchers have studied the

work-life balance experiences of employees across different types of institutions. Plains University is a doctoral-granting institution, thus, selection of this institution expands both the literature on work-life balance in the academy and the broader body of knowledge on non-elite four-year institutions.

In Hollenshead et al.'s (2005) study, doctoral-granting institutions offered 1.38 work-life policies on average; Plains University exceeded this average with two such policies. A broad search of the university's website and interviews with administrators revealed that the university offered an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or a hotline that any employee could call for resources related to childcare, eldercare, counseling, and financial problems. The Faculty Guide contained a one-time stop the tenure clock option. There were no formal policies for telecommuting, flexible work hours, or job sharing; there also were no maternity or paternity leave programs. I chose to further investigate Plains University, in part, because it seemingly typified the doctoral-granting institutions in Hollenshead et al.'s study. I also recognized, however, that Plains' policies, while typical in terms of policy count when compared to other doctoral-granting institutions, could hardly be described as generous with an EAP and a one-time faculty stop the tenure clock option. I wanted to learn more about how administrators balanced their personal and professional lives in this environment and whether organizational norms impacted the management of that balance.

Participants

I requested participation from male and female administrators at Plains University who were between the ages of 25 and 60 and had worked at the university for at least two years. I elected to interview administrators who were within the ages of 25 and 60 because those are the ages at which individuals often experience pressure to balance work with responsibilities outside

of work as their families expand and/or aging relatives require additional assistance. I chose to interview administrators who had worked at the university for at least two years because by that time, I expected that they would be familiar with the work-life policies that were available to them or at least possess an understanding of what type of behavior was viewed as acceptable within the division in which they worked with regard to balancing work with responsibilities outside of work.

To initially locate participants, I accessed the university's online organizational chart which identified exempt administrative positions and their incumbents. There were 84 administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology (46 male and 38 female) and there were 59 administrators in Student Affairs (25 male and 34 female). I used the organizational chart to assemble a list of names of all of the administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology and in the Division of Student Affairs. I then emailed five individuals on the list, at random, and requested their participation in the study. If I did not receive a response from an administrator after one week, I sent that individual a second email. If I still did not receive a response, I made a notation on my list and emailed another administrator; I tried to always have five email requests pending at any given time.

I chose to email five individuals at a time for two reasons. First, I wanted to make sure that I could interview each individual in a timely manner; I wanted to find a date for our interview that fit with the individual's schedule so I needed to keep my schedule relatively flexible. Second, conducting the interviews in cycles of five enabled me to review the demographics of my participant pool and emerging themes on a frequent basis. Once I had conducted about 10 interviews and logged demographic information about the participants, my

sampling became more purposeful. If I felt that I had spoken to a fair number of women in Student Affairs, for example, I emailed men who worked in Student Affairs.

After conducting about 10 interviews, I also realized that administrators' perceptions of their flexibility at Plains University were very supervisor-driven so if a participant mentioned that his/her supervisor required him/her to be present consistently during the university's standard operating hours, I returned to the organizational chart to find the name of the participant's supervisor. I then emailed the supervisor to try to schedule an interview so I could obtain his/her perspective on his/her employee's presence at work and compare and contrast that perspective with the employee's perspective. I continued to email administrators in Finance and Technology and in Student Affairs until additional data no longer enhanced the categories that I had developed and the data reached the point of saturation.

Using these strategies, I uncovered differences in the perspectives of administrators who worked in the Division of Finance and Technology. I saw differences emerge between administrators who worked in Finance and administrators who worked in Technology. There also were differences between individuals who worked in different areas of Technology. As I gathered conflicting data from administrators who worked in different areas of Technology, I returned to the organizational chart and purposefully recruited the colleagues of a participant to obtain their work-life perspectives. I methodically tried to work my way around an area and up the chain of supervisors so I could construct a better understanding of the dynamics within that area. As described in Chapter V, I found two very different environments in Technology, which I refer to as the IT creative area and the IT technical area. Administrators in the IT creative area performed work related to website design and instructional technology. Administrators in the IT technical area handled programming, systems, and networking. They were responsible for

maintaining Plains University's technological systems and ensuring that they functioned smoothly.

After finding success using the technique of working my way around an area and up the chain of supervisors in Technology, I followed it in Finance and in Student Affairs as I continued with my research. All of the strategies outlined in this section enabled me to develop a diverse pool of participants with varied perspectives. I was able to examine similarities and differences between and among groups of administrators in the same division and in different divisions. I also was able to examine similarities and differences between and among administrators in the same work area, like the IT technical area, and in different work areas. This helped me to discover different categories of data and to compare and contrast the properties of those categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Over a period of three months, I interviewed a total of 32 administrators from four areas of the university. Some administrators were satisfied with their work-life balance, others were not, and each had his own unique perspective on the topic. Table 1 provides an overview of administrator participation by work area; more detailed information regarding participants is described in the Data Analysis section of this chapter.

Table 1

Participant Count

Area	<i>n</i>
Student Affairs	14
IT Technical	7
IT Creative	4
Finance	7

Data Collection

I began data collection by conducting a pilot study with administrators who were employed by Plains University to learn more about their experiences working at the institution.

The pilot study consisted of one focus group with administrators from the Division of Finance and Technology and three semi-structured, in-depth interviews with administrators: two from Development and one from Student Affairs. Through the focus group and the interviews, I was able to identify several preliminary codes. At the end of the pilot study, I decided to continue with my research at Plains University because I wanted to hear more from administrators at the university and to learn about their work-life experiences; the interviews piqued my interest in administrators' experiences at Plains University.

While the findings from the pilot study are not included in this manuscript, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with all study participants. In semi-structured interviewing, an interview protocol is used to guide the conversation; however, the same questions are not always asked of every participant or asked in exactly the same way. Instead, the semi-structured nature of the interview allowed me to tailor my questions to the participant's responses, adapting the questions to the information that he/she shared with me and to what I still wanted or needed to know.

The interview protocol had three major themes: the participant's job and the demands that it made on his/her time, the participant's responsibilities outside of work and how he/she spent time outside of the workplace, and knowledge and utilization of institutional work-life policy supports and interest in such supports (see Appendix B). While the focus of this study was not on work-life policies, I included information about this area in the interview protocol because the literature indicated that the existence of such policies for faculty was increasingly common in the academy. I wanted to learn more about whether administrators at Plains believed that they had access to work-life balance policies and if not, whether they would be interested in

utilizing them. As described in the succeeding chapter, Chapter IV, an overwhelming majority of administrators at Plains University were interested in work-life policy supports.

Interviews lasted approximately one hour and were held at the participant's office or in a quiet, public location on campus. Before beginning the interview, I asked the participant to sign an Informed Consent Release and gave the participant a copy of the form. I also asked the participant to select a pseudonym or I assigned one. All of the participants granted me permission to record our interview.

During the interview, I took notes about topics that I wanted to revisit with the participant and/or emerging themes. I also took notes after the interview about what transpired. All of the interviews were transcribed within 72 hours. After transcribing the interview, I reviewed my notes from the interview. I also recorded my thoughts about the interview and any emerging themes. All of the transcribed interviews were uploaded into a qualitative software program for organization and analysis.

Data Analysis

In order to remain true to the nature of constructivist grounded theory, I utilized the constant comparative method so analysis was a continuous, reflective process. As previously stated, in constructivist grounded research it is impossible to divorce the researcher from the data, however, researcher bias and participant bias tend to dissipate as underlying themes are discovered through constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Analysis began immediately following the first interview. After that interview, I recorded notes about the interview and used the list of preliminary codes that I generated in my pilot study to code the interview; I also kept notes about potential new codes. As data collection continued, I wrote memos that identified

specific themes as they took shape and evolved. As I developed new codes to reflect those themes, I returned to the interviews that I had already coded and recoded them.

Although analysis after my first interview consisted of within case analysis, after my second interview, I conducted both within case analysis and cross-case analysis. I also reviewed the ways in which administrators' experiences varied by the division and the area in which they worked. I used those emerging similarities and differences to determine which participants I would recruit next for an interview. This technique enabled me to see and to further explore the previously described differences that emerged within the Technology area.

After I completed all of the interviews, I uploaded them and the codes that I developed into NVivo 9, a software program that was designed specifically for qualitative research. NVivo helped me to organize all of the transcribed interviews and facilitated my analysis. I printed each of the codes from NVivo, reviewed them and the data that they contained, and made notes about some of the overarching themes in the data. I then sorted each code into one of four categories: work-life categories that pertained to all participants, codes that were more Student Affairs-focused, codes that were more Finance and Technology-focused, and codes that emphasized the importance of work-life balance or spoke to employees' interest in work-life balance. This helped me to see some of the big themes in the data and to look for differences within and across divisions.

Following these steps, I made a preliminary list of the codes that I felt were the most important and the most interesting. Those seven codes were: whether the participant fell into higher education or purposefully selected a career in higher education, whether he/she worked evening/weekend hours, whether he/she reported being passionate about his/her job, perception of face-time expectations, perception of supervisor's flexibility, interest in work-life policies, and

overall work-life balance score. I then created a matrix that featured the most interesting and important codes, the names of all of the participants, and participant demographic information. The matrix enabled me to conduct a more thorough analysis of the data and to look at similarities and differences between participants based on age, gender, race, marital status, parental status, dual-career couple status, and the area in which the participant worked. The matrix also helped to confirm the importance of the themes that I had found in my first round of analysis. It permitted me to see how many participants, for example, reported an interest in work-life policies and whether the themes that I initially thought were more Student Affairs-focused, such as passion for one's job, really were unique to that group of administrators.

New patterns also emerged from the data in the matrix. Initially, it was obvious that some codes, like the impact of technology, affected administrators' ability to achieve work-life balance but I did not realize that other factors, like membership in a dual-career couple, were important until they emerged from my analysis of the matrix. I noticed that gender and parental status impacted administrators' perceptions of their overall work-life balance, as I describe in Chapter IV. Differences in participants' overall work-life balance score and perception of flexibility emerged across work areas, as I report in Chapter V. In order to protect participant anonymity, the full matrix is not included in this manuscript, however, a modified version of it can be found in Appendix C.

In order to make sense of all of the data and some of the emerging themes, I returned to my research questions to guide my writing. I reviewed all of the codes that I had developed and created a list of codes that could help me to answer each research question. From the list for each question, I selected the most interesting and meaningful codes and began to weave what I had already written about those codes into one cohesive document. As I wrote, I realized that I

needed to develop a better understanding of the nuances of administrators' experiences in each work area. I returned to the printouts that I had for each of the codes about which I was writing and highlighted each participant's data within that code in one of four different colors to indicate in which of the four areas at Plains University the participant worked. The different colors enabled me to conduct a deeper analysis of the data within each code to look for similarities and differences between participants who worked in the same area, division, and in different divisions. This process helped me to develop my understanding of the ideal worker in each work area and to structure Chapter V. I found that some codes, like self-imposed job pressure and passion leads to job pressure, were actually sub-codes that impacted the number of hours that an administrator in Student Affairs worked.

While I wrote, I frequently referred back to the matrix to test or to confirm certain hunches, such as whether marital status impacted the work-life balance experiences of women who worked in Student Affairs. I also cycled between reviewing data and incorporating information from the literature to enrich and augment the analysis. I found that administrators reported that their personal and professional lives intersected so I returned to the literature on spillover theory to understand this phenomenon. Many administrators desired formal work-life supports so I searched for research that documented the effectiveness of structural work-life supports and incorporated that literature into my discussion and recommendations for Plains University in Chapter V. Data analysis was a continuous, reflective activity that occurred throughout the writing process.

Validity

I took several measures to ensure the validity of the study's findings. After transcribing each interview, I carefully checked it by listening to it and comparing it to the transcript. This

helped to ensure descriptive validity in my analysis or the idea that as I wrote, I described what was actually said by participants (Maxwell, 1992). During the data analysis process, I followed up with participants if I had questions or if I wanted to gather additional information from them. I also shared and discussed the study's findings with participants through member reflection conversations in an attempt to gather feedback and critique (Tracy, 2010). Unlike member checks, which are conducted in adherence with positivist paradigms and aim to ensure equivalency of meaning, member reflections are less about testing the findings of the study and more about "*collaboration and reflexive elaboration*" (Tracy, 2010, p. 844). Instead of trying to affirm one valid meaning from participants' responses, member reflections allowed for additional data, perspectives, and complexity in responses. Member reflections helped to mitigate observer effects in my analysis and writing (LeCompte & Goetz, 2007).

Chapter IV

THE CHALLENGES OF FINDING BALANCE AND PERSPECTIVES ON WORK-LIFE POLICIES

“Last week, I called in late because I didn’t have time to do my kitchen dishes and they sat there for two days and I’m not dirty. They sat there for two days because I would come home from kickboxing at 9:30 at night, do homework, and I’d collapse. My kitchen dishes just never got done. And I looked at them and said, ‘I cannot do another thing productive in my life right now until my dishes are clean.’ So I called in late to work.”

- Nadine

“I love my job so much but I also see that it’s in conflict with a positive work-life balance sometimes.”

- Danny

Nadine and Danny are Student Affairs administrators at Plains University. In this study, Student Affairs administrators were the most likely to report trouble balancing their responsibilities at work with their responsibilities outside of work. Eleven out of the 14 Student Affairs administrators interviewed admitted that they had difficulty finding balance. While the majority of Student Affairs administrators voiced problems, administrators in Finance and Technology also described trouble juggling work with demanding responsibilities outside of work. Exactly half of all of the participants in this study reported that they experienced difficulty balancing their personal and professional lives. These administrators had children and did not have children, and spanned all ages.

Kathy spent her weekends caring for her elderly mother who lived outside of the state and catching up on housework and grocery shopping. She described her life as “what it feels is like I’m on a treadmill.” Nico, who also cared for an elderly parent who lived in another state, shared that “it’s hard for me to balance out taking care of her and the drive back and forth. It’s really difficult.”

I begin this chapter with a brief summary of participants' work-life balance perspectives by demographics. Then, I address how technology and the rise of dual-career couples have impacted administrators' work-life balance experiences. These developments have increased the amount of spillover between administrators' personal and professional lives. In response, nearly all study participants, regardless of their overall work-life balance satisfaction level, were interested in utilizing work-life balance policies. Administrators believed that such policies could improve their ability to balance their personal and professional lives and provide attractive benefits to their employer, Plains University.

Challenges to Finding Balance

Demographics

In this study, male administrators were more likely than female administrators to report that on the whole, their work-life balance was good or excellent. Seventy-eight percent of males, compared to 43% of females, reported good to excellent overall work-life balance. Children appeared to impact females' perceptions of their overall work-life balance but not males' perceptions. Eighty percent of females age 40 and under with young children at home reported poor overall work-life balance compared to just a quarter of males age 40 and under with young children at home. The majority of parents with young children at home were members of dual-career couples, making this finding particularly notable. The Administrators in Dual-Career Relationships section of this chapter describes the challenges faced by such administrators in greater detail.

Eleven participants in this study were single in the sense that they were unmarried, divorced, or widowed. Four of the seven single females reported poor work-life balance compared to just one of the four single males. Interestingly, the four single female participants

and the one male participant who reported poor work-life balance worked in Student Affairs. As described in the Student Affairs Administrators' Regular and Extended Hours section of the succeeding chapter, Chapter V, work-life balance may be more difficult for Student Affairs administrators than for other administrators because of the evening and weekend demands that such positions regularly make on administrators' time. Two of the single female Student Affairs administrators reported failed engagements while others felt that they were asked to assume a greater amount of responsibility in the evening and on the weekends because they did not have families. According to Linda, "There's an expectation that you'll work harder because you don't have kids or a husband."

All administrators felt that time was a precious commodity. Jason, an administrator in Finance with young children, described his life as "a constant juggling act. Every day becomes a juggling act especially as the kids get older." Felicia reported that after her baby arrived, "since we don't have flexible hours [at Plains], I really had some rough times. It was a little stressful at times." Janet, a new supervisor without children, reported that her life was "out of whack" because she was still figuring out how to manage all of her new administrative duties and as a result, spent a greater amount of time at work than usual.

Female participants were less optimistic about their overall work-life balance than male participants. Singles in Student Affairs also reported work-life balance challenges. All participants, however, agreed that they experienced a shortage of time to accomplish personal and professional commitments and responsibilities in their lives. As described in the following section, technology complicated administrator's time management challenges.

Technology Complicates

Administrators mentioned the ways in which technology had altered the workplace and their ability to balance work with responsibilities outside of work. Boundaries that once separated work from other aspects of administrators' lives have disappeared as technology has made working around the clock possible (Currie & Eveline, 2011). Administrators acknowledged that they checked email and responded to phone calls and text messages on evenings, weekends, vacations, and sick days. Technology placed pressure on administrators in two ways. First, the existence and availability of technology gave administrators pressure to engage with the workplace beyond regular business hours or while they were away from the office. Some saw the ability to always be connected positively while others believed that it was problematic. Second, because they could always be connected, one-quarter of administrators used technology as a strategy to avoid being crushed by email when they returned to the office following a weekend or a day off. This tactic, however, had consequences for their personal lives.

Technology enabled administrators to maintain a connection to work whenever, wherever. Some administrators appreciated the ways in which technology enabled them to remain up-to-date, even when they were out of the office. Rich expressed an appreciation for email because it allowed him to maintain his connection to the office while he was unable to be at work. A few days ago, "I was on jury duty. It's great to be able to stay in touch....it's just so easy now with the phone. You have five minutes, you can just check." When Janet, a supervisor, was home sick for three days in the midst of several important projects, she confessed, "I did really feel out of touch so I was checking my email."

Most administrators, however, believed that the rapid response time expectations imposed by technology and the ability to always be connected placed pressure on them while they were at work and away from work. Maria described the ways in which technology had changed students' expectations in terms of response time from her office.

The student will send an email to us or they'll post something on the Plains University Facebook page and if we don't respond in three minutes, literally, three to five minutes, they call. So the[re is an] expectation of real time business intelligence, 24/7 accessibility on the part of some of our students and their family members because of the way technology is now driving our world.

Rob said that his wife had grown accustomed to the late night phone calls and emails that required him to return to campus because of student issues. "It's to the point where it's a running joke around our house where she says, 'alright, it's your kids, go. I've got the baby. What time are you going to be back?'"

The ability to always be connected left some administrators feeling as though they did, in fact, always have to be connected. They felt that their supervisors and coworkers expected them to respond to calls, text messages, and emails on their personal devices during vacation and sick days. Maggie, a supervisor, shared,

the way we use technology today has changed the workforce noticeably from a nine to five kind of thing. I have my cell phone with me all of the time. It sleeps next to me because in this job, I do get phone calls in the middle of the night. You know, where I used to walk out the door and if I forgot my cell phone, I'd say, 'oh, what the heck.' But now, if I forget it, I go back and get it because for some people, that's the only way that

they'll be able to track me down if they need me. So, in a real way...we are chained to our work.

Nadine vented about text messages from her colleagues or her supervisor that apologized for contacting her while she was on vacation but requested a response. "What am I supposed to do with that? Am I a horrible person if I say, 'I didn't see it [the text message]'? Am I a horrible person if I say, 'oh, my phone was at home?' What do I do?"

Julia shared that when she was out of the office for just a day, she normally received "a text or a call about work." She reported that she usually did not mind the interruptions, however, she refused to take her cell phone with her when she went on vacation. Phil deliberately booked vacations that would take him "off the grid" and render him inaccessible to his coworkers. Around the clock connectivity gave administrators at all levels and in all areas pressure to remain connected and to engage. Many developed different strategies to cope with this pressure. Some administrators, like Nadine and Maggie, gave into the pressure and responded to phone calls and text messages; others purposefully devised ways to make themselves inaccessible from time to time.

One-quarter of all administrators reported that they responded to emails after hours and on the weekends because they wanted to save themselves from more work when they returned to the office. Nadine confessed, "It's my fault. I should shut my email off. I shouldn't check it but if I know that on Monday, I'm going to walk into a firestorm of emails, what's the point?" Jacob referred to the ability to check emails from home as the "double-edged sword" of technology.

Even if I take a sick day and I'm not bedridden, I'll probably open up my laptop and do some work just because you don't want it to pile up. You don't want emails to pile up and that's probably a disease most people have. They feel like they have to.

Brian saw emails as a significant stressor.

I have so many emails coming in from the community that I do have to check my email. If I don't check my email when I'm on vacation at least every other day, or even if I'm out sick, if I don't check my email, it just piles up. I get so stressed coming back in that it's just overwhelming. So for my sanity and for the university's sake, I definitely always do that.

Joy and Allison caved to the pressure of responding to technology around the clock with the intention of easing their workload but at the expense of introducing their jobs to their lives outside of the workplace. Joy explained,

my son made a comment the other day, he said, "mommy's always texting" and I said, "I'm not always texting. There [are] other things that I do on my phone besides texting" and it's just so funny that he said that and now I'm aware of it. I watch myself. If I'm around them, I try not to get on my phone as often.

At the time of our interview, Allison had just returned from a weeklong vacation. Although Allison had planned to disconnect from work while on vacation, she found herself checking email at night once her husband was reading or watching television and her children were asleep, just in case she needed to "weigh in on" anything at the office. Allison also confessed that she was "obsessed with a clean inbox because if it's in there, it means I haven't done it." This strategy of keeping up with email in order to manage one's work caused work to spill over into administrators' personal lives.

While a quarter of all administrators checked their email 24/7 with the intention of moderating their workload and preventing work from accumulating in their absence, this tactic actually meant that they ended up working outside of regular work hours, thereby increasing

their total hours worked and impacting their life outside of the workplace. Eighty-eight percent of administrators who responded to email after work hours in order to supposedly ease their workload were within the ages of 25 and 40. This work management tactic may be more common among younger administrators because they have never known a workplace without email. Therefore, the lines that previously separated work from life outside of the workplace for older generations may be blurred for younger generations of employees.

Technology has created new pressure for administrators to be connected and driven them to devise new ways to manage their work, like checking email on days off and on weekends. In this study, technology imposed pressure upon administrators. For some, this pressure was self-imposed as administrators strove to respond to students, supervisors, and colleagues. Others felt that their supervisors expected them to respond because they could always be connected to the workplace. As described in the Challenges to Finding Balance Discussion section of this chapter, the expectations surrounding technology and response time are often murky in many workplaces. Thus, in the absence of clear guidelines, administrators may self-impose expectations upon themselves to respond to technology around the clock to ease their own workload. They also may believe that their supervisors have an expectation that they will answer their phone calls, text and email messages; in other words, they have been led to believe that the ideal worker is always connected and responsive. Technology has caused work to spill over into administrators' lives outside of the workplace and blurred the lines that separate when work ends and life outside of the workplace begins. Life outside of the workplace offered unique challenges for participants in this study who were in dual-career relationships.

Administrators in Dual-Career Relationships

Harrington et al. (2010) found that men and women in today's workforce equally desired jobs with greater responsibility. In 2002, 78% of married couples were dual-career couples (Gappa et al., 2007). In this study, 78% of married administrators and 77% administrators with young children were members of dual-career couples. Being a part of a dual-career couple created particular challenges for participants with children and without children.

Although Nico and Jacob did not have children, both had long commutes to work which impacted the amount of time that they spent with their significant others. Jacob usually left the house early in the morning and did not return home again until about seven o'clock at night. Jacob's wife worked irregular hours so his commute, combined with her schedule, often made it difficult for them to find time together. "She works nights most of the year, too, so we barely see each other until like 9:30 at night." Rebecca's husband worked Sunday through Thursday while Rebecca worked Monday through Friday "so Saturday we spend together. We do something at home or we go somewhere."

Both male and female administrators reported that they had to pitch in and help with anything and everything in order to maintain a dual-career household. Shawn, a father of two, reported,

my wife is very career-driven and ambitious and I think parenting is the most important thing to her, but she also has dreams and aspirations and I support it wholeheartedly but in order to do that, I have to be willing to kinda do other things.

Marty's wife worked in her dream job so "she's very happy at work. But of course, she commutes every morning so she leaves the house at 7:15." Consequently, Marty dressed both children, fed them breakfast, made lunches, and walked them to school. Marty was responsible

for doing his family's laundry, the grocery shopping, and vacuuming the house. His wife maintained the family's finances and paid the bills. Male and female administrators in dual-career couples bathed their children at night, took turns staying at home when someone was sick, and managed who would take a sick child to a doctor's appointment. Jacob frequently made dinner so he and his wife could eat together when she arrived home late at night. Shared household chores and split parenting responsibilities were the norm in the dual-career households in this study.

Even though household chores and parenting duties were divided between partners, administrators needed support in order to keep their dual-career households running smoothly and to feel as though they were able to manage all of their responsibilities. "The dual-career couple model...leaves a considerable amount of room for role conflict, hand-offs, coordination, and unfortunately, confusion" (Harrington et al., 2010, p. 20). Dual-career families, in particular, need flexibility, mutual problem solving, and coping mechanisms in order to manage both family and work responsibilities (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987). Joy acknowledged that the flexibility that her husband had in his job enabled her to continue to work full-time at Plains because he was able to work from home when the children were sick or to leave work early to pick up the children from school.

Dependable childcare also played a key role in dual-career households with children. Maria's mother-in-law cared for Maria's children several days each week while Maria and her husband worked. Rebecca admitted, embarrassedly, that she hired a nanny to care for her daughter after school since she and her husband could not be home. Dual-career parents reported that childcare drop-offs and pickups placed great pressure on them and added to their work stress. Administrators relayed stories of frantically calling their spouse, family, and neighbors

for help 15 minutes before they needed to pick up their child because of a last minute work emergency or an impromptu meeting. Jason recalled, “there have been times that I’ve fully anticipated getting home and, you know, either didn’t or made it by the skin of my teeth.” Rob commented that as he grew closer to the end of the workday,

I have to calculate how much time I have to pick up my daughter and if I’m late, I pay a penalty. If I have to drop my daughter off earlier, I have to pay a fee for that. So, you know, if I’m there at 5:31, I pay a hundred dollars more for the next hour. If I drop my daughter off at 6:59, I pay a hundred dollars more. It goes in half hour increments so it’s difficult sometimes to just, depending on the nature of what’s in front of you, stop something and say, “I gotta go take care of this.”

Pressure to pick up children from childcare and the financial implications of being late forced some administrators to place boundaries on the time that they could spend at work. As described in the Generational Differences section of this chapter, placing boundaries on time spent at work was more common among younger administrators.

Dual-career couples faced pressures that ranged from having little time to spend with their partners, to splitting household chores in order to accomplish them, to finding reliable childcare coverage. Administrators with children and without children needed varied forms of support in order to maintain a dual-career household. They often felt frazzled, exhausted, and that there was a shortage of time to accomplish all of their responsibilities. Since dual-career couples are now commonplace, Caliguiri and Givelekian (2008) warned employers that as Americans age and birth rates continue to decline, workers will be in increasing demand. These workers, however, require greater levels of support than previous generations of workers in order to juggle their responsibilities outside of the workplace with their jobs.

Challenges of Finding Balance Discussion

Technology and the prevalence of dual-career couples have created new challenges and expectations for administrators with regard to balancing their lives at work with their lives outside of the workplace. As technology has changed the ways in which administrators work, supervisors have imposed expectations on their employees to always remain connected to the workplace. Administrators, in some cases, also have self-imposed expectations on themselves to keep up with their email when they are in the office and out of the office. Since 78% of married administrators in this study were members of dual-career couples, many administrators shared household duties and parenting responsibilities with their partners. While technology has blurred the lines between work and life outside of work, dual-career relationships also have placed new pressures on male and female administrators. Administrators reported difficulty separating their work lives from their personal lives and experienced interrole conflict.

Spillover. Much of the early literature on work and families was centered on the segmentation model which hypothesized that there was no relationship between work and non-work roles. This model maintained that work and non-work roles did not influence one another and that one could function successfully in the work role without any impact on the family role and vice versa (Rothbard & Duma, 2006; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Life could be neatly compartmentalized. This perspective was challenged by later researchers who argued that work and one's personal life were closely related.

Spillover theory postulates that work and one's personal life are connected and that feelings about work or work experiences carry or spill over into an individual's life outside of work; likewise, events outside of work can spill over into the workplace and impact one's performance at work (Clark, 2000; Sorcinelli & Near, 1989; Zedeck, 1992). Spillover theory is

important because if there is no relationship between work and personal life, then attempts by employers to promote work-life balance may be futile. In a mixed methods study, Sorcinelli and Near (1989) affirmed the existence of spillover between faculty member's work and personal lives. Administrators in this study, like Joy and Rob, similarly revealed that events in their work lives and personal lives spilled over and influenced one another.

Barnett (1998) also found evidence for spillover that challenged the notion that employees could manage their work and personal lives in separate spheres. Barnett referred to separate spheres as a "myth."

When work and family are treated as separate and distinct spheres, then family matters can be viewed as belonging at home and having no business at the workplace...no matter how hard the individual tries to keep social system concerns at home, he or she will fail because it is not in our nature to make that separation. (p. 155)

Instead, individuals have multiple roles in their lives, not multiple selves, and those roles sometimes overlap and intersect. Plains University administrators reported similar difficulty segmenting their work and personal lives.

Raul shared that when he first started working, his father taught him to "separate work and family. You know, work and play. Separate totally, if you can." Allison reported that one of the strategies that she used to facilitate her own work-life balance was

I have to set my own parameters. When I get home, I haven't seen my kids all day and I only see them a couple hours a day for bedtime as it is, so I try to stay away from the Plains University stuff.

Both Raul and Allison, however, reported that they were unable to completely separate work and their personal lives. Work occasionally interrupted their home lives, in large part because

technology rendered them readily accessible. Raul said that he sometimes received a call from work and “I pretty much have to stop what I’m doing, depending on the severity of it.” Allison never ignored her supervisor’s calls when she was at home. “If he’s calling me, it’s probably for a good reason.”

Other administrators reported that family issues often remained on their minds while they were at work, especially those who were members of dual-career couples. Jim shared, “I think if it’s a family issue, it’ll always creep in. It depends on how serious it is, obviously. I think you can work through it, but it’s always there.” Further, “I can see when you’re with family, not thinking about work but I can’t see the when you’re at work, not thinking about family.” Joy and Allison attempted to erect boundaries between work and personal life, but agreed that “they definitely intertwine.”

Evidence in support of spillover theory challenges the notion that work and life outside of work can be organized into tidy separate spheres. Instead, individuals hold multiple roles that can impact and influence each other (Barnett, 1998). Technology and dual-career relationships have increasingly blurred and complicated the overlapping nature of the multiple roles held by today’s administrators. Few administrators at Plains reported that their work areas or supervisors had set clear expectations for them regarding the use of technology after regular work hours. Consequently, administrators were usually unclear about when and how often they needed to use technology to remain connected to the workplace. Some administrators self-imposed expectations upon themselves to always be connected. Other administrators assumed that if their supervisor contacted them, they needed to respond.

While the ideal worker model is discussed in more detail in the following chapter, the model is based on the employee who places work before all other responsibilities in life.

According to the model, the productivity and commitment of a worker is judged by the total hours that the worker spends at the workplace (Hewlett, 2007; Thompson, 2008). Face-time is an important component of the ideal worker model. Technology has complicated the concept of the traditional ideal worker. Without clear guidance from employers surrounding the use of technology outside of the workplace, some administrators in this study self-imposed pressure on themselves to appear as what they conceived to be the ideal worker by remaining connected to the workplace 24/7, simply because they had the ability to do so. Other administrators believed that their supervisors expected them to respond to technology around the clock. While employee productivity and commitment historically was judged, and in some workplaces continues to be judged, based on face-time at work, technology has morphed face-time expectations into 24/7 connectivity expectations. The varied, unclear expectations surrounding technology and connectivity left administrators in this study confused and dissatisfied.

Role conflict. Administrators in this study believed that events in their personal life spilled over into their professional life. Likewise, events in their professional life spilled over into their personal life. As a result, administrators' multiple roles sometimes felt incompatible. Half of all administrators reported they experienced difficulty balancing their personal and professional lives; they experienced interrole conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Many administrators, like Kathy and Nico described experiencing time-based conflict as they sought to balance the eldercare responsibilities in their personal lives with their work hours.

Increasingly, men are more likely to report greater levels of work-life conflict or imbalance. Men's overall work-life conflict increased by 11% over the last thirty years from 34% in 1977 to 49% in 2008. The change in women's work-life conflict was insignificant (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2008). In 2008, Galinsky et al. reported that men had assumed

most or an equal share of child care responsibilities. Shawn and Jim, whose spouses both worked, were responsible for one late night feeding shift per night for their young children. Rob's wife worked an overnight shift so when his wife returned to work following a period of maternity leave, Rob cared for their son throughout the night. "I'd watch her overnight, let mommy see her when she came in in the morning, and then I would drop her off at daycare." As described in the Administrators in Dual Careers section of this chapter, Rob also experienced pressure to pick up his daughter after work, which sometimes interfered with the responsibilities of his job.

Gerstel and Gallagher (2001) found that men who were members of dual-career couples tended to spend more time caring for their children than men whose partners did not work outside of the home. A new generation of fathers and spouses are playing a greater role in family life and household responsibilities; many have responded by making an effort to better balance work and family (Harrington et al., 2010). However, "the majority of fathers in dual-earner couples (59%) report experiencing some or a lot of conflict today, up from 35% in 1977" (Galinsky et al., 2008, p. 18). Six of the seven fathers with young children in this study reported experiencing time-based conflict.

Technology has increased the ways in which work can spill over into administrators' personal lives. The rise of dual-career couples has meant that personal issues also spill over into the workplace as male and female administrators struggle to manage household chores, responsibilities, and children. As a result, these developments have changed administrators' work-life balance expectations and experiences. While this study was not designed to measure the amount of interrole conflict in administrators' lives, it does offer evidence that administrators in the academy, like faculty, experience interrole conflict, particularly, time-based conflict.

Perspectives on Work-Life Policies

Given these findings, perhaps it is not surprising that 30 of the 32 administrators in this study were interested in work-life balance policies. Administrators reported difficulty managing work and life commitments and they wanted organizational support to help them do so. Participants wanted to be able work flexibly, regardless of gender, age, marital status, parental status, or even current overall work-life balance satisfaction. Administrators shared many reasons why they felt such policies were important and several confided that the ability to work flexibly was simply something that they expected from their employer in today's mobile society. Telecommuting (53%), the ability to work flexible hours (41%), and childcare (34%) were the most desired work-life balance accommodations. Eldercare (16%), job sharing (6%), and paternity leave (3%) also were mentioned by participants.

Telecommuting

Administrators were interested in telecommuting for several reasons. Some mentioned that having the option to work from home could increase their productivity. Shawn was interested in telecommuting because

there are days where I can get a lot accomplished, just having access to email and being able to [complete projects] from home because I'll sit in my office and do that for hours on end. So, to be able to do that and not have to, you know, constantly answer the door or something, the telephone, that would be helpful.

Jim wanted "just one day [where] you could sit down and do what you need to do." Jason felt as though there were times during which he could predict his workload and know that his presence would not be required in the office. During those periods, he believed that he could work just as effectively at home as he could in the office. Rich noted,

I think people are more effective when they're not worried about their son or daughter getting home on time so I don't have a problem with it at all. I think people appreciate that and if anything, go above and beyond just to show you that it's not detrimental to them performing their work.

Brian, Jacob, and Nico believed that telecommuting made particular sense in an era of rising gas prices and declining wages. Brian shared, "I'm running up gas bills of a couple hundred dollars a month, and especially when we have not received raises in a while, I mean, that's difficult." This group of administrators viewed telecommuting as a tool that Plains could use to build goodwill even when the institution's finances were tight.

Many supervisors, particularly those in Finance and Technology, believed that the work that they performed and their employees performed could be accomplished remotely. Brian, a Finance supervisor, believed that his position "would not necessitate me or my direct report being here physically in the office every day." From Brian's point of view, his physical presence was often irrelevant in terms of impacting the way in which he performed his job.

I could have dealt with that meeting off-site at the vendor's location or even, you know, conversing with them through phone or PC from my apartment. It doesn't make a difference. We could still analyze a spreadsheet attached to an email from home as you could from here.

Several of the IT technical administrators, like Peter, talked about how strange they felt it was that they were unable to telecommute, especially since many of them could do their jobs from virtually anywhere, as demonstrated by the work that they performed from cars and movie theaters after hours and on the weekends.

To be quite honest, the one policy I think we're way behind on here is working from home. And I understand there are reasons why you don't necessarily want your employees sitting at home working but when you reach a certain level, it doesn't matter whether you're here or not. You're held to project work and fixing it and if you can do it as well from home as you can here and you're held to, "we want this project to be done by mid-September" and it's done then, it doesn't particularly matter where you're sitting, whether you're at your desk or your house.

Peter noted that he seemed to be the only person that he knew who worked in IT who was not able to work from home at least some of the time. Jonathan added, "the benefit of IT is that most of what you do is not face to face." While everyone in the IT department likely could not work from home at the same time, Jonathan believed that administrators could have the option to work from home on a rotating basis and "you could do it for just about everybody" that way. Peter believed that telecommuting had become such an accepted practice in the IT field that in a few years, the lack of an official telecommuting policy at Plains "will probably be a limiting factor in hiring people here if it doesn't change." Brian felt that telecommuting was "more modern thinking in terms of helping people out and managing their lives."

All of the administrators who were interested in telecommuting simply wanted to have the option to telecommute; they did not want to do so on a daily basis. Steven noted that "I don't think I could work from home every day but it'd be great to have that option." Nadine felt similarly, "I wouldn't even want it every week. If I could do it, like, once a month or once every other week or something like that, I'd be very happy." Administrators viewed telecommuting as a way to improve productivity, enhance their effectiveness, create goodwill, and foster retention. As previous researchers have found, Plains administrators believed that the mere existence of a

telecommuting policy would increase their satisfaction with their employer (Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005).

Flexible Hours

Administrators wanted to be able to work flexible hours on a regular basis or on an as-needed basis. Flexible hours schedules permit employees to come into work earlier than the organization's regular business hours and to leave before the end of the regularly scheduled workday. Alternatively, employees could come into work later than the organization's regular business hours and stay at work beyond the end of the regularly scheduled workday. Flexible hours scheduling also can include compressed work schedules in which employees work four 10-hour days from Monday through Thursday, for example, instead of five eight-hour days from Monday through Friday. Some organizations also give employees compensatory time off, or flextime, in exchange for extra hours worked. Employees can bank that time and then use it to schedule a few extra hours off when they desire.

Raul said that he would work flexible hours "in a heartbeat because I'd be able to start work a little earlier or start work a little later, still get my job done, and still maybe have a little more time than I do with my kids now." Brian, a supervisor, believed that implementing flexible hours was "the right thing to do to help the employees." He shared, "it helps the people internally from their own personal situations and the university community as well" since offices could remain open for a greater number of hours if they permitted employees to come in earlier than the usual workday hours or to stay later.

Sally wanted to work a compressed schedule because it would save her money on childcare; she "really love[d] the idea of working ten hours a day" and believed that she could still accomplish her job by following that schedule. Lauren's friend worked at an institution of

higher education that offered administrators compensatory time. When he called Lauren late at night, he was often surprised that she was still at work. “In talking to him, I was like, man, this compensatory time thing, that sounds good! That’s not my reality.”

Administrators viewed flexible hours as an accommodation that would enable them to alter their hours on a regular basis or on an as-needed basis and still successfully accomplish their work in a timely manner while increasing the time that they had to manage personal obligations and responsibilities. Many administrators, like Brian and Lauren, felt that a flexible hours program would be a way for Plains University to support its administrators, reward them for time worked, and extend the University’s operating hours to benefit the institution and the students that it serves.

Childcare

Administrators with young children, with grown children, and without children suggested that Plains University should offer its employees an on-campus childcare facility. Brian acknowledged, “In this day and age, it’s almost imperative that husbands and wives both work and it’s rare that you can support the family on one income.” On-campus childcare would make “family life a little easier.” Many administrators who had young or grown children complained about the cost of childcare; participants with young children estimated that the cost of care in the area surrounding Plains University was between \$1,200 and \$1,700 per month. Administrators thought that on-campus childcare, whether subsidized or unsubsidized, would be a useful benefit that the institution could offer to its employees, even if the price was the same as what the administrator paid at their local childcare facility. Peter reported that “it wouldn’t actually be the money, it’d just be that my daughter is here.” Joy “would love to be able to, during my lunch hour, go over and see my kids. I mean, that’s that much more time that I can see them.”

Participants believed that onsite childcare would eliminate some of the stress of having to rush out of work to pick up their children. They thought that onsite childcare would improve their productivity and their ability to focus on work while they were at work. Raul thought that if his children attended an onsite childcare center, “I would probably actually stay later [at work].” Researchers have found that dual-career policies, like on-site childcare, enhance employee productivity (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Wolf-Wendel et al., 2003).

Administrators at Plains also suggested that childcare could help to “decrease turnover.” Joy stated, “I’ve known people who have left here because they didn’t have that opportunity to work after having a family. They just couldn’t because the cost of daycare is exorbitant.” Raul was one of the three administrators in this study with young children who was not a member of a dual-career couple. His wife tried to work part-time after they started their family but ended up leaving her position. Raul believed that if Plains had offered childcare, he and his wife would have had greater support and “my wife would probably still be working.”

Work-Life Policy Discussion

Nearly all of the Plains University administrators in this study were interested in work-life balance policies. Telecommuting, flexible hours, and childcare were the most frequently mentioned policies. As administrators confront new pressures imposed by technology and dual-career relationships, work-life balance policies are tools that employers can implement for the benefit of their employees and the broader organization. Research has shown that the mere existence of work-life policies can make employees more loyal and committed to their organization, regardless of whether the employees intend to utilize the policies or directly benefit from them (Anderson, Birkeland, & Giddings, 2009; Grover & Crooker, 1995; Porter & Ayman, 2010). Creative work-life policies demonstrate the values of an institution and its culture.

Family-responsive policies may portray that an organization cares about its employees and lead employees to feel valued (Grover & Crooker, 1995).

Work-life policies also offer employer benefits; a supportive workplace environment is critical to organizational efficiency, employee satisfaction, and worker retention (Perna, 2001). Research has found that individuals who have more flexibility to manage their time in their jobs are able to work longer hours while maintaining work-life balance. Similarly, women who participate in flexible work scheduling have higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Porter & Ayman, 2010).

According to Bristol, Abbuhl, Cappola, and Sonnad (2006), across the academy there is growing agreement that work-life policies and the flexibility that they offer are necessary in order to attract and to retain the most qualified faculty. The adoption and implementation of such benefits for administrators may be a way for higher education to attract and retain the most qualified administrators. Administrators have undoubtedly taken note of the absence of these policies. Jacob felt that talking about work-life balance policies was “like this taboo thing that people don’t want to talk about because it means we’re going to work less or something.” As younger generations of administrators assume roles in the higher education workforce, they bring with them different attitudes towards work and work-life balance.

Generational differences. Research has shown that the attitudes of younger workers towards work-life balance are different from those of older generations. Younger employees place a greater value on work and family balance than preceding generations of workers (Bristol et al., 2008; Harrington et al., 2010). While participants of all ages in this study expressed an interest in maintaining some degree of work-life balance, administrators from Generations X and Y were the most likely to share that they made a conscious decision to balance their life at work

with their life outside of work. While the cutoff dates for each generation vary depending on the source consulted, in this study, Generation X administrators were classified as those born on or after 1965. Generation Y administrators were those born in the late 1970s through 1987.

Administrators from both generations viewed their jobs as important but that their lives outside of the workplace were equally, if not more, important to them.

Catalyst (2001) found that younger generations of workers placed more importance on personal goals and values than on those related to work. Shawn stated, “this job is important but, you know, the health of my child is more important than almost anything.” Shawn expected his employer to be understanding and accommodating when he needed the flexibility to care for a sick child or to come into work late in an emergency. “I don’t know if I could comfortably work somewhere where people weren’t open to that.” Allison shared, “We don’t live to work. We work in order to do the things that we enjoy and things that we’re interested in, spend time with our families, and things like that.” Further, when on vacation from work,

you have to make that real conscious decision, I think, to say, “I need to step away” and realize that really, really, the institution will get by without you. It has for 120 years and it will go on for another 120 years.

As Williams (2000) found, a younger generation of administrators at Plains University was willing to put limits on the hours that they spent at work in order to have time to develop and maintain full lives outside of the workplace.

Administrators from Generations X and Y knew that they would not spend their entire career working at Plains University and they saw their jobs as expendable. For some, a turn of events or an unexpected tragedy changed their perspective on work. After a rocky period with her coworkers, Sally changed her attitude about her job.

All of those things happened and I said, well, you know what? I'm not appreciated anyway. I'm gonna do the work that I need to do, but when I need to go, I'm going. And I cut down. It is what it is. Nothing has changed in the last four years, basically. No pay raises and everything and you have just say, "what's your priority?" You have to give this percentage of your life to your work and do it well, but your family has to be a higher priority because the truth of it is, and what I've realized is that someday, I'm going to leave here and they're going to have someone else [doing my job] and no one's going to be sitting here crying saying, "oh, I wish Sally was here." Everyone's replaceable and I don't mean that in a bad way but it's just work.

Like Sally, Linda felt that she was not appreciated at work and went through a period of time during which she had a poor relationship with her supervisor. In response, she reduced the number of hours that she spent at her job. "I spent more time with my family because I said, well, all of this time that I spend here and they can just turn around and kick me on the butt and say, 'we no longer need you.'"

Employees no longer spend their lives working for one employer as they did in decades past. The current economic climate in which layoffs have become commonplace has led employees to view their positions as dispensable. Gerkovich (2006) found that Generation X employees highly valued flexibility and were willing to leave their organizations if they could not attain access to it. Administrators at Plains University were no exception. In this study, administrators recognized that their jobs were by no means permanent, no matter how hard they worked, and they therefore sought to keep work in perspective. Administrators from Generations X and Y believed in the importance of more than just work; they desired and pursued full lives outside of the workplace.

Conclusions

As stated previously, half of the participants in this study experienced trouble balancing their work with their life outside of the workplace. Despite the fact that only half of administrators reported trouble balancing, 94% of administrators of all ages and across all work areas desired work-life balance policies. Regardless of whether the administrators were in a dual-career relationship or single, had children or did not have children, and were satisfied or dissatisfied with their overall work-life balance, they believed that work-life balance policies could improve their professional and personal lives.

Technology has changed the ways in which administrators work and expectations regarding work hours and responsiveness. In this study, administrators reported a love/hate relationship with technology. Many believed that technology had the ability to improve their work-life balance, and in some cases reported that it did so, but technology and expectations about responsiveness also added pressure to administrators' lives. Kossek and Lautsch (2008) recognized that many organizations have cultures that make employees feel that they "can no longer 'turn work off' at the end of the day. Professional responsibilities have been thoroughly integrated into personal time" (p. 154).

Technology and the rise of dual-career relationships have increased the amount of spillover or overlap between employees' personal and professional lives. Events in one's work life and in one's personal life will spill over and influence one another. Administrators also experienced interrole conflict as they attempted to manage their personal and professional lives. Work-life policies may be a way to help administrators to manage spillover and role conflict and to more successfully navigate their responsibilities at work with their responsibilities outside of

the workplace. While such policies undoubtedly benefit administrators, they also can benefit organizations. As Kossek and Lautsch (2008) described,

Most working men and women today want to succeed in every dimension of their lives. And when they do, their employers, families, and communities benefit, as do the individuals themselves. Organizations can reap their share of these benefits by transforming their cultures so that people have control over how they manage their many priorities. The payoff? A more engaged, energized, and productive workforce, which translates directly into bottom-line performance. (p. 158)

Bailyn (1993) urged organizations to think about their people as individuals for whom employment is critical but not the only activity in their lives. As younger administrators have joined the academy's workforce, they have brought with them new perspectives on work and life outside of the workplace. They view both as important and are unwilling to make work their sole purpose in life. As described in the succeeding chapter, administrators at Plains University were frustrated with the concept of the ideal worker and its emphasis on face-time in the workplace. They desired greater freedom to manage their professional and personal lives.

Chapter V

IDEAL ADMINISTRATOR EXPECTATIONS

“I could see a male who’s here all the time getting promoted and moving up much more quickly because they’re able to be here more often than someone who has children that they’re responsible for.”

- Sally

As a mother, Sally tried to place limits on the hours that she spent in the workplace. She believed, however, that an administrator who conformed to the typical image of the ideal worker—a male employee who could spend an unlimited number of hours at work—would be promoted faster than an administrator who had children. Despite the fact that decreasing numbers of male and female employees fit this profile, the ideal worker model persists in workplaces across industries, including the academy.

I begin this chapter with a description of the ideal worker model. Then, I examine norms and expectations regarding work-life balance as understood by administrators in four different areas of Plains University. As I noted in Chapter III, when I began this study, I intended to examine the ways in which workplace norms and ideal worker expectations impacted administrators in the Division of Student Affairs and in the Division of Finance and Technology. I found, however, significant differences in norms and expectations for administrators in three areas within the Division of Finance and Technology. Therefore, I examine norms and expectations in four different areas of the university in this chapter: Student Affairs, the IT technical area, the IT creative area, and the Finance area. Administrators in the IT technical area handled programming, systems, and networking; they were responsible for maintaining Plains University’s technological systems and ensuring that they functioned smoothly. Administrators in the IT creative area performed work related to website design and instructional technology. I

close this chapter with a discussion of how the findings from each of the four areas in this study both support and complicate existing research regarding the ideal worker.

The Ideal Worker Model

Thompson (2008) described the ideal worker as one who placed work before all other responsibilities in life. Also referred to as the white male career model, the ideal worker model was described by Hewlett (2007) as follows: a cumulative, lockstep career with a continuous, linear employment history; a strong emphasis on face-time at work; the expectation that employees will make the greatest advances in their careers in their 30s—with no second chances; and the belief that money is an employee's primary motivator. Employees are not supposed to worry about spending time with their family or with their children. The ideal worker is someone who can devote unlimited time to work and has no distractions outside of the workplace (Sallee, 2012).

The ideal worker is present in the workplace and logs the requisite face-time hours needed during regular work hours and beyond. This study defines face-time as the amount of interaction between employees and their supervisors and coworkers, as well as the amount of time that an employee is seen by his supervisor and coworkers around the office (Elsbach, Cable, & Sherman, 2010). Face-time is a requisite part of the ideal worker model. According to Santos and Cabral-Cardoso (2008), the

“ideal worker” is one that devotes his, or her, entire life to a full-time job and does not allow family obligations to interfere with production. Productivity and commitment tend to be defined in terms of hours spent at work. (p. 446)

The image of the ideal worker is framed around typical male life patterns of decades past in which men worked outside of the home and were supported by a flow of family work from

women (Williams, 2000). While such arrangements were more common in previous decades, they are untenable and unrealistic in today's dual-career environment. Consequently, the ideal worker model no longer fits the reality of employees' lives.

Today, more women and single parents are in the workforce. In 2008, 79% of married/partnered employees were members of dual-career couples (Galinsky et al., 2008). These workforce demographic changes, combined with the increased work commitment demanded in this technological age, have made dependent care difficult and active participation in the community and in leisure activities increasingly challenging (Bailyn, 1993). Household responsibilities remain unchanged, although women are no longer home to accomplish these activities during the day. Instead, both men and women in the workforce must perform as ideal workers without the flow of family work from women that in the past permitted men to perform as ideal workers (Williams, 2000). The reality of today's workers' lives and the organization of work have led to new stress and work-life conflict for both women and men as they attempt to fit the mold of the ideal worker in a dual-career world (Gappa et al., 2007).

Despite the outmoded nature of the ideal worker model, research shows that the model prevails in many workplaces across a majority of industries. In the academy, faculty feel compelled to meet the expectations of the ideal worker model, despite their dissatisfaction with it (Thompson, 2008). In Ward and Wolf-Wendel's (2005) study, female faculty who were aware of the existence of work-life policies at their institutions expressed concern regarding whether using the policies would penalize them in terms of their reputation as a scholar or impact their success when they applied for tenure. Grant et al. (2000) found that "there was tremendous pressure for women to conform to the normative work patterns designed for male careers" (p.

17). Armenti (2004) documented that a male culture persists from the top levels of the administration in the academy, to the faculty, to each individual department.

For the most part, the culture of Plains University was no different. Administrators experienced face-time pressure and had few official policies available to them, save the employee assistance hotline mentioned in Chapter III. While some administrators' work areas afforded them informal accommodations that enabled them to come into work late after an evening event, for example, administrators still felt pressure to be present in the workplace during regular work hours and often, beyond.

Since three-quarters of the 32 study participants indicated that they worked evening and weekend hours on a regular basis, I felt that it was important to address in this chapter how work hour norms impacted administrators' perceptions about the ideal worker. For each of the four areas in which administrators in this study worked, I review expectations regarding work hours, then examine the work-life accommodations offered to administrators in that area, and summarize the message sent to administrators about the ideal worker in that area. I begin with an examination of the experiences of administrators in the Division of Student Affairs.

The Ideal Administrator

Student Affairs Administrators

Regular and extended hours. Previous research has documented the long hours that Student Affairs administrators typically work (Forney et al., 1982; Lorden, 1998). The Student Affairs administrators in this study were no exception. Administrators in Student Affairs experienced face-time pressure to be present during the university's regular business hours and beyond. Sally felt pressure to be present during the nine to five workday hours. "My supervisor's supervisor has made it very clear to me that I'm expected to be here nine to five."

Joy stated that her supervisor felt “very strongly about the office always being manned” during the workday. “In the event that anybody comes by, there should always be somebody there. So we all, you know, we’re aware of everybody’s vacation time. We always make sure that there’s always one person on staff at all times.” Janet, Joy’s supervisor, stated that in their department “what we do so well is our presence. We’re here. We are here for students. They come and we’re physically here. We answer our phones, we answer our emails. So our presence, I think, is important.”

While administrators felt that their presence was expected in the office during regular business hours, working evening and weekend hours also was the norm in Student Affairs. Twelve of the 14 Student Affairs administrators reported that working evening and weekend hours was a regular occurrence. Danny and Lauren described the need to work those hours in order to meet the needs of students who often desired late night activities. As Danny explained, for Student Affairs professionals in general, I don’t want to analyze everybody, but it’s hard to be just nine to five. It’s very difficult because there are always things with students in the evening. That’s when they do their extracurricular activities; you’re advising a club and doing work for them.

Rob indicated that expecting to resolve students’ problems within a nine to five timeframe was unrealistic since students were often on campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Although Sally had been promoted to a supervisory role in Student Affairs and therefore worked fewer evening and weekend hours, she talked about the pressure that she felt in her previous entry-level position to work long hours “because we do need people here at night.”

Supervisors Kathy, Maria, and Nadine were all on-call on a rotating basis in case an emergency situation arose on the campus. Therefore, they worked evening and weekend hours

fairly regularly. When asked about the demands that her job made on her time, Kathy reported that the demands were significant. "I'm on call constantly. I'll come back, either come back or stay, three to four times a month for an evening program. There's the occasional weekend and there's the 3am phone calls." As supervisors, these individuals were often higher up on the emergency call chain and were notified when something of a more significant nature occurred such as a student arrest, a physical plant emergency, or a weather event. While the frequency of the calls to these individuals varied depending upon their supervisory role and the area of Student Affairs in which they worked, the calls sometimes required these supervisors to return to campus to handle a situation.

For some in Student Affairs, evening and weekend hours were a regular occurrence because of an ever-increasing workload, especially as departments tried to do more with fewer staff than in previous years. Phil provided examples of the type of work that he often completed at home at night because he ran out of time during the regular workday or needed quiet time in order to complete it. "That stuff is becoming more of a regular part of my life evenings and weekends." Shawn, who had worked in Student Affairs at Plains for several years, noted that his job had changed significantly during his tenure but that new duties had simply been added to his job description; nothing had "really been taken away."

Evening and weekend work was the norm in Student Affairs. Administrators arranged their schedules to serve students, were frequently on-call, and talked about ever-increasing workloads. While departmental norms and supervisor-imposed expectations about face-time drove Student Affairs administrators to work extended hours, diligence and self-imposed pressure, combined with a passion for their work, also drove administrators to work evenings and weekends.

Self-imposed pressure. Student Affairs administrators blamed themselves, in part, for the long hours that they worked. Joy, Lauren, Shawn, and Sally described working long hours in order to build successful programs and to feel accomplished when they left the office for the day. Shawn and Nadine talked about not wanting to leave for the day until their “job was done.” Nadine expressed frustration with herself about her inability to leave a task incomplete at the end of the day.

We can all name somebody in our office, they’re here nine to five and they go home and yet, they still have the job [laughs]. So where is my lack of balance getting me? You know? It’s not getting me anywhere but I’m not that person. I’m not that person that at five o’clock, no matter if my work’s done or not, I can walk out.

Shawn reported that he usually worked an eight or a nine hour day instead of the university’s standard seven-hour workday because he came in early and left late.

I don’t have to do that. I rarely take lunch. Sometimes I’ll eat at my desk. I know I need to eat and stuff like that but I don’t say, “okay, there’s five students outside but I’m going to take lunch at 12.” That I don’t do. It’s everyone’s right to do that because we’re not paid for lunch, [but] I don’t do that. I tend to think if I do that, it might be 10 people when I come back.

Over and over, Students Affairs administrators provided examples of their work ethic and self-imposed pressure to be available for students.

Although Lauren felt pressure from the Board of Trustees of Plains to make her departments’ plans for students successful, she explained that she also did not want to miss being present for many of the student events.

I imposed, I think, certain expectations on myself to be there. So, at times, I felt like I didn't have a life 'cause I was always here. When students invited me to one of their events, "oh, do you want to come for this meeting?" I thought, really, I don't. I don't want to be at school any more but I need to be.

This lifestyle left Lauren feeling out of sorts and exhausted. At the end of her first year on the job, Lauren spoke with her supervisor and let her know that even though she wanted to make sure that things continued to "go right," she could not tolerate another year like the last. Her supervisor responded, "I don't think you even need to [have another year like the last]."

Passion leads to pressure. Despite regularly working extended hours, Student Affairs administrators rarely complained about their sometimes grueling schedules. While some administrators reported that they were working actively to make their hours more manageable, even those administrators talked about the passion that they had for their jobs. Six of the administrators stated that they "loved" their jobs while two others claimed that their jobs were their "passion." Rob laughed, "you know, it's funny because when someone asks me what I do, I don't ever say I have a job. I just say this is my passion and this is what I really enjoy doing." Many of the administrators talked about the sense of ownership that they had over their work. Nadine described the pride that she took in her work and that as a single woman in her 40s, "I really do see what I've built here as being my baby" because she truly loved her job.

Other administrators felt that that their jobs were important and appreciated the opportunity to impact students' lives. The students were often what kept the administrators feeling energized and ready to return to work the following day. Shawn asserted,

if you really don't want to help students and help them recognize their potential and really go after their dreams, then it will be a chore. But it's not a chore for me. I come here and I get to impact people's lives.

Shawn talked about bouncing around from job to job until he arrived at Plains University several years ago. He attributed the length of his employment to loving the environment and to working "with some really great people." Nearly all of the administrators described supportive coworkers who pitched in for one another and in some cases were almost like family to them. This made the irregular hours more bearable and gave an atmosphere of camaraderie to the entire division.

Student Affairs administrators worked long hours for two major reasons. First, they felt pressure from their supervisors to be present at work. They arranged their schedules to meet the demands of students, were regularly on-call, and experienced increasing workloads; they wanted to meet, and in many cases exceed, their supervisor's expectations in terms of responding to students' needs. Second, Student Affairs administrators loved their jobs and thereby imposed expectations on themselves to be present and available beyond regular workday hours.

Accommodations. Even though many of the Student Affairs administrators felt pressure to be present during the workday and to be present for evening and weekend activities, all of them reported that they had some degree of flexibility in their jobs.

Kelly: What about if you work late one night, are you able to come in late the next morning?

Shawn: Mhm. Like during Freshman Orientation, I want to be here for the student night programs so what I will do is I'll come in, I'll work with Jenelle [his supervisor] doing the student portion during the day, and you know, I'll take a break in my office, get something to eat with the rest of the staff, and then come back and we'll do a night

program. The next morning I go home. I'm not going to be working that day 'cause I've been here all day. You know, I have that opportunity to, "okay, I've done my portion of it. I'll see you guys tomorrow."

Kelly: And is that because of Jenelle or because of her supervisor?

Shawn: No, that's the expectation. That's the expectation that you put in the work.

Most of the administrators had a supervisor who enabled them to flex their hours when necessary in order to accommodate stretches of long hours and/or late nights. Lauren, who worked for the same supervisor as Shawn, noted that "the nice thing is that my supervisor is very supportive and understanding so if I'm here 'til 11 o'clock at night, it's okay that I'm not coming in at 8:45 in the morning." Further,

I think there's a lot of time and off hours, but I appreciate that my direct supervisor is flexible with me in terms of "I'm not coming in until x time" or "I'm gonna not be coming in on this Friday because I worked on Saturday" or something like that.

Nadine described coming into work a little late and never being "called out on it" because her supervisor knew that she often stayed late to respond to emails or to attend events.

Many of these employees' supervisors discussed the effort that they went to in order to offer their employees some degree of flexibility and support. Maria, a supervisor, explained that she tried to "mirror" the accommodations that she had received from her supervisors over the course of her tenure at Plains by allowing her employees to take an extra day off during times of peak activity in her department. Maria also encouraged her employees to come in late the morning after they were on-call. "It's silly to say, yeah, you better be at your desk at nine o'clock 'cause you're just going to end up having people leave [laughs]." Danny, one of Maria's direct reports, confirmed, "I think within our department, there's an expectation of making sure

you take care of yourself and that's always communicated, from top down." Nadine, who also reported to Maria, explained that Maria understood that she had a long commute to work. On icy and snowy days, Maria permitted to Nadine to work from home.

Maggie, who was one of the administrators in a leadership role in the Division of Student Affairs, set the tone for many of the Student Affairs administrators. "Everybody has times in their life when things happen and I think a compassionate, and understanding, and good leader is flexible enough to accommodate the unexpected things that happen in our lives." Maggie tried to accommodate her employees' needs and her employees clearly understood and appreciated those accommodations.

Phil, Joy, and Rob, all provided examples of the ways in which Maggie showed that she cared about them and appreciated them. Joy described Maggie as

She's always been very aware. She knows there's one evening during the regular semester where I advise the [student group] and I run the welcome event. She knows that I'm going to be here late that evening so she always makes sure to tell me to come in a little later the next day or to come in a little later the morning of the event.

Joy and Rob, who both had young children, reported that Maggie encouraged them to take vacation time for the sake of themselves and their families. Rob shared that Maggie urged him to improve his work-life balance by spending less time at work while Joy explained,

she's very, very supportive. There have been times where she sensed that I am feeling overwhelmed, you know, working full-time and being a mother and not getting to all of the things that my kids need sometimes and she's very, very supportive in that sense. She said to me, specifically, last year, I remember during the performance evaluation, the two

of us were talking and she said, “you know, I know what it’s like. I’ve been there.”

Sometimes those few words of encouragement are very, very powerful. Very powerful. While the presence of her employees during normal business hours was important to Maggie, she also encouraged her employees to maintain full lives outside of the workplace. “When I see someone here at six o’clock at night, it makes me think, ‘what are you not able to handle during the workday?’”

The ideal Student Affairs administrator. Despite the flexibility that the Student Affairs supervisors offered to their employees, more than half of the administrators were not satisfied with their overall work-life balance. Administrators knew that their supervisors expected them to be present during regular business hours but they and their supervisors also acknowledged that their jobs could not be fully accomplished within regular business hours. This led to confusion on the part of the administrators. They imposed evening and weekend hours on themselves but were not entirely certain how many evening and weekend hours they needed to work in order to be successful in their jobs or to appear as ideal workers. Many of the administrators loved their jobs so they naturally ended up logging more hours at work. They were passionate about their jobs and wanted to do the best work that they could to meet their own expectations, to please their students, and to satisfy their supervisors. Currie and Eveline (2011) found that academics were likely to do the same and to give into the “lure of work” (p. 537). Succumbing to the lure of work by working extra hours, however, added to Student Affairs administrators’ dissatisfaction with their overall work-life balance.

In order to offset the sometimes difficult schedules that their employees worked, supervisors provided administrators with opportunities to come into work late, take a day off, or leave early. While this kept the administrators relatively happy, they also acknowledged the

impact that their jobs had on their personal lives. Although Nadine loved her job, she asserted her dislike for being on-call early on during our interview.

I don't have a typical schedule, especially when we're on-call and stuff. There are nights when we're on-call so we're taking phone calls all night long. Do I have good work-life balance? I don't think so. I don't know that I do.

Other administrators appreciated the flexibility that their supervisors afforded them but were hesitant to take advantage of something like coming in late one day because they did not want to miss something that was happening in their office. Lauren shared,

I'll tell people that I supervise, "you were here until this time. Don't come in tomorrow 'til x time." But then they'll be here early and I don't know what it is. 'Cause I know I did that at times, too. When my supervisor said, "oh, don't come in," but I felt like I didn't want to miss.

Informal flexibility made some administrators feel that coming in late or leaving early was not officially condoned and therefore sometimes made them hesitant to take advantage of such opportunities. Administrators also knew that they were expected to be present during the workday and to log the face-time hours that their supervisors expected. The supervisors in Student Affairs sent mixed messages to administrators about the ideal worker. The established culture of working long hours also added to administrators' pressure to be present at work during the regular workday and after hours. Supervisory face-time expectations and the culture of working long hours, combined with administrators' passion for their jobs, left many of them feeling discontent with their work-life balance. Some IT technical administrators also were dissatisfied with their work-life balance.

IT Technical Administrators

Regular and extended hours. Out of all of the areas in which I interviewed administrators, those who worked in the IT technical area were the most likely to talk about pressure to maintain a physical presence in the office. No matter what jobs administrators in the IT technical area held, all of them described pressure to report on time for work and to be present during the university's regular nine to five business hours. According to Felicia, the ideal worker in the IT technical area is always present during business hours. "At Plains University, we have expectations from management that are not work-related. Be on time. You're expected to be on time and stay throughout the day." Jonathan confirmed that there are "people who come in at nine o'clock who you see racing in because they're almost late." IT technical administrators had difficulty understanding the logic behind this face-time presence requirement. Felicia, a young mother, described the pressure on time and presence as "not very family-friendly."

Like the administrators in Student Affairs, three-quarters of the IT technical administrators talked about working long hours, evenings, and weekends. Out of all of the administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology, IT technical administrators were the most likely to report that their jobs, due to the nature of technology, made demands on their time 24/7. Peter reported that the demands of his job were "24 hours a day. It doesn't stop. Weekends, too." Even though Nico shared a rotating on-call duty with his colleagues, he still felt that work was a "24/7 thing, all the time" and "I'm always connected."

Peter and Steven reported working on the weekends while sitting in a movie theater and after hours in a car on the freeway. In the words of Peter, "you can never get away." Peter noted that when he was at home, he probably spent about 10 to 15 minutes an hour on his work-issued

phone, “you’re on there all night, you really are.” Raul reported receiving phone calls at 10 o’clock at night and that he always kept his work phone close to him. “I don’t think it’s further than 10 feet away.”

Like the Student Affairs administrators, the IT technical administrators also reported not having enough time during the workday to complete all of the work that was assigned to them. This was particularly true for supervisors. Peter and Jonathan estimated that they worked approximately 50 to 60 hours per week. Jonathan explained,

there’s just so many things going on at all times here. There’s just no way you can get it done in a 35, 40 hour week. It’s not going to happen. Generally, I’ll go pick up lunch and bring it back. I rarely have a lunch where I’m unproductive. So my day starts when I get here at eight, eight-thirty, whatever it is, and it doesn’t stop until I leave at sometimes it’s five, sometimes it’s six, sometimes, it’s seven-thirty. It just depends on how into I am what I’m doing after five o’clock, how many meetings I’ve had during the day that have kept me from getting anything else done.

Peter noted that in addition to his regular work, he had “just a massive amount of projects ‘cause everything on campus belongs to IT one way or another these days.”

Other IT employees spoke about logging extra hours after work because of the pressure to keep their skills current and competitive in a rapidly changing technological environment. Raul described his time after he left work as, “after I get home, take care of the kids, and do email, then there’s self-development. You know, there’s always trying to stay on top of things to be cutting edge.” Rebecca spoke about the constant pressure to teach herself new skills and technology with little formal or outside training.

Accommodations. Throughout the IT technical interviews, only three work-life accommodations were mentioned. Rebecca was able to come into work 30 minutes late and leave 30 minutes later at the end of the day so she could care for her child in the morning, an option that she had negotiated with her supervisor. Two other employees reported that they often received an extra day off when they worked an overnight shift to perform a technology upgrade or were on-call for an extended period of time. Peter described this accommodation as one that was only provided when you have performed “major work where you’ve been here 24 hours and then you get the next day” but he mentioned that it would “almost be dangerous” for IT if leadership did not provide that accommodation. Steven noted that time off after long stints of work was “discretionary. Nothing is written in stone.”

Nearly everyone in the technical area of IT reported that they were unable to telecommute. According to Jonathan, “an expectation in IT, here, is that you’re here and you can’t work mobilely and this is the only IT position I’ve ever been in where that was the mindset. That’s the culture.” Steven confirmed, “Working from home is not something that’s encouraged, talked about. They like very much for you to be in.” Only Jonathan and Nico reported that their supervisors were flexible about permitting them to telecommute in an emergency or for a short amount of time such as when they had a plumber or a cable repair technician coming to their homes. Nico, however, was fearful to take advantage of this option too often. Instead, Nico “liked to have a presence” at work. “I’m very cautious in my moves, you know, when I’m in the workplace. I try not to rock the boat so I figure I better just show my face and just be here.” When pressed as to why he felt that way, Nico added,

maybe it's just me, you know, who feels that I need to be seen. Maybe I don't want to be out of sight, out of mind. Know what I mean? Because maybe if I'm out of sight too long, who knows what could happen.

Most IT technical administrators saw their work environment as inflexible with a heavy emphasis on face-time at work. Administrators were rarely offered accommodations like flexible hours or telecommuting and if they were, they were hesitant to take advantage of them because of the emphasis on presence at work during business hours.

The ideal IT technical administrator. In IT technical, the ideal worker was present during regular business hours and taught himself new programs and technology after work hours. The majority of the IT technical administrators worked evening and weekend hours, in large part, due to the 24/7 demands of their work and expectations that all systems would always be available. Unlike Student Affairs, there was no culture of flexibility supported by the IT technical area. In rare cases, administrators reported that they received a day off after working extended hours and only two administrators were able to telecommute.

Just three of the IT technical administrators in this study shared that their overall work-life balance was good or excellent. IT technical administrators desired to be able to telecommute and to adopt the flexible work practices of many of their peers who worked in IT at other organizations. They could not understand the area's emphasis on face-time at work. While Felicia was unable to telecommute, her husband's company, in contrast did not

really look at the person's presence in the office. They care more about the work so that has been a big help. Otherwise, I would say it has been very hard. Sometimes my kid gets sick a few times a month, mornings, at the time when I'm leaving the house. He will be throwing up but there is no way that I can say, "okay, I'll work from home."

As a member of a dual-career couple and with the pressure that she had to be on time for work and no option to telecommute, Felicia and her husband had to choose who would stay at home with their sick son. For Felicia, however, this required the use of one of her sick days, which made her uncomfortable; Felicia did not like to take too many days off for fear that it would impact her reputation and the way that her supervisor and her colleagues thought of her.

Peter believed that many IT technical administrators did not use their full allotment of vacation time on an annual basis. When asked why he thought this was the case,

I guess it's just the overwhelming amount of stuff and always the fear in the back of your mind, well, if I'm gone for three weeks, people are going to think I'm unnecessary or they've gone on well without me so now let's just shoot some other work to other people.

I mean, that's fear.

Face-time expectations to be present during the nine to five business hours left many of the IT technical employees fearful. Fearful of being late, fearful to use too much sick time or vacation time, fearful that they might not receive a day off after logging numerous hours, and fearful to take advantage of telecommuting, even when it was available to them. There was a very different atmosphere, however, in the IT creative area.

IT Creative Administrators

Regular and extended hours. IT creative administrators had great flexibility in their jobs. While most were expected to work during the university's regular business hours, there was a much more flexible culture in the IT creative environment than in the IT technical area or in Student Affairs. The supervisors in the IT creative area focused heavily on work results over physical presence so administrators were able to flex their hours and/or telecommute. Without formal telecommuting and flexible hours policies, however, the administrators typically reported

for work during regular business hours but knew that telecommuting or coming in late was an option that they could utilize, with the permission of their supervisor.

IT creative administrators indicated that their jobs made demands on their time but did not discuss the 24/7 pressure that the IT technical employees described. While all of the IT creative administrators worked evening and weekend hours on occasion, the IT creative supervisors were the most likely to do so on a regular basis. Non-supervisory administrators, like Bob and Jacob, occasionally performed some work on nights and weekends because they were diligent employees. Bob recounted that “occasionally, nights and weekends I’ll keep track of something that’s running. I’ll check my email or just check up on a system to make sure that it’s functioning properly.”

IT creative supervisors, Marty and Allison, were more likely to work late than their employees. Marty said that he usually left the office by six o’clock because after “4:45, when everybody gets out, I can get some work done.” Working late was a strategy that Marty employed to tackle his work once the interruptions ceased as employees left for the day. Marty said that he rarely took work home but admitted to checking and responding to emails at night. Allison, in contrast, strove to leave the office at five o’clock because of her commute. She stated, however, “I feel comfortable leaving at five because I know that I’m still connected all day long.” On the whole, “there’s barely a day that goes by that I’m not checking email on a regular basis when I’m home.” The culture of the IT creative area was far less of a 24/7 environment than the IT technical area. Supervisors tended to work some evening and weekend hours but mostly to catch up on their work or to check email, not because their jobs made 24/7 demands on their time.

Accommodations. On the whole, IT creative administrators reported little face-time pressure. Instead, these administrators described a far more flexible work environment than the IT technical administrators. Jacob reported, "I'm able to work from home sometimes. Marty's a really cool boss and I almost never get any flack for asking and I always ask. I'm able to take work home and I can be pretty mobile with it." Bob said, "I have a lot of flexibility" and noted that his supervisor was very understanding, "he gets it." If Bob needed a repair technician to come to his house or if his son was home from school because he was sick, Bob was able to work from home. Bob also shared, "one of the things I'm supposed to be doing is spending a whole day at home every month training." Unlike the IT technical administrators who experienced pressure to keep up with their skills and did so on their own time, the IT creative administrators were encouraged to spend a day each month at home acquiring new skills.

Much of this flexibility stemmed from the attitudes of the supervisors towards work. Marty recognized that "there are a lot of things that need to get done but there's yet to be a project that my career depended upon. You don't have those kinds of pressures in higher education." Marty noted that none of his employees are

paid a fortune to do what they do. They have good, stable jobs with good benefits and things like that and I've always thought that my role as a manager is to make sure that I make the work environment as good as I possibly can. I try to kick them out at five o'clock every day, no matter what's going on. Most of the time, I don't even have to kick them out. They know the expectation is it's five o'clock, I should go.

Marty, like his supervisor, Allison, focused on results. "The way I've always looked at it, and the way I know my boss looks at it with me, is as long as your work's getting done." If an administrator could accomplish a project at home and was not needed in the office that day,

Marty and Allison were comfortable permitting the administrator to do so, as long as the task was completed in a way that met expectations and was finished within a reasonable amount of time.

The ideal IT creative administrator. IT creative administrators had far more flexibility to manage their lives at work and their lives outside of work than IT technical administrators, as confirmed by Allison. “Across the entire IT organization, it’s [flexibility] not equal.” IT creative administrators were able to telecommute or to work a flexible schedule. The ideal worker in the IT creative area produced sound results on a reliable basis. He was regularly present at work but had the flexibility to telecommute or to flex his hours when needed. Telecommuting and working flexible hours were an established part of the culture in the IT creative area and were endorsed by the supervisors. Administrators appreciated this work environment; all of the administrators rated their overall work-life balance as excellent or good.

In contrast, there was a heavy emphasis on face-time in the IT technical area and administrators were afforded few opportunities to work flexibly. In Student Affairs, administrators were able to work a flexible schedule or to come in late from time to time, but were able to do so as a reward for working long hours. IT creative administrators were afforded these options because their supervisors believed in the practices and utilized them as just another way to conduct business in a mobile era.

Finance Administrators

Regular and extended hours. Out of all of the administrators in this study, Finance administrators were the least likely to work evening and weekend hours. Administrators who worked in more entry-level positions, like Jim and Julia, reported that they usually could accomplish their work within the university’s regular business hours. Julia stated, “yeah, I don’t

take anything home with me” while Jim said, “I think that’s a big thing, not having a job where you’re bringing the work home with you and then having that interfere with being at home.”

Although the administrators who worked in Finance were less likely than administrators in IT technical or in Student Affairs to work evening or weekend hours, they still experienced face-time pressure to be present during the university’s normal business hours. Julia believed that “my physical presence in the office is necessary every day or else the other two people who are there will have long lines and stuff without the extra person to help divert the traffic.” Jason reported that his supervisor “does expect me to be here as diligently as I can.” If an issue arose that Jason’s supervisor wanted addressed, Jason explained, “he’ll want to hand something off and move onto the next thing. And [if I’m not here] that can be sometimes detrimental.”

Higher-level administrators within Finance, particularly those with supervisory responsibilities, were the most likely to report working evening and weekend hours. Ana often stayed late so she did not have to bring work home. Rich typically worked an hour longer than the university’s standard workday and then brought reading materials and other work home with him at night or on the weekends. Jason noted that in the “past year and a half, I’ve worked significantly more at night. I’d say I average--so we’re supposed to [work] 35--I average, closer to 50, 55.”

Accommodations. While several of the Finance administrators reported that their supervisors had expectations in terms of their regular physical presence on the job, other administrators talked about some of the flexibility that they were afforded by their supervisors. When Savannah logged extra hours some nights, her supervisor permitted her to come into the office late the following day. Savannah’s supervisor also allowed her to telecommute when she had a problem at home. She and Brian worked flexible hours. Savannah came in one hour and

15 minutes before the Plains workday began and left early while Brian came in 45 minutes later than everyone else in the morning and stayed 45 minutes later at night. Ana noted that her supervisor was “very, very flexible. I think one woman used to work from 8:30 to 4:30 because of drop-offs and pickups [for her children].”

Other employees discussed how understanding their supervisors were when emergencies arose. Julia said of her supervisor, “she knows that things happen. Like my car broke down last week and she was just very, ‘well, get here when you can get here’ and you know, stuff like that.” When Jim ran into problems with his children’s childcare provider, his supervisor allowed him to take three weeks off from work with little notice. Ana’s daughter “got sick last year and we were investigating options so we went and interviewed a lot of different doctors and Kayla [Ana’s supervisor] was great about taking time off.”

The ideal Finance administrator. The ideal worker in the Finance area was present during the university’s regular business hours. While Finance administrators largely reported that they were unable to telecommute, there seemed to be a culture of flexibility in the Finance area, like the IT creative area. Administrators were able to come in late, flex their hours, and supervisors were accommodating in the event of an emergency. Although Finance administrators needed to be present at work, few complained about their work-life balance and nearly all of the administrators reported that they were satisfied with their overall work-life balance. Interestingly, however, nearly all of the administrators who worked in Finance had worked for another institution or in a corporate environment prior to coming to Plains. In their interviews, Finance administrators raised a topic that went unmentioned by administrators in most other areas, experiencing greater pressure and stress in their previous jobs.

Finance administrators Rich, Ana, and Jim all mentioned the pressure that they had been under in previous jobs and the ways in which the stress at Plains paled in comparison. Ana noted that in her previous corporate job she had been under constant pressure from her colleagues and her clients. She had often felt “pulled in both directions and you have to extend your hours” in order to respond to everyone. Jim confessed that “it’s easy to tell when work gets overwhelming” because he would start to dream about work. Since coming to Plains, “I’ve only had that once or twice here so I don’t think it’s really creeping into the home time or anything else like that.” Bob shared that while he may have looked calm on the outside in his previous position,

every night I’d wake up in the middle of the night and I found if I just kept a pad next to me, then I’d wake up and write down everything I needed to do or else I would never be able to get back to sleep. That actually helped me ‘cause I think when I’m under pressure, it’s not during the day, it’s in the middle of the night when you wake up and your brain starts going.

Since working at Plains, Bob had not yet felt the need to keep a pad next to his bed.

The pressure that some Finance administrators experienced at Plains was far less than what they had experienced working in other organizations. Although flexibility in Finance was heavily supervisor-driven, there seemed to be a culture that encouraged supervisors to accommodate their employee’s needs. Finance administrators were relatively satisfied with their overall work-life balance, especially those administrators who had worked in a corporate environment prior to working at Plains University.

Face-time expectations in Finance and Technology. Although the IT technical area, the IT creative area, and the Finance area all existed underneath the umbrella of the Division of

Finance and Technology, administrators within this division worked in three very different work environments. IT technical administrators faced significant face-time pressure. Administrators in this area were expected to report on time for work and to be present throughout the business day. Although two IT technical administrators reported that they had some degree of flexibility in their jobs, afforded to them by their supervisors, they were hesitant to take advantage of that flexibility. Most IT technical administrators had few accommodations available to them. The work environment in the Finance area was more flexible than the IT technical environment, however, face-time expectations during regular business hours still prevailed. Julia's customer-service focused role demanded that she be present to assist students who stopped by her office; Jason's role was more managerial in nature, however, his supervisor still expected that he be present in case he wanted to hand something off to Jason. Two of the Finance administrators were permitted to work flexible hours.

In contrast, administrators in the IT creative area were able to work flexible hours and telecommute. Administrators understood that they had the ability to request these accommodations when necessary and supervisors in this work area focused on results. Administrators did not have complete control over their hours; they were still expected to report to work during regular business hours, however, they knew that they could request an accommodation, if they so desired, and that it would likely be approved.

Brian, a Finance supervisor, was willing to grant his employees the ability to telecommute but did not feel that he had the power to do so because of the resistance of top leadership to the practice. While several of the administrators whom I interviewed mentioned this resistance to flexibility, most just attributed it to "management" or to "leadership" and could not or would not name specific individuals who might be responsible for it. Only Jonathan, an

IT technical supervisor, offered an explanation for the resistance and why most supervisors in the Division of Finance and Technology were unable to offer administrators formal accommodations despite their interest in them and their employee's interest in them. Jonathan believed that top leadership of the Division of Finance and Technology believed in management by walking around and "there's a validity to what they want to do here, you know, by having us present, but there's no technical reason and I don't really see the management reason why everybody has to be here five days a week."

While Allison and her IT creative colleagues had adopted informal practices and a culture that permitted employees to work flexibly, the IT technical and Finance supervisors did not feel that they had the same power. This may have been connected to the physical locations of the IT technical, IT creative area, and Finance offices. The IT technical area and the Finance area were housed in the same building as the top leadership of the Division of Finance and Technology so the IT technical and Finance administrators might have been more liable to experience face-time pressure imposed by the leadership's management by walking around philosophy. Since the IT creative administrators worked in a separate building, they may have been shielded from some of the face-time pressure that their colleagues in other work areas experienced. Allison and the other IT creative leaders also might have been more willing to take a risk and defy the established face-time expectation in the division than their colleagues.

Regardless of the reason and despite administrators' and supervisors' interest in work-life accommodations across the Division of Finance and Technology, few administrators felt comfortable taking advantage of work-life accommodations when granted and few supervisors felt empowered enough to offer these benefits to their employees. Most administrators could not understand the source of the face-time culture that prevailed over the division. Work-life

balance in the Division of Finance and Technology was supervisor-driven which led to unequal practices across the division.

Discussion

Work-life balance for administrators at Plains University largely was dependent upon each administrator's supervisor and that supervisor's attitude and expectations about work. Previous researchers found that supervisors played a key role in employees' work-life balance experiences (Allen, 2008; Clark, 2000; Grant et al., 2000; Jo, 2008). In all four of the areas that I examined at Plains, supervisors drove the culture and the practices surrounding administrators' flexibility.

Supervisors Drive Flexibility

In Student Affairs, some degree of flexibility was accepted by the supervisors and expected by the administrators. Shawn and Lauren's supervisor regularly granted time off after long stints of work, something that Shawn and Lauren had come to expect when they logged long hours. Maggie, a Student Affairs supervisor, tried to accommodate the unexpected events in her employees' lives and to be flexible about emergencies and problems as they arose.

In the IT technical area, most administrators had little flexibility because of the heavy face-time expectations that pervaded the area. IT technical supervisors did not feel that they had the power to offer their employees work-life accommodations. IT creative administrators, in contrast, had the greatest amount of flexibility of administrators in all of the areas in this study. The IT creative supervisors supported telecommuting and working flexible hours; administrators were able to work mobilely and were comfortable doing so. Supervisors, like Allison, emphasized results over face-time.

Throughout the Finance area, expectations regarding flexibility and face-time varied. Administrators reported that the amount of freedom that they had depended upon their supervisor. Some administrators were able to flex their hours to come in late and work later to accommodate childcare problems or other concerns in their personal lives. Other administrators, like Julia and Jim, believed that they needed to be present during regular work hours but that their supervisor made accommodations when emergencies occurred.

While supervisor-driven flexibility was helpful for some Plains administrators, the university's supervisor-driven atmosphere regarding flexibility led to unequal experiences for administrators who worked in different areas. Researchers have documented that supervisor-driven flexibility leads to different outcomes for different employees, depending on the employee's supervisor's attitude towards flexibility. Jo (2008) sampled employees who had voluntarily resigned from positions at a large, private, research university in the Northeast between 2000 and 2003 and found that whether administrators were able to work flexible hours was up to the employee's manager who could refuse to grant access to such accommodations. At Plains, flexibility was not uniformly applied. In the absence of formal work-life policies, administrators in different areas of the university had very different experiences and were left to negotiate individual arrangements with their supervisors. In some cases, supervisors were open to granting accommodations to their employees, as evidenced by Savannah and Brian who worked in Finance and flexed their hours. In other cases, however, supervisors were unwilling to grant accommodations; IT technical administrators were fearful to request accommodations.

Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, and Pruitt (2002) found that individually negotiated solutions in the workplace helped individuals to balance but had little impact on the underlying culture in the workplace. While Student Affairs administrators were offered informal practices that helped

them to maintain a sense of balance on occasion, like coming into work late following an evening event, the culture of Student Affairs with its long hours and evening and weekend events was at odds with this flexibility. Similarly, IT technical administrators usually received a day off following an overnight system upgrade but knew that this practice was at their supervisor's discretion. The culture of the IT technical area promoted the expectation that administrators would report to work on-time and remain present during regular work hours.

Desire for Formal Supports

Across both divisions, administrators who worked in areas where flexible accommodations were offered on an informal basis wanted formal work-life policies. Because telecommuting and working flexible hours were not official university policies, administrators understood that their accommodations were tenuous and could disappear at any time. While Jacob appreciated the flexibility that his supervisor afforded him in the IT creative area, he felt that his work-life balance would be better "if it didn't feel like I was getting away with something. 'Cause sometimes it does feel that way, you know? And I'll be more reluctant to ask, 'hey, could I just maybe work from home?'" When asked about his overall work-life balance, Bob decided,

Bob: I'd probably give it a nine 'cause there is room for improvement and because it isn't codified, it could go down to a three overnight.

Kelly: Why? If something happened to your supervisor?

Bob: Yeah, or her supervisor, or yeah. Things could go radically wrong.

Kelly: If there was a change?

Bob: Yeah, 'cause right now, it's really just at the whim/I don't want to call it a whim, that's not really fair, but at the discretion of the supervisor.

Administrators were concerned about having such supervisor-driven flexibility for many reasons. In a study that examined work-life policies for faculty at the University of Washington, Quinn et al. (2004) noted that in the absence of formal work-life policies, flexibility is sometimes treated as a privilege for a select few. Although the present study focused on administrators, not faculty, the findings were similar. Administrators in this study, like Jacob and Lauren, worried about being perceived by others as receiving special treatment which made them careful about when they chose to ask for flexibility or how often they did so. They worried about how their supervisors would perceive of them as workers if, for example, they asked to come in late too many times. Administrators also worried about how a change in supervisors would impact the flexibility that they had.

Lauren stated, “I almost wish/maybe there is something that exists but I don’t know of any official thing because in some ways having something official would take off the pressure.” Linda wanted the opportunity to officially be able to come into work late following an evening or a weekend Student Affairs event instead of asking her supervisor if she could do so or counting on him to offer the option to her. Jason wanted the opportunity to work flexible hours and believed “to do it in a manner which is approved, and understood, and expected, would be valuable.” Jacob wanted to have a policy about telecommuting so that he did not feel like it had to be “hush, hush” when he worked from home. “I feel like so much stuff is sort of on the side and under the table and never really brought to light.”

Administrators with informal flexibility wanted formal work-life policies because, like Lauren, they believed,

when things are institutionalized, it just makes it okay for everybody. It makes it more comfortable to go to some supervisors and say, “this is what I need” and “okay, we should be able to do that because according to the institution, we can do that.”

Researchers have documented the importance of having written, accessible, and detailed policies about work-life accommodations (Gappa et al., 2007; Quinn et al., 2004). Such policies also must be institutionalized and a part of the university’s culture (Mason & Goulden, 2004; Sullivan et al., 2004). In this study, administrators who had flexibility in their jobs acknowledged the need to formalize that flexibility so that it would be a legitimate way for them to work instead of a special privilege or an option left to the discretion of their supervisor. Without formal policies, administrators worried that they were not performing as ideal workers when they took advantage of informal flexible accommodations.

Structural and cultural supports. Kossek, Lewis, and Hammer (2010) examined the literature on work-life supports across industries and found that work-life policies typically took one of two forms: structural and/or cultural. Structural work-life supports were formal work-life policies and practices that enhanced a worker’s control over his work, such as telecommuting, job sharing, and flexible work schedules. Cultural work-life supports were informal workplace practices that when combined with cultural norms, enabled employees to perceive that work and family roles were embraced by their supervisor and their organization.

At Plains, administrators only had one work-life structural support in the form of an employee assistance hotline, something that none of the administrators mentioned during our interviews. Most believed that there were no structural work-life supports at the university. Research has documented that without structural supports, employees who have trouble integrating work with their personal lives are left on their own to deal with their problems

(Rapoport, Bailyn, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002). After Felicia, an IT technical administrator, gave birth to her son, she experienced problems balancing her new role as a mother with her professional life. She very strongly believed that structural work-life supports would have been useful to her during that period. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, administrators at Plains felt that structural work-life supports would show that the university backed administrators in their pursuit to be fully engaged in their work and their life outside of the workplace. They also believed that structural supports would add a sense of fairness and equity to the informal practices that some experienced in their work areas.

Structural supports alone, however, are not enough to create an atmosphere of flexibility in the workplace. Thompson (2008) documented that if an organization's culture does not support work-life flexibility, employees may still feel pressure to conform to the ideal worker model. Because of the long entrenched ideal worker model, employees are often concerned that use of formal and informal work-life supports will damage their professional reputation; they worry that if they take advantage of them, they will be perceived as less committed to their jobs or will be passed over for future promotions or opportunities (Hewlett, 2007; Thompson, 2008; Williams, 2000). Nico, for example, was fearful to work from home and felt that he needed to be present in the IT technical area on a regular basis. Kossek and Lautsch (2008) noted that often, employees will not utilize a work-life policy if their work unit's or department's microculture says that the only way to move up within the organization is if you place your job before everything else in your life.

While supervisors in Student Affairs were somewhat supportive of flexible work accommodations, the culture of the division emphasized working long hours. Student Affairs administrators were left to interpret the mixed messages that they received regarding flexibility

and the ideal worker in the division on their own. In contrast, while the culture of the IT creative area supported work-life flexibility, administrators still felt pressure to report to work during regular business hours and to be cautious about how frequently they requested accommodations. Although Jacob knew that his supervisor supported telecommuting, he shared with me that he did not feel comfortable asking if he could telecommute until he had worked at Plains for a few years and knew that he had gained the trust of his supervisor. IT creative administrators knew that the accommodations that they received were not supported by the university. Thus, the supports that the IT creative administrators received were not true cultural supports since according to Kossek et al.'s (2010) definition cultural work-life supports must be embraced by an employee's supervisor and the broader organization.

Structural and cultural work-life supports demand that organizations challenge the notion of the ideal worker and the emphasis on face-time that pervades so many workplaces, including the workplace at Plains University (Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010). In the Division of Student Affairs, administrators felt the need to be present to meet their supervisor's expectations, students' expectations, and cultural expectations. Administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology believed that top divisional leadership viewed long hours as an indication of commitment and productivity. According to Bailyn (1993), as long as the commitment and productivity of employees is judged by time logged in the office, an emphasis on long hours and face-time at work will persist. Instead, organizations need to value working smarter over working longer hours or logging face-time. In order to foster true cultural change, supervisors need to learn to judge employees' performance by their results, not by the amount of time that they spend in the office (Catalyst, 2001; Hochschild & Machung, 1989/2003).

There did seem to be some willingness on the part of many supervisors to judge administrators' commitment and productivity by more than their presence at work. Maggie indicated that she might question the efficiency of an administrator who regularly logged long hours. Supervisors in the IT technical area were willing to rethink the rules at work and to allow administrators to telecommute and to flex their hours. Allison, an IT creative supervisor, already judged her administrators' performance by their work results over their presence in the workplace.

These findings substantiate Kossek et al.'s (2010) definition of work-life cultural supports as accommodations that must be embraced by supervisors and organizations. These findings also suggest, however, that another dimension must be added to Kossek et al.'s definition. Cultural work-life supports need to go beyond the organizational and supervisory levels envisioned by Kossek et al. (2010) to the individual level. Student Affairs administrators logged long hours because of face-time expectations and because of their passion for their work. Thus, even when structural supports and supervisory and organizational cultural supports remove face-time expectations, administrators may still work long hours because of their love for their jobs. While institutions certainly do not want to discourage administrators from working hard or putting in the time necessary to accomplish their work, they will need to ensure that their messages to administrators about work-life support reach the individual level. Otherwise, supervisory and organizational cultural supports for work-life may not be enough to develop a supportive work-life culture.

Until change occurs at all levels of the institution, from the development of structural policies to cultural acceptance of work-life supports on the part of administrators, supervisors, and the university, ideal worker expectations likely will continue to prevail. Work will remain

organized around the ideal worker instead of the integrated worker who is able to fully participate in the workplace and in his/her private life outside of the workplace (Bailyn et al., 2001). Administrators in the Division of Student Affairs and in the Division of Finance and Technology will continue to experience face-time expectations and supervisor-driven flexibility.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the work-life balance experiences of administrators at one institution of higher education and how those experiences varied based on workplace norms and subcultures, as measured by administrators' perceptions. Through qualitative methods, I examined the experiences of administrators in the Division of Finance and Technology and in the Division of Student Affairs at one private, doctoral-granting institution, Plains University. I investigated the ways in which administrators understood the ideal worker in their division and in their work area. I also looked for similarities and differences between the experiences of administrators.

This research is important because the demographics of the American workforce have changed. Today, women are more than 50% of the workforce, dual-career couples are the norm, and the number of single parent households is on the rise. Many researchers have studied the work-life balance experiences of employees who work in corporate environments and documented the problems that they have found. Corporations have responded by enacting work-life balance policies and have found that they improve employee productivity, engagement, commitment, and retention. Similarly, over the last decade and a half, researchers have examined work-life balance for faculty and found the experience to be problematic. Work-life policies are believed to be a way to remedy the structural inequities faced by female faculty, to improve the work experience for all faculty, and to recruit and retain the best faculty. Little is known, however, about the work-life balance experiences of administrators in the academy.

As tenure-track faculty positions shrink and institutions face growing calls for accountability, the number of administrators who work in the academy continues to expand.

Researchers have documented that the work-life experiences of employees can vary by industry (Anderson et al., 2002). Thus, the work-life experiences of administrators in the academy may not be the same as the experiences of employees who work in corporate environments or even faculty. Research on the work-life balance experiences of administrators has important implications for the administrators themselves, the institutions in which they work, and the academy as a whole.

This study's findings enabled me to answer the research questions outlined in chapters I and III. In the following section, I summarize the findings for each research question and describe how the study advances the ideal worker model. I then delineate the limitations of the study and offer recommendations for future research. I close with recommendations for university leaders and policy makers.

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1: *How do Finance and Technology and Student Affairs administrators describe their work-life balance experience at Plains University?*

Half of the administrators in this study experienced difficulty balancing work with their responsibilities outside of work. Administrators were unable to completely separate the two realms and spillover occurred from work to administrators' personal lives and from administrators' personal lives to work. Technology blurred the personal and professional roles held by many administrators. Varied and unclear expectations surrounding technology and connectivity left administrators feeling confused and dissatisfied. Both male and female administrators experienced work-life conflict or interrole conflict between their personal and professional lives. The prevalence of dual-career couples also complicated administrators'

ability to balance their personal and professional lives. This study indicates that work-life balance may be problematic for more than just the faculty in the academy.

In the absence of formal work-life policies at Plains University, the amount of work-life flexibility experienced by administrators was supervisor-driven. Few structural or cultural work-life supports existed for administrators. This led to unequal experiences for administrators who worked in different areas and confusion regarding the ideal worker. Across both divisions, administrators desired formal work-life supports that would clarify ideal worker expectations and make utilization of flexible work practices acceptable. Nearly all of the administrators, 94%, were interested in work-life balance policies. Administrators who worked in the IT creative area desired formal accommodations to make the informal practices in their work area official instead of what felt like special privileges. Other administrators who had less flexibility, like those who worked in the IT technical area, wanted work-life policies so they could work like their peers in other organizations and telecommute or flex their hours.

The most desired policies were telecommuting, flexible hours, and childcare. Some administrators saw these policies as a way to improve their work-life balance experience. They thought that such policies could ease some of the pressure that technology and/or membership in a dual-career couple placed on them. Others recognized that the policies existed in other workplaces and viewed them as a workplace accommodation that they expected in the 21st century. Administrators believed that work-life balance accommodations would make them more effective workers and improve their productivity. They also thought that such policies would improve administrator retention and foster goodwill towards the institution.

Research Question 2: *How does an administrator's understanding of workplace norms and ideal worker expectations in his/her division impact his/her work-life balance experience and*

behavior? How do the work-life balance perspectives of administrators who work in Finance and Technology diverge and converge with those of administrators who work in Student Affairs?

Different work environments were found to exist within each of the two divisions and four work areas studied at Plains University. These varied work environments impacted administrators' work-life balance experiences and their understanding of the ideal worker at Plains University. In Student Affairs, supervisors offered administrators some degree of work-life flexibility but that flexibility conflicted with the culture of long hours and face-time in the division. Therefore, administrators were sometimes hesitant to take advantage of flexibility; many were discontent with their work-life balance. Administrators received mixed messages about the ideal Student Affairs administrator.

Administrators in the IT technical area experienced the least amount of flexibility. The majority of administrators worked evening and weekend hours due to the demands of their jobs and expectations that all systems would always be available. The ideal IT technical administrator reported on-time for work, was present throughout the day, and made himself/herself available after regular work hours. In contrast, administrators in the IT creative area worked in the most flexible environment. These administrators were able to telecommute or to flex their hours on occasion. The area offered informal work-life accommodations that administrators could request when necessary. The IT creative work area emphasized results, not face-time. Face-time expectations prevailed in Finance, however, the environment was more flexible than the IT technical area and required fewer late nights and weekends than Student Affairs. Supervisors generally accommodated administrators' needs. Figure 1 depicts expectations for administrators across Plains University.

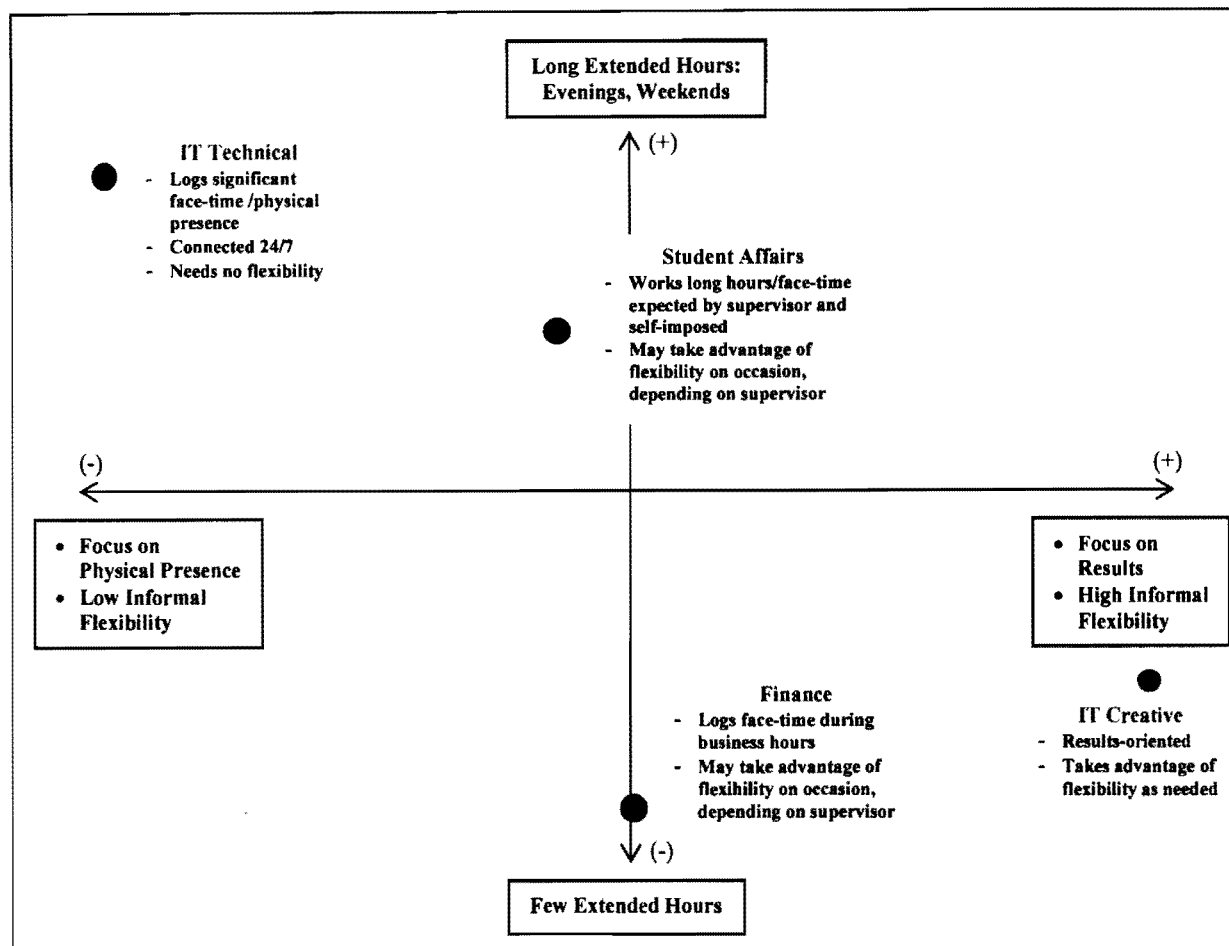


Figure 1. Administrator Expectations Across Plains University.

The ideal worker has been described as someone who can devote unlimited time to his/her job and has few distractions outside of the workplace. Historically, the ideal worker has been a male employee with no childcare responsibilities who can log the requisite face-time hours during business hours and beyond. The ideal worker model depicts the IT Technical workplace as described by administrators who worked in that area. Administrators in Student Affairs and in Finance also experienced expectations to log face-time hours and pressure to make their physical presence apparent.

The ideal worker model, albeit untenable due to the demands of today's dual career couples and the spillover that we know occurs between an individual's personal and professional

roles, persisted in the work areas studied at Plains University. I assert, however, that technology has complicated the traditional ideal worker model. Uncertain expectations surrounding the use of technology left many administrators in this study unclear about when and how they should utilize technology after work hours and on vacations. The ideal worker is still one who can log the requisite number of face-time hours, however, many administrators in this study perceived that the ideal worker also logged face-time after business hours through the use of technology. Across all four work areas, administrators described conflicting feelings about technology and the ability to remain connected to work. Few administrators reported that they received clear expectations from their supervisors regarding the use of technology after business hours.

Work-life boundaries remained ill-defined for many of the administrators in this study. Left to their own conclusions, administrators, especially those who sought to appear as dedicated, committed workers, surmised that the ideal worker responded to technology during and after work hours. As described in the foregoing summary of the findings from research question one, participants desired formal employer-sponsored work-life supports that would clarify ideal worker expectations for administrators at Plains University.

Limitations

Since I emailed administrators to solicit participation in this study, I must acknowledge that the individuals who participated may have been individuals who were interested in work-life balance or who had concerns about their own work-life balance. I designed my sampling selection procedures very deliberately to guard against this and while I do not believe that this possibility limited my ability to effectively answer the research questions, it may have contributed to the large number of participants who expressed an interest in work-life balance policies in this study.

The goal of the study, like nearly all qualitative studies, was generalizability through the development of theory (Maxwell, 1992). Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to administrators at other institutions or even to the broad population of administrators at Plains University. Instead, my findings are applicable to administrators in the Divisions of Finance and Technology and Student Affairs at this particular institution. The design of this study could be tested, however, on administrators who work in other areas of Plains University and at other institutions. Indeed, more qualitative research on the work-life experiences of administrators would enrich our understanding of this group of employees in the academy.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should address whether the ideal worker as understood today is one who logs face-time during work hours and afterwards through the use of technology. In particular, research should address whether technological face-time has become a part of the ideal worker model for administrators across the academy, as well as for faculty and for corporate employees. Although unrealistic and impractical, the ideal worker model continues to persist across industries.

Future research also needs to study the work-life balance experiences of administrators who work at other types of institutions and in other areas of the academy. Little is known about the work-life experiences of administrators who work in development or athletics, for example. Research also needs to explore the work-life balance experiences of non-exempt employees in the academy. Faculty, administrators, and non-exempt employees work together to ensure the smooth operation of each institution. The different nature of each group of employee's jobs, however, indicates that each group likely will experience work-life balance differently and will have different needs.

Recommendations for University Leaders and Policymakers

Across the Division of Finance and Technology and the Division of Student Affairs, administrators noticed of the lack of work-life policies that were available to them. Jason suggested that

The university could be more aggressive in its recognition that higher ed can play a significant value-added role in establishing work-life balance for professionals and young professionals. The higher education community relies on experts in so many different verticals and so many different professions and could easily be a bastion of how to provide that. Yet, I think that this university falls short in demonstrating how or being vocal about it.

Administrators desired work-life policies and believed that the academy, with all of its knowledge, could lead workplaces across industries as a work-life balance model.

Administrators also thought that it would be in the best interest of Plains University to adopt work-life policies for administrators; they thought that such policies could bring important benefits to the institution like improved administrator retention and increased productivity.

In light of these findings, Plains University should conduct more research regarding the work-life balance needs of all of its administrators and consider adopting and implementing work-life balance policies targeted towards administrators. Successful implementation of these supports, however, will demand that Plains University confront and challenge the notion of the ideal worker and its emphasis on face-time that persists across the Division of Finance and Technology and the Division of Student Affairs. Implementation of such policies alone will not override the prevailing long-hours culture in many of the work areas. Plains will need to

encourage administrators to work more efficiently instead of working long hours. Supervisors will need to emphasize results over time spent in the workplace.

The university, supervisors, and administrators will need to confront the ways in which technology has changed the work environment. Clear expectations regarding the use of technology after work hours may help to remedy the confusion surrounding this topic and to improve work-life balance for administrators. Work-life policies can offer employees a viable balancing strategy, however, these structural supports must be accompanied by cultural change and the development and establishment of a workplace culture that endorses structural work-life balance supports. Further, these supports must extend to the level of the individual. While structural and cultural supports will improve the success of work-life policies, individuals also must embrace these supports in order for them to find success.

The ideal worker model that persists for faculty in the academy remains well-entrenched for administrators who work in the Division of Finance and Technology and in the Division of Student Affairs at Plains University. As new generations of administrators with different values assume positions in the academy, the existence of work-life balance accommodations for administrators may become increasingly important. Thus, more research about administrators' work-life balance experiences and their understanding of the ideal worker model may better position the academy for the future and enable it to retain and to support a diverse administrative workforce.

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Appendix A
Summary of Featured Work-Life Balance Experience Studies

Study Focus	Author	Participants	Method	Results
Corporate Employees	Matos & Galinsky (2011)	3,502 employees	Quantitative	Shortage of time; flexible work environment important
	Friedman & Greenhaus (2000)	860 business school alumni	Quantitative	Shortage of time; flexible work environment important
	Winslow (2005)	920 employees	Quantitative	Work-life conflict on rise
	Emslie & Hunt (2009)	23 employees	Qualitative	Work-life balance problematic over longer period for women
	Harrington, Van Deusen, & Ladge (2010)	33 male employees with children	Qualitative	50% experienced trouble balancing
	Ward & Wolf-Wendel (2004a)	29 female faculty with children	Qualitative	Role conflict; role quality and flexible work environment important
Faculty	Wolf-Wendel & Ward (2006)	117 female faculty with children	Qualitative	Role conflict; institutional type impacted work-life balance and flexibility
	Sorcinelli & Near (1989)	112 faculty	Qualitative	50% experienced work-life balance stress; shortage of time; spillover
	Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin (2000)	350 faculty	Qualitative	Trouble balancing competing priorities; lack integrated life
	Grant, Kennelly, & Ward (2000)	602 faculty at doctoral-granting institutions	Mixed	Work-life conflict; greedy jobs; undivided commitment to job necessary

Study Focus	Author	Participants	Method	Results
Administrators	Bailey (2008)	9 deans	Qualitative	Tension between personal and professional lives
	Herman & Gyllstrom (1977)	500 faculty and non-faculty employees	Quantitative	Role conflict
	Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, & Stough (2001)	178 faculty and non-faculty employees	Qualitative	Stress impacts work-life balance
	Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, Hapuarachchi, & Boyd (2003)	9,732 faculty and non-faculty employees	Quantitative	Psychological strain

Appendix B
Participant Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate today. What I'd like to do is to discuss the ways in which you balance your work as an administrator in higher education with your responsibilities outside of work. This conversation will be recorded and I will take notes but everything that you say will remain confidential. After this interview, I will assign a fictitious name to you and refer to you by that name in any work that I produce for this research. If I have questions about anything that we discuss, I may come back to you at a later time and ask to speak with you further for greater clarification or additional details. Would that be okay with you?

- 1.) Let's start by talking about what attracted you to higher education.
 - a.) And what brought you to Plains University?

- 2.) Tell me about your current job.
 - a.) Can you describe for me the type of work that you perform?
 - b.) What kind of demands does your job make on your time?
 - c.) Last week, how many hours did you work? Was that a normal week for you?
 - d.) How do you accomplish your work and when do you do so?
 - e.) How would you describe the pressure in your job?
 - f.) What are your supervisor's expectations in terms of your presence at your job?
 - g.) What are your supervisor's expectations for your coworkers in terms of their presence?

- 3.) How do you spend your time outside of your job? (family or close friends who compete for your time—a spouse, children, aging parents or relatives)
 - a.) Family—can you talk to me about that?
 - i.) How do you juggle those demands with your work?
 - For example, could you walk me through what your day looked like yesterday? Last week?
 - ii.) Do you anticipate that you may have any family pressures on you in the future? Do you think that your parents or other relatives might need your help as they get older?
 - b.) With the hours that you work, is it difficult to find the time to see friends and pursue hobbies/interests?
 - i.) How have you juggled your work with time for yourself?

- 4.) What has influenced your decisions regarding your career? (e.g.—money, ambition, desire to help others, balance, jobs you have had that made you realize what you didn't want)
 - a.) Has your family or have family issues influenced any of your career decisions?
 - b.) Have career issues influenced your decisions about your family?

- 5.) Does your institution offer any work-life policies to help you?
 - a.) If yes, could you please describe them?

- i.) Have you utilized any of them?
 - If yes, talk about experience—advantageous? Use accepted by supervisor and colleagues? In what ways have the policies assisted you?
 - If no, why?
- b.) If no, are there any informal practices at the institution that help you to balance? For example, a flexible supervisor or the freedom to set your own work hours?

6.) Some increasingly popular employer-sponsored work-life accommodations across higher education include: on-site childcare, child and elder care referral services, part-time work that ramps back up to full-time over a particular period of time, job sharing, flexible hours.

- a.) Do you think that any of these policies would help you? Would you take advantage of them?
- b.) What else, if anything, do you think that your institution could do or should do to help you?

7.) What keeps you at Plains University?

Appendix C

Participant Matrix

Name	Division	Gender	Evening/ Weekend Hours?	Interested in Flexibility?
Danny	SA	M	Yes	Employer should provide
Janet	SA	F	Yes	Telecommuting okay for her people one day a week
Joy	SA	F	Sometimes	Childcare, job sharing
Kathy	SA	F	Yes	Yes, telecommuting but not realistic--need presence
Lauren	SA	F	Yes	Yes, flexible hours
Linda	SA	F	Yes	Yes, need more conversations about how people balance
Maggie	SA	F	Yes	Doesn't like working from home for supervisory reasons; wishes Plains could be more encouraging of creative work solutions; yes, daycare
Maria	SA	F	Yes	Yes, but not sure could work in all realms of Student Affairs
Nadine	SA	F	Yes	Yes, telecommuting every other week
Phil	SA	M	Yes	Yes, eldercare, childcare
Rob	SA	M	Yes	Daycare, telecommuting but unrealistic--need presence
Sally	SA	F	Yes	Job sharing, childcare, compressed hours
Scott	SA	M	No	Not really, feels better to be present
Shawn	SA	M	Sometimes	Yes, telecommuting and flextime but might be tough because needs to be present and accessible at work. Childcare, paternity leave

Name	Division	Gender	Evening/ Weekend Hours?	Interested in Flexibility?
Ana	F	F	Yes	Yes, flexible hours
Brian	F	M	No	Yes, telecommuting
Jason	F	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours
Jim	F	M	No	Yes, telecommuting, childcare
Julia	F	F	No	No need now
Rich	F	M	Yes	Would allow for his employees but prefers presence
Savannah	F	F	No	Yes, eldercare, childcare
Felicia	ITT	F	No	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours
Jonathan	ITT	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours
Nico	ITT	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, eldercare
Peter	ITT	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours, childcare
Raul	ITT	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours, childcare
Rebecca	ITT	F	No	Yes, telecommuting, eldercare
Steven	ITT	M	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours
Allison	ITC	F	Yes	Yes, telecommuting, flex hours
Bob	ITC	M	No	Daycare, eldercare, institutionalized flex
Jacob	ITC	M	Yes	Yes, institutionalized telecommuting policy, flex hours
Marty	ITC	M	Yes	Yes