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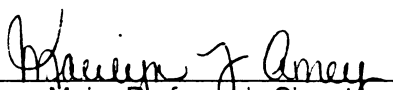
WORK AND LIFE BALANCE: A STUDY OF COMMUNITY
COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL DEANS

presented by

JEAN MARISE BAILEY

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**WORK AND LIFE BALANCE:
A STUDY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OCCUPATIONAL DEANS**

By

Jean Marise Bailey

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

WORK AND LIFE BALANCE: A STUDY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL DEANS

By

Jean Marise Bailey

Work/life is a topic that increasingly appears in literature and conversation in our society today. As people work longer hours and work harder to do more with less in order to beat competition to the goal, it becomes more difficult for workers to manage both their work lives and their personal lives.

This study investigated work/life issues faced by community college occupational deans. The goal of the study was to understand how occupational deans in a Midwestern state manage both their work and personal lives. In addition, the study revealed strategies, support structures, and coping mechanisms used as well as provided insight into the nature of the responsibilities of occupational deans and the multiple roles they play both at and away from work.

For David and Mom

My constant supporters and best friends

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Balancing one's life has become a prominent topic in society over the past decade or so. Just keeping up with life seems to be a challenge for many people. Part of the reason for this challenge is that Americans are working longer hours than ever before. In 2000, Americans were working an average of 1,978 hours per year, up 36 hours from 1990 (Philipson, 2002). However, longer working hours and working more days per year are not the only issues. The demographics of work and family have changed substantially with more single parent and dual-career couples in the workforce. Despite this demographic change, the culture and organization of paid work, domestic care work, and community organizations have maintained the traditional "breadwinner-homemaker model" (Bailyn, Drago, & Kochran, 2001). This model functions under the assumption that workers have someone to whom they can subordinate household responsibilities. Workers now find themselves struggling with the changing demographics of society under this traditional work model. While it is often necessary for people to juggle multiple roles, it is common to find them stretched thinly among the various responsibilities in lives, searching for solutions to this dilemma. This is common for people in many professions; however, community college occupational deans may face the juggling act in unique ways due to their multiple job responsibilities. This study will examine how community college occupational deans manage their work and their personal lives.

Definitions—What Is Work/Life?

In work/life literature the concept of work/life is often coupled with the word “balance” (Bailyn, et al., 2001; Williams, 2000). Work/life is commonly referred to as “work and life” or “work and family” to represent the dichotomy of these two areas of a person’s life. For the purpose of this study, the term work/life refers to a person’s work (employment) life and personal life, experiences not work related. A basic definition for balance used in work/life literature encompasses emotional, spiritual, physical, and developmental components; taking beliefs, dreams, and experiences into account; living in the present; and taking action (Haddock, Zimmerman, Scott, & Current, 2001). However, researchers in the field of work/life often struggle with the term “balance” because it implies an equal distribution of work and life causing people to struggle with the idea that there should be an equal division between these two aspects of their lives (Ward, 2003). Instead, the terms “integration” or “weaving” are more appropriate. It is important to realize that work is a meaningful and necessary part of life for most people, not to be separated from life as in the notation work/life (Rapoport , Bailyn, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002). It is not an either/or, and not everyone wants to give equal weight to work and personal life (Rapoport, et al., 2002). Therefore, it is helpful to approach work/life from an integrated perspective. Men and women should be able to experience work and personal lives, not in conflict or separate, but as integrated (Rapoport, et al., 2002). To foster this integrated perception, it is important for employers to view work and personal life as interdependent, equally valued activities (Bailyn, Drago, & Kochan, 2001).

Maggie Jackson (2002) approaches integrating work and personal life by examining home and personal lives to see how work can be blended into them. Her research examines work/life in diverse ways including integration, redefining home to integrate work, and breaking up or changing the workday to take time for personal activities. Others agree that work/life is an approach to changing the ways people work that allow time for personal pursuits. For example, an article in the Harvard Business Review on Work and Life Balance looks at work/life from an integrated perspective encouraging organizations to first, help employees recognize organizational priorities while employers respect the personal priorities of employees; second, to support employees as whole people; and third, to continually evaluate the work setting and practices to support the personal lives of their employees (Friedman, Christensen, & DeGroot, 1998). While this view focuses on recognizing all the components of a person's life, typically the opposite of this perspective is the reality in the workplace. More often, in this new global economy focused on 24/7 availability and long work hours, employees are viewed as if they had no personal interests or domestic care concerns (Bailyn, et al., 2001).

Much of the work/life literature bases the balance issue on the concept of the ideal worker norm in society (Bailyn, et al., 2001; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Williams, 2000). Ideal worker jobs are thought to be those that are full-time, blue-collar jobs in the working-class context and high-level executive and professional jobs for middle class and above (Williams, 2000). Specifically, the ideal worker model assumes that people in these jobs can subordinate all other

elements of life to the requirements of the job (Bailyn, et al., 2001). For workers under this model, work is primary; time to spend at work is unlimited; and the demands of family, community, and personal life are secondary (Rapoport, et al., 2002). Add to this norm the changes that have occurred in workplaces, such as more dual career couples, heavier workloads, and longer working hours; and it is easy to see that caregivers often cannot perform as ideal workers as they no longer operate in an ideal worker context (Williams, 2000). With this ideal worker norm so ingrained in society and workplaces, it is no wonder many struggle to meet the demands of busy lives that do not fit this mold.

Why Community College Occupational Deans?

It is important to address the topic of work/life as it relates to community college occupational deans for several reasons. In addition to transfer programs, community colleges hold a unique position as educators for local sub-baccalaureate labor markets serving adults who want to improve their employment and economic status (Jacobs, 2001a). Occupational deans, the people responsible for job market programs and training, are under significant stress from both external and internal changes. Externally, occupational structures and job structures are in enormous flux as the focus of occupational training has shifted from a few large firms to several smaller firms causing a more diversified focus for training. In addition, training needs are harder to identify since no one knows what the demand for particular occupations, such as those in the industrial technology areas, will be given the inability to predict trends in our ever changing global economy (J. Jacobs, personal communication, October 5,

2004). Furthermore, many occupational programs, such as apprentice and health programs, are externally certified requiring occupational administrators to maintain program requirements that meet these types of external certifications and licensures. Internally to the community college, occupational deans are traditionally responsible for federal Tech Prep and Perkins occupational funds; however, today federal funding is a very small part of the responsibilities of occupational deans as many of them are now overseeing workforce development training, credit, and non-credit training. They deal with expanding roles in workforce development training, constant fluctuation in workforce organization, and changes in the location of work (J. Jacobs, personal communication, October 5, 2004).

In addition to workforce changes, community college occupational programs enroll diverse students of different ages with different life experiences and a broad range of educational goals resulting in the challenge of serving multiple markets with widely varying objectives (Jacobs, 2001b). Traditional students come to community colleges to begin their training in a particular field with intentions of transferring to a four-year institution to continue their education; yet many of them fail to get a baccalaureate degree (Jacobs, 2001b). Oftentimes, traditional students drop in and out of community colleges, going from a couple semesters of school to work and back to school again (Jacobs, 2001b). Older working adults come to community colleges to update or improve their skills, but these students often struggle with a deficiency in basic academic skills and life circumstances such as childcare and work schedules that make attending

classes challenging (Jacobs, 2001b). Another growing group of students is the "reverse transfers" who are adults with college degrees attending community colleges to acquire specific occupational skills (Jacobs, 2001b). All these students seek occupational training that is unique to them and their needs. These unique training needs diversify the roles of the occupational deans as they attempt to provide programming to suit a variety of situations.

Typically, community college missions focus on student success and community needs, seldom mentioning employee needs. Several current factors related specifically to administrators make this a timely and necessary study. For one, college administrators typically function from an ideal worker model, working a full day and some evenings, when necessary, plus occasional travel away from home (Bright, & Richards, 2001). In a Chronicle of Higher Education article (1999 <http://chronicle.com/jobs/v45/i44/4544person.htm>), Milton Greenberg gave the following description of a college administrator's life:

There is a major physical dimension to academic administration: long days, frequent evening engagements, often several days a week, much of it social or political, attending to the infinite aspects of university life on campus (you are expected to be there), in the local community (you are expected to be there) and in the broader community (ditto). I found very few of my administrative colleagues needing or getting eight hours of sleep any night. If you treasure lots of sleep and control of your time and energy, higher administration is not for you.

Yet another factor to consider is the increasing turnover in administrative positions at community colleges due to retirements of administrators who have worked at community colleges since the 60s and 70s when many community colleges were established (Barwick, 2002; Cohen & Brower, 1996; Fisher, 2002; Wolf & Carroll, 2002). While more administrative positions are available than ever before, it is becoming harder for community colleges to recruit qualified applicants willing to do the job. In addition, the educational administrative workplace has not changed to accommodate employees' increasing multiple obligations and responsibilities making the work/life situation challenging for everyone. This is particularly true for women when they perceive the dual roles of their personal and professional lives as career inhibitors as they struggle to play "a game" in which men make the rules by which women must play (Glazer-Raymo, 1999). Similar circumstances also affect the present generation of men from dual career relationships who might aspire to administrative positions.

In his article, *The Postmodern Challenge: Changing Community Colleges*, Bergquist (1998) mentions issues of work/life when he gives the example of people not knowing whether they are inside or outside the organization because the conveniences of modern technology, such as car phones, email, and home computers blur the line that separates their home lives from their work lives. He questions:

Is the edginess of the community college instructor or dean in part a continuing confusion about what is work, what is home, and what is leisure? Is the time we save with wonderful new devices time

that we take away from our own lives and the lives of the people with whom we do not work, such as friends and family? (p. 95).

Work/life has already come to the forefront as an issue for four-year colleges and universities. Leaders in work and personal life research include Penn State (Drago, Crouter, Wardell, & Willits, 2001), Boston College (www.bc.edu/wfnetwork), University of Wisconsin (Anderson, Morgan, & Wilson, 2002), and six Sloan Centers of Working Families located at Cornell University, University of Chicago, University of California, Berkeley, University of Michigan, Emory University, and University of California, Los Angeles (Christensen, 2003). In addition, organizations such as the College and University Work/Family Association (CUWFA) have emerged to provide information on work/family issues within the specialized environment of higher education. CUWFA offers services to support the diverse group of professionals contributing to the development of work/family programs and policies on campus (cuwfa.org, 2003). Much of the work/life research at the university level focuses on faculty lives, particularly those of women faculty. While some of the information obtained in studies conducted at the university level can be adapted to community colleges, it is also important to research this population independently because of the uniqueness of the community college environment.

This study focuses on occupational deans at the community college level. The occupational deans in this study are the identified occupational contacts for a Midwestern state and are considered to be the instructional administrators primarily responsible for occupational courses, programs, and faculty. However,

deans responsible for occupational programs are typically involved in additional activities such as participating in program advisory committees, dealing with outside regulating agencies, and connecting with business and industry representatives.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to understand how community college occupational deans in a Midwestern state manage their work and personal lives. More specifically, this study investigated the strategies used and the issues faced by the occupational deans as they manage their multiple roles. In addition, it was anticipated that the data collected will reveal any evidence of conflict or struggle that these deans may face as they attempt to manage their work and personal lives. I was also hoping to reveal how closely the occupational deans align themselves with the ideal worker norm.

This population has not been studied from a work/life perspective. The work roles of the occupational dean continue to change and the demographics of the people in these roles have changed with increasing numbers of minorities and women in these positions. This study provides insight into life as an occupational dean from both a male and female perspective.

Research Questions

Using a qualitative design and personal interviews for data collection, three research questions will be addressed in this study.)

1. How do community college occupational deans perceive their lives from a work/life perspective?

2. How do the requirements of their positions affect the abilities of community college occupational deans to manage the demands of their work lives and their personal lives?
3. How do community college occupational deans manage their work lives and their personal lives?

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Community college occupational deans face enormous challenges daily as they confront their multifaceted responsibilities. These deans often put in long hours beyond the normal work day to accomplish their many responsibilities, leaving little time and energy for personal lives and responsibilities at home. As more and more community college administrators retire leaving positions to be filled, it is important to explore the lives of community college occupational deans both from a professional perspective and a personal perspective to find out more about the people currently holding these positions, the roles these administrators play, and their lives away from campus. This study investigates the lives of community college occupational deans from several different angles to detect the strategies they employ and the barriers they may face as they attempt to manage together their professional and personal lives. Therefore, the topics examined draw from literature on various work/life perspectives and literature focusing on work/life issues in business and industry and higher education. The higher education literature covers work/life issues pertaining to four-year college and university faculty and administrators and two-year community college faculty and administrators. In addition, theoretical frameworks are reviewed to provide a foundation and direction for the study.

Introduction to Work/life

Work/life is an emerging topic in higher education, and several areas of literature lay important foundations for the study of work/life and community

college occupational deans. These areas include literature focusing on different perspectives of work/life as well as university and community college literature focusing on work/life issues, roles, and responsibilities of higher education administrators. Other perspectives, such as the ways in which society views work and the societal implications of having a job or career, are also important to identify the various forces involved in an investigation of work/life.

Literature on work/life ranges from definitions of what is meant by work/life to identification of social issues and policy changes that affect the ways people use their time both at and away from work. In addition to the basic definition for balance by Haddock (2001) cited in Chapter 1, the core component of work/life is identified as time and how people spend it (Rogers, 2002). This central idea lends nicely to the definition used in this study in which the term work/life refers to a person's work or employment life and personal life or non-work related experiences. As society has changed the ways people participate in work over the past thirty years, people have become more aware of the need to examine their use of time as they try to adapt changing lifestyles and multiple roles to traditional work models.

Work/Life Perspectives

Work/life issues are addressed in many different contexts. Those in business and industry have recognized the importance of work/life issues for the past 20 years or more as a means for boosting production, increasing employee morale and retention, and reducing stress and medical leave time. Sociologists view work/life by addressing changes in ideals and the ways people view work.

Others view work/life from a gendered perspective as they study the changes in the workforce over the past 30 years and the impact of these changes on women. The important issue to note in all these perspectives is the fact that employees and their needs have changed; however, in many cases, work environments and the expectations of employers remain the same. This is true for higher education as well.

Business Perspective. One aspect of work that affects many people is the trend for more and more organizations to be “leaned down” to the bone, resulting in more work for the remaining employees and fewer resources. This causes employees to put in long hours with work often extending into weekend family or personal time (Rogers, 2002). This is perhaps why many work/life researchers study their topic using theories that examine the relationship of one’s work/life situation to other experiences such as stress, absenteeism, turnover, productivity, and job satisfaction (Bruck, Allen, & Spector, 2002; Campbell Clark, 2001). Current budgetary constraints in higher education caused by recent reductions in state and federal appropriations make this “leaned down” aspect extremely pertinent in this study as community college occupational deans are forced to take up the slack left from staffing cut-backs and personnel shortages. Community colleges often re-organize administrative structures to shuffle around the work of unfilled positions creating even heavier workloads for the remaining administrators (Bolman & Deal, 1997). This can cause feelings of being overwhelmed on the job and cause one’s job to “spillover” into his or her personal

life as responsibilities from work overlap with responsibilities at home (Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003).

Overarching concerns for some who conduct research on work/life include the ways in which people work, the increasing time people spend at work, and the quality of their time away from work (Hochschild, 1997; Jacobs, 2003; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Rayman, 2001). Americans are working more than ever before and lead European countries in hours logged at work or on the job (Hochschild, 1997; Jacobs, 2003). In fact, Americans are now logging 1,978 hours at work annually, a full 350 hours or nine weeks more than Western Europeans (De Graaff, 2003).

This increased time on the job has led some researchers to investigate other work options such as flex time, job sharing, and reduced schedules (Hochschild, 1997; Kossek, 2003). While these flexible work options seem like viable solutions to the time crunch many workers face, flex time is often met with resistance by employers who must deal with the underlying social dilemmas of such arrangements including animosity among workers, effects on group performance, perceptions of face-to-face time, and the variety of schedules among employees (Kossek, 2003). These flexible work arrangements often require additional planning, scheduling, and communication (Kossek, 2003).

Societal and Community Impact. It is easy to notice that the pace of people's lives has increased over the past 30 years, and their focus on work has changed. Juliet Schor offers some perspectives regarding the extent to which everyone is over extended in her book, The Overworked American (1992).

These theories include the change in perception of time—that everything is speeding up due to technological advances in society, that demands people make on themselves have increased as they attempt to keep pace with their aspirations, and that time has become a scarce commodity as they have less for themselves (Schor, 1992). While Schor's ideas seem intuitively accurate, it is important to see whether these issues ring true for the community college occupational deans in this study.

The issues for these deans might be more in line with the need to work long hours to establish credibility or perhaps over-commitment to one's job. Society has shifted its focus on work from viewing a job as the means of supporting a family and putting food on the table to viewing a career as an indicator of success. This is particularly true for women competing for positions typically held by men (Hochschild, 1997).

In her book, The Time Bind (1997), Arlie Russell Hochschild investigates this social dilemma of work/life at a Fortune 500 company interviewing people in a variety of positions ranging from the executive office to the factory floor. In one particular discussion with a mid-level manager, Hochschild uncovers an interesting paradox because the manager advocates strongly for work/life policies and initiatives for her employees, yet she puts in some of the longest hours of anyone in the company on a nearly impossible work schedule (Hochschild, 1997). This particular mid-level manager felt that to be credible as an executive, she needed to put in inflexible, long hours and to focus her life on her work instead of her family. However, she admitted that her life felt out of

control, and she feared that her dual lives would eventually come crashing down (Hochschild, 1997). This type of situation is reality for many people in management positions who attempt to have lives outside of work. As people strive to perform well in one area, it is common for other areas in their lives to slip, creating a sense of chaos and loss of control. The mid-level executive Hochschild interviewed also had young children who were in daycare 10-12 hours a day; Hochschild identified acting-out behaviors of these children indicating the stress they experienced as a result of their long days in daycare (1997). It is almost as if this “warehousing” of children is becoming the norm in society.

A similar impact on society is the way some people over-associate with their jobs and are consumed with their work. Ilene Philipson writes about over commitment to one's job in her book, Married to the Job (2002). Philipson works as a psychotherapist who discovered a common link among many of her patients in that they were all overly committed to their jobs in ways that affected their ability to function in their personal lives (2002). She gives example after example of people who form their identity from the positions they hold or the places they work. Philipson posits that society places too much emphasis on work as she notes the increase in time spent on the job and people's obsession with material possessions (Philipson, 2002). Granted, some of Philipson's patients exhibited extremes of being obsessed with their work, but it is common for many people to put in longer days with less vacation time. Could this be a result of an addiction

to work? Do people not have anything else to do with their time? Is this an indication of shifting values from family and community to work above all else?

Another work/life issue involves examining the ways workers participate in community events and activities (Rayman, 2002). In his book Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, Robert Putnam (2000) explores this issue in depth by looking at the declining participation in bowling leagues and other once popular activities from the perspective of changing society and the ways people work and play. As the focus of society seems to be shifting to an increased emphasis on time at work, something in people's lives has to give which, according to Putnam (2000), is community involvement. This is particularly true for people such as community college occupational deans who often have evening work responsibilities that might interfere with community activities. In addition, some of these deans' work may include involvement in community activities. These activities might cause conflict between the required choices for community involvement and the personal choices, causing one to question, 'which is work and which is life?'

Changes in society are also coming from another group: younger workers. Younger workers are an important group to study because these are the people who will fill the many positions that will soon be vacant in higher education due to mass retirements (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). As Americans face less leisure time, there is growing evidence of ambivalence towards careers on the part of younger generations and a resistance to the ideal worker model. Younger workers are more inclined to change jobs for better work schedules or more money, exhibiting

less commitment to a specific organization than previous generations (Rayman, 2001). In this context, higher educational institutions, like corporations and non-profit organizations, must find solutions to the challenges of work/life balance for their employees if they are to stay competitive in recruiting and maintaining productive and satisfied employees. Many young people graduating from school and entering the world of work are not enthusiastic about dedicating themselves to the job above all else (Herman & Gioia, 2003). These young workers have watched employers dump outmoded people with little regard for their welfare. Younger workers do not have the same commitment to their work or to their employers that was true in earlier generations (Herman & Gioia, 2003). With these beliefs, younger workers may be more attuned to their work/life issues seeking more policies and work options to suit their needs. This was apparent in higher education literature 20 years ago, as illustrated in the following passage from Dill (1982):

Critical segments of the academic culture—the culture of the profession and the culture of the enterprise—have fallen into decline, while the culture of the discipline has strengthened. The primary meaning for academics has thus become not profession, not institution, but their professional career, and external conditions may decrease the meaningfulness of that orientation as well.
(p.188)

As Dill's statement suggests, higher education is experiencing a culture change resulting in a somewhat detached view toward the institution as people focus on their specialty areas and careers.

Gendered Perspective. Quite often, researchers investigate work/life from a gendered perspective positing that women struggle with work/life to a greater

extent due to care giving (child care, elder care, pet care) and various responsibilities at home (cooking, cleaning, washing, etc.) that they juggle in addition to the workloads they manage on their jobs (Hochschild, 1997; Philipson, 2002; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Schor, 1992; Ward, 2003; Williams, 2000). Gender issues are also evident in the literature depicting the ideal worker norm in society, which creates conflict for caregivers who are unable to subordinate all other aspects of their lives to the job (Bailyn, et al., 2001; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Williams, 2000). Since caregivers are more likely to be women (Hochschild, 2003; Williams, 2000), this puts them at a disadvantage as they try to succeed in an ideal worker society or in an organization that promotes this ideal worker norm. While gender issues are still at the forefront of work/life, some men are beginning to understand the challenges of their female coworkers as increasing numbers of men in dual career couples face similar struggles when they attempt to share care giving responsibilities (Hochschild, 1997; Rayman, 2002). These struggles coupled with the concept of the ideal worker norm in society create an almost impossible situation for caregivers attempting to succeed (Williams, 2000).

All of these perspectives involve key issues necessary in a study on work/life. As this study unfolds, I will be looking for evidence of over-commitment to the job or feelings of proving oneself by the hours worked. Trends in vacation time usage and participation in community activities will also be examined. Although this study includes people of both sexes, any gender issues in the findings are also noted. In addition, I am looking for signs of organizational

change within community colleges indicating an awareness of work/life issues, policies, and practices that help facilitate the management of one's work and personal life. Such change may facilitate the recruitment and retention of both men and women who juggle multiple roles into these challenging professional positions. Along with these signs of change, I also inquired about work/life policy use to see whether the occupational deans in this study actually take advantage of any work/life initiatives that may exist at their institutions.

Work/life in Higher Education

Currently, literature that specifically addresses work/life at the community college level is practically non-existent; however, some literature addresses issues relevant to work/life such as job satisfaction, stress, and burnout. Using literature from studies at the four-year institutional level, it is possible to make some assumptions of work/life issues of community college deans. However, given the differences in organizational structures, missions, and goals between four-year and community college institutions, these assumptions may not give an accurate picture of the issues involved.

Four-Year University Faculty. Reading about faculty and faculty-related issues provides one perspective of current work/life trends in higher education. Faculty issues lend nicely to those of administration given that administrators typically come from the faculty ranks (Bright & Richards, 2001). Three work/life trends are reshaping the academic workplace and faculty careers. These trends include changing faculty demographics, differences in working and economic conditions, and pressures to alter academic careers to accommodate the new

generation of faculty (Sorcinelli, Austin, & Rice, 2000). Current senior faculty are making plans for retirement, creating opportunities for new, younger faculty. These new faculty are experiencing the academy differently from the previous generation, and they are facing different challenges including the availability of jobs, the competition for positions, the impact of technological innovations, and the rigors of tenure being harder for junior faculty held to tougher standards than their predecessors (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000). These young faculty are also from the new generation of dual career couples with multiple responsibilities in addition to work.

As faculty demographics have changed to include more women and minority faculty, researchers have become keenly aware of the different ways in which these faculty experience their careers and attempt to manage their lives (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000). In their personal lives, women typically begin families in their early 30s, at about the same time they would be developing their academic careers and following the rigors of the traditional tenure track. This tenure track is based on a male approach or traditional path through the academic promotional system (Hochschild, 2003; Williams, 2002). However, a growing number of female faculty are delaying starting their families until after the tenure decision or opting out of having a family or partnership altogether in order to devote themselves exclusively to their careers (Blair-Loy, 1999; Drago & Varner, 2001). These sometimes difficult choices are seldom issues for male faculty with supportive spouses or partners tending to the home front (Williams, 2002).

The classic academic career represents a model of the ideal worker. It is built around the life of a traditional man who is working hard to compete with others, establishing a reputation for himself and his work, and hoarding scarce time while minimizing family life and subcontracting the work of the family to his wife or partner (Hochschild, 2003). But evidence indicating a desire to shift away from the traditional academic career exists. In a study by Sorcinelli, Austin, and Rice (2000) on early career faculty, three concerns emerged consistently in focus groups: "lack of a comprehensible tenure system, lack of community, and lack of an integrated life" (p. 12). The faculty in this study perceived they were striving for more balanced lives, not wanting to emulate the hectic lives of their predecessors, and they were concerned about time and their struggles to integrate their professional and personal lives (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000). These comments are evidence of conflicts younger faculty face as they attempt to manage both spheres of their lives, pointing to the differences between the experiences of senior and younger groups and their personal life situations. The study concludes with ideas to help foster a balance between personal and professional lives such as helping pre-tenure faculty with time management issues, connecting women and faculty of color to relevant resources and campus networks, identifying resources and flexible employee benefits for dual career couples, and providing new faculty with information about campus and community activities and services (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000).

At work, female faculty are challenged through the extra responsibilities they take on as part of their faculty duties. Studies point to female faculty

experiences in higher education as different from their male counterparts in terms of scholarship, advising assignments, teaching loads, and service to the community, profession, and institution (Luna & Cullen, 1995). Women typically spend more hours per week in the classroom, more time preparing for their classes, and more time advising students than do their male counterparts, which leaves little time for research publication--the main criterion for promotion at four-year institutions (Park, 2000). In addition, female faculty often feel they have to prove themselves over and over again before they can be accepted by their colleagues and achieve recognition (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000; Tack & Patitu, 1992). This pressure can result in longer working hours for women as they strive to accomplish as much or more than their male counterparts to prove their worth. As female faculty face these additional challenges, they often do so without the support of a full time, care giving partner tending to the home and family in their absence. These extra responsibilities create an even heavier load for female faculty as they struggle to meet the demands of their careers.

Faculty of color face social pressures beyond those of their female counterparts and often additional responsibilities as the only faculty of color in a department or institution (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Often, minority faculty have difficulty finding mentors and the necessary support and connectedness they need to succeed in a pre-tenure position (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000). These increased pressures and responsibilities coupled with even less time for a life outside of work create an almost impossible atmosphere for success. In addition, support and connectedness is crucial when faculty members attempt to

manage their personal and community responsibilities. Having support at work from coworkers who recognize the importance of time away from the job can validate the need to spend time productively in other areas of one's life aside from work.

Other higher education work/life issues affect a select few. For example, a current study conducted by Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2003) looked specifically at the ways in which female faculty with small children manage their professional careers and their personal lives. This is a crucial area to study given the increased number of women faculty in higher education and the work/life conflicts women face as they attempt to achieve tenure and raise a family. Ward and Wolf-Wendel specifically targeted women on the tenure track to understand the ways in which they attempt to achieve balance between their professional and parental roles, the strategies they employ, and the barriers they face as they attempt their multiple roles. They found that these women thought their multiple roles helped them to have a more realistic perspective of their work and helped them to find their identity in more than just their careers (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2003). This finding is another indicator of the changing perception that younger workers have about their careers—that there is more to life than one's work.

Along with these trends, the changing demographics of work is evident as faculty needs and concerns often focus on the pressures faculty in care-giving roles face as they strive to meet the demands of tenure track positions, typically suited for ideal workers or the traditional academic without care-giving responsibilities (Drago, et al., 2001). Also at issue is the availability and use of

family-friendly policies at four-year institutions such as parental leave, flexible work schedules, and tenure delays (Drago, et al., 2001; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2003). These policies allow for a more malleable approach to achieving tenure in a faculty position instead of forcing faculty to follow the conventional approach using the traditional, stringent timelines. A recent study by Drago, Colbeck, Varner, Burkum, Fazioli, Guzman, & Stauffer (2003) investigated care-giving bias avoidance and found significant evidence that academic women are far more likely to hide care-giving commitments to escape potential reprisals in the workplace. Bias avoidance also results in sacrificing care giving commitments to maintain or enhance work performance (Drago, et al., 2003), which parallels Hochschild's findings during her study of the Fortune 500 company (1997). This is yet one more indication that people in higher education continue to struggle to accommodate their personal needs, and this is true of faculty and perhaps community college occupational deans. This study investigated whether community college occupational deans exhibit bias avoidance tendencies in order to avoid negative consequences at work.

Community College Faculty. Although there are few, if any, studies of work/life issues specifically targeting community college faculty, some articles allude to work/life issues similar to those for four-year faculty such as hectic schedules and lack of time for personal lives. At the same time, community college faculty often face slightly different challenges. Community college campuses have multiplied and program offerings have expanded at staggering proportions. Two-year colleges have emerged as viable institutions of higher

education, enrolling more than half of the nation's freshman college students (Phelan, 1997). Even though the creation of community colleges has reached a plateau, community college faculty are still operating in fast-forward mode, striving to maintain their overloaded schedules and rushing through their work weeks and semesters at a break-neck speed. Community college faculty typically carry a heavier teaching load than their 4-year counterparts, often teaching four to five courses a semester. In addition, faculty take on additional courses, teaching at night and on weekends, to boost their incomes.

Other literature addresses issues such as burnout and job satisfaction, common experiences for community college faculty. Stressors that contribute to burnout among community college faculty include lack of faculty participation in decision-making, the increase in under-prepared students coupled with student expectations of high grades, apathetic peers, and low salaries (Clagett, 1980); physical environment, student lack of motivation, available supplies and resources, and students with weak mathematics/languages skills (Grant, 1991); and the time available to faculty to prepare for class or to keep up to date in their field, the lack of recognition for professional growth, and the lack of support for instruction (ERIC Digest, 1988). LeCroy and McClenney's article on community college faculty suggests that they are placed in unattainable roles attempting to juggle student diversity, fragmentation (especially among adjunct faculty and part-time students), and demands of large class sizes and heavy teaching load assignments (1992).

While these topics are not addressed from a work/life perspective, the articles identify issues that could be considered as work/life topics for community college faculty. As more women and partners from dual career couples aspire to faculty positions and leadership roles in community colleges, it is evident that work/life issues such as the ideal worker model and establishment of and participation in work/life programs and policies need to be addressed if these positions are going to appeal to future leaders.

Administrators. Turning to the work/life focus on administrators, there is evidence that some of the work/life issues of faculty carry over into the realm of community college administration, which is not surprising since many administrators come to their positions from the faculty ranks. Specific authors (Barwick, 2002; Bright & Richards, 2001; Stalcup & Wilson, 1981; Townsend & Bassoppo-Moyo, 1997) shed light on the responsibilities, characteristics, and challenges of people in higher education administration that are useful to this discussion of work/life issues.

The multifaceted and diverse nature of community colleges is evident in literature targeted specifically at these institutions. Looking at articles directed at other administrative positions within these colleges, one can get a sense of the challenges and issues community college employees face. For example, an article on department chairs indicates the importance of recruiting skilled managers, good communicators, and strong leaders for these positions noting that department chairs often face demanding circumstances with little or no formal training for the position (Lindholm, 1999). Lack of training for a position

can add to the stress experienced by an employee resulting in longer hours to perform the job or to prove oneself in that position.

When focusing on community college administrators, it is easy to identify work/life issues and ideal worker norms, particularly in the role of president since this is one of the most heavily researched positions in community colleges.

Despite the heavy retirement forecast for senior level community college administrators, future leaders are shying away from these leadership opportunities, particularly the presidency, because of the complexity and difficulty of the job (Barwick, 2002). With responsibilities ranging from understanding theories of learning and curriculum to funding formulas and budgets to community involvement, whether to apply for a presidency has become a quality of life issue for some applicants (Barwick, 2002). Over 71 percent of community college presidents report working more than 50 hours per week (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998), and 52 percent report that the job is highly stressful (Vaughan & Weisman, 1997). As applicants consider the role of president, they must also weigh the impact of this role on their families (Barwick, 2002). In the article "Struggling for a Balanced Life as President," a university president commented on her lack of personal time noting that it had been a month since she had a weekend to herself and when she is out for her own pleasure, she almost always runs into someone who recognizes her as the president of the college (Basinger, 2001). This particular president also commented that being a president is more than a full-time job, and she occasionally has to take time out in order to replenish herself (Basinger, 2001).

In the book The Academic Deanship, work/life is addressed from an administrative perspective at a four-year institution (Bright & Richards, 2001). In their brief discussion of a dean's personal life, Bright and Richards discuss the multiple obligations, events, early and late meetings, and activities with which a dean can become consumed because the dean's presence is often requested, if not required, for many functions (2001). Another article about personal characteristics and backgrounds of chief academic officers in Kansas community college districts mentions survey data indicating the officers' average workday was 10 hours long and each officer was involved in at least two community or civic organizations (Parker & Parker, 1985).

The need for deans to put in long days is understandable if the skills and responsibilities required to do their jobs are examined. From the few studies focused on various community college administrative positions, the primary responsibilities identified include planning, organizing, staffing, directing and leading, and controlling (Stalcup & Wilson, 1981). Necessary skills for these roles include budgeting skills, proposal writing, people skills, and time management along with the characteristic of being energetic (Vaughan, 1990). Townsend and Bassoppo-Moyo (1997) found that knowledge and skills required for community college academic administration centered around professional competencies: contextual, communication, interpersonal, and technical. Another author notes the complexity of the dean's position at a community college stating, "The dean is responsible for a greater variety, if not a greater volume, of activities than this person's counterparts at four-year institutions" (Robillard, 2000, p. 4).

With all these responsibilities, how do deans renew or recharge themselves to face these challenges day after day?

Just as administrators are stretched among diverse responsibilities, they are equally stressed in various ways. A 2002 dissertation by Linda Wild discusses work-related stress factors affecting community college deans. Wild (2002) contends that interactions with supervisors and the organizational culture of the institution cause the greatest amount of stress for deans when coupled with the challenges of reduced resources, expanded demands from students, and increased accountability from governing bodies and constituencies.

Evidence exists that indicates the difficulty many deans, particularly women, face as they attempt to manage their multiple roles. Judith Glazer-Raymo (1999) interviewed female presidents, vice provosts, and deans and found one overriding theme echoed from all these administrators was “their continuing difficulty of balancing personal and professional positions. Female administrators perceive these dual roles as career inhibitors” (p. 163). And, “The workplace has not changed to accommodate women’s multiple obligations and responsibilities” (p. 164).

While these studies point to specific challenges on the job, limited information is available that discusses community college occupational deans, or community college deans in general, and the ways they attempt to balance their professional and personal lives. Do they attempt to function as an ideal worker? How do they manage their responsibilities away from work? What support structures do they use? How do they renew or recharge to face their daily

barrage of activities? Douglas Robillard (2000) comments on the lack of literature and studies specifically targeted at deans in general in community colleges. He states that while other positions such as university presidents and professors have been studied extensively, the position of dean has received little recognition noting that he found only two publications that specifically address community college deans (Robillard, 2000). One of the intentions of this study is to add to the research specifically targeted at community college deans and to increase awareness of the work/life issues associated with them.

The multiple responsibilities of community college occupational deans coupled with the unlimited demands and long hours required in administrative positions set the stage for a work/life study of people in these roles. Add to these issues the high levels of stress that deans have (Wild, 2002), and it is evident that work/life is a concern for people in this particular middle-management role. More research should be done specifically on all types of deans at the community college level to clarify their work/life issues in order to identify ways and/or policies to help remedy their struggles for balance. Therefore, it is important to conduct a study focusing on community college occupational deans that investigates the ways deans handle the different aspects of their lives and manage the “time squeeze” facing many employees.

Literature Summary

This literature review draws from several key areas to depict the situation many people face in their work and personal lives. The literature addresses the ideal worker expectation, the increased time spent at work, the budget

constraints with which educators work, and the changes in the demographics of working society. These changes at work have affected the personal lives and the ways workers participate in community activities. The literature points to the particular struggle women face but also indicates that these struggles affect men with care giving responsibilities. Research shows the attitudes and commitment of younger workers are shifting as these workers strive for different lives from their predecessors. For others, there is evidence of a growing epidemic of people committing themselves to their jobs above all else, including their families. The literature identifies definite work/life issues for early career faculty, non-majority faculty, and community college faculty. Family friendly policies are just beginning to enter their work worlds, yet many faculty shy away from these opportunities. While studies indicate the unique circumstances for community college faculty and the ways their positions can lead to burnout and additional stress, more research needs to be done to explore how these circumstances contribute to work/life issues of community college deans to shed light on the ways they manage their lives.

Theoretical Frameworks

The process of managing multiple roles and the conflicts this can cause is not a new topic for researchers, and the struggle between work and non-work has been investigated from many different perspectives. One perspective, the *ideal worker norm*, posits that the workplace is structured around an ideal worker who can subordinate non-work activities to a full-time caregiver (Bailyn, et al., 2001; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Williams, 2000). This ideal worker view parallels

earlier sociologists' thinking of the "myth of separate worlds," which implies that working people have two separate lives—work and family—that function completely independent of each other (Kanter, 1977).

A second perspective, *role-conflict theory*, includes a focus on the conflict from a behavioral view and a time view (O'Driscoll, 1992). O'Driscoll posits that conflict can result from incompatible behavioral demands, such as having to behave one way at work and another way at home, and from time-based conflict that results from viewing time as a limited resource with work and non-work demands in competition for an individual's time (1992). Workers often experience a crossover or spillover conflict from one role (work), to another role (non-work), which makes meeting the demands of the second role more difficult (Hammer, Bauer, & Grandey, 2003). Often in academe, work and personal lives are viewed as independent of each other, seldom crossing paths (Hochschild, 2003), but excess time in one area leads to a shortage of time in another. This separateness of worlds, each with specific time demands, could cause community college deans to experience both role conflicts and stress from multiple roles.

A third perspective referred to as *role theory* posits that multiple roles can lead to stressors and symptoms of strain (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984). Role theory focuses on the expectations associated with work and family roles and finds those competing expectations can often lead to physical and psychological strain (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984), which then results in feelings of being

overloaded in both areas of a person's life and leads to lower job and life satisfaction (O'Driscoll, Ilgen & Hildreth, 1992).

This study is structured from the role theory perspective focusing on the demands of the job and lives of community college occupational deans. This is an appropriate lens from which to examine occupational deans because of the multiple responsibilities of these positions and the time demands on the people in these positions. While their work situations are challenging, these deans also have a variety of personal situations and obligations that are different from the ideal worker, thus causing them to handle their multiple responsibilities in a variety of ways. The study indicates how the deans attempt to manage work and personal responsibilities and investigates whether the workplace allows for weaving or integration. The data from the study also help identify ideal worker norms in roles of the deans and the behaviors that the deans perceive to be recognized as successful at their institutions (Bailyn, et al, 2002). This study identified whether these community college deans attempt to align themselves with the ideal worker norm, and whether this attempt causes additional stress or conflict in their lives.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Purpose Statement

This qualitative study used personal interviews for data collection to shed light on how community college occupational deans manage their professional and personal lives. More specifically, using role theory as a framework, this study attempted to reveal insights into how these deans manage their work and personal lives by examining the strategies they use, the issues they face, and any signs indicating whether there appeared to be a struggle to manage their multiple roles. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do community college occupational deans perceive their lives from a work/life perspective?
2. How do the requirements of their positions affect the abilities of community college occupational deans to manage the demands of their work lives and their personal lives?
3. How do community college occupational deans manage their work lives and their personal lives?

Rationale for a Qualitative Design

The chosen method for this study was a qualitative approach using person-to-person interviews. This approach was appropriate to this type of study for several reasons. First, work/life has been studied in depth at the four-year college/university level, but it has not been studied at the two-year community college level. A qualitative study provided an opportunity to construct the realities of work/life perceptions of community college occupational deans by using an interpretive approach to understand the meaning of the deans'

experiences (Merriam, 1998). Using the literature provided from the four-year institution studies, questions were developed for and targeted to the occupational deans in order to gather their perceptions of work/life at the community college level. Second, a qualitative design was appropriate for a study on work and life balance in which experiences and personal strategies are explored (Creswell, 1994). It also provides a focus for the researcher on interpretation and meaning of the data (Merriam, 1998). Finally, a semi-structured approach with open-ended questions allowed participants to explore their unique experiences with work/life in the private setting of an interview which allowed for candid, personal responses (Merriam, 1998).

Population and Site

Community college occupational deans in the Midwest were the target subjects of this study. Because of the diverse nature of their positions, occupational deans were chosen to shed light on work/life experiences at the community college level and to add to the limited amount of research available on community college deans in general. These deans' roles are typically varied and multifaceted with responsibilities extending to several, if not all, occupational programs offered at a particular community college. Some of these responsibilities include meetings with business and industry representatives, state and federal reporting, state and federal grant management, advisory committee meetings, and program articulation with both secondary and post-secondary institutions. In addition, deans are expected to participate in typical college activities such as committee meetings, curriculum development, and

faculty and staff oversight. The combination of the types of duties these deans perform coupled with the responsibilities for the occupational programs can be quite challenging. While the nature of the occupational deans' roles is indeed multifaceted, the findings from this study may also apply to other dean positions as well as occupational deans elsewhere.

The community college occupational deans in this study were members of a Midwestern state organization. This organization has one designated representative from each of the 29 public community colleges in the state and typically meets five times throughout the year. Although not all of the members have the title of dean, this group was chosen based on the representation of occupational deans/administrators from Midwest community colleges and the responsibilities these deans/administrators share for state and federal reporting. These criteria set the foundation for a purposeful sampling group, which helped to identify information-rich data (Merriam, 1998).

Study participants were in attendance at the October 2004 meeting. The organization members were invited to participate in personal interviews after the meeting, thus making the interviews a voluntary activity for the participants. Interviewees were selected from the representatives on the organization membership list who were members at least one calendar year. Currently, 19 organization members met this qualification. I interviewed 9 deans from this group.

Data Collection Procedure

The interview approach to data collection provides direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge (Merriam 1998). The purpose of a person-to-person interview is to find out what is on people's minds, their feelings about a certain topic, and how they interpret the world around them (Merriam, 1998). One of the features of an interview is that the resulting data is indirect information filtered through the views of the interviewee (Creswell, 1994). In this study the person-to-person interview was an appropriate data collection method because of the potentially sensitive topic of work and life. The interviews used a single-category design in which information was gathered until the point of theoretical saturation was reached (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Finally, a qualitative approach helped develop a rich perspective of work/life issues and identify areas for future research (Merriam, 1998).

The interviews followed an informal, semi-structured approach using a list of questions and issues to be explored and allowing respondents to define the issues from their own perspectives (Merriam, 1998). The interviews explored perceptions and feelings of the occupational deans and allowed for thought and exploration that revealed the work/life experiences of the deans. Such experiences included strategies used to manage both their work and personal lives and rationale for choices made when professional and personal lives collide. The data also revealed how closely these deans align themselves with the ideal worker model in which they subordinate their personal lives to someone

else or to their time away from work. In addition to experiences, insight into work/life issues for the deans were also revealed through the personal interviews as they shared feelings associated with their work/life choices.

Each personal interview was 50 to 70 minutes in length and conducted after the October 2004 meeting. The person-to-person interviews were conducted with organization members who were in their current positions at least one year. This qualifier eliminated several of the new members who replaced retiring members during the past year.

Prior to the October meeting, I addressed the appropriate group members by email (see Appendix A) to introduce the study, to explain the topic for the personal interviews, and to recruit participants. I explained that the purpose of the personal interviews was to examine work/life issues with the resulting responses used for dissertation data collection. I conveyed the relevance of this study to the occupational deans and indicated that their participation in the personal interviews was completely voluntary. All interested deans replied to the email to indicate their willingness to participate in an interview thus allowing for participant self-selection. A list of participants was compiled from 11 respondents, and a follow-up email (Attachment B) was sent to each participant to set up each person-to-person interview. I also requested that each participant bring two typical weeks' entries from his/her planner or calendar from September of the last academic year (2004/2005). In addition, a "release form" (Appendix C) was sent as an attachment for participants to indicate their permission to use the data they provided during the personal interviews. Participants were asked to

either return the form electronically or to bring it with them to the interview.

Additional forms were available prior to the beginning of the interview, and each form was reviewed for signatures. Each participant received a copy of his/her signed form prior to the beginning of the interview.

Due to personal conflicts, 9 of the 11 responding deans were interviewed. This number met the proposed goal of 6 to 10 interviews. All the deans who qualified for the interviews would have been suitable candidates with similar state reporting requirements. The five deans who did not respond did not indicate a reason for not participating. Interviews took place in a location suitable to the participant, in a hotel suite away from the participant's institution. A semi-structured, relaxed approach was used, and each 50- to 70-minute interview consisted of two activities: a calendar review and a topic-centered conversation (see list, Appendix E). Both activities were audio taped. Prior to beginning the interviews, each participant was asked to fill out a short demographic survey (Appendix D) to provide additional information on each participant's life situation.

Interviews

As an introduction, I presented a concise overview of the study similar to the explanation provided in the initial email, outlined the sequence of events, and answered any questions. The calendar review (Merriam, 1998) consisted of 10 minutes for participants to review their calendars, to think back to that two-week period, and to reflect on the events listed in the calendar, the choices they made, and their thoughts about those choices and events. Calendars were used purely for issues identification and reflective purposes; they were not collected.

Participants were then asked about their reflections, what they saw, and what issues came to mind. These reflections and issues were recorded as a list on paper, and this list served as topics for the interview discussions and helped continue the identification of more focused work/life issues. When no issues were identified, a back-up list of topics generated from the literature review was used (see Appendix E).

I took notes during the interview activities, and immediately after the interview I noted any additional reflections and thoughts I had about the interview. The tapes, notes, and results were transcribed verbatim and coded according to emerging themes identified during the transcription.

Two mock person-to-person interviews were piloted on deans and administrators who were not members of the state organization. This pilot helped to identify problems with the interview process or interpretation of questions. The problems encountered were addressed and adjustments were made in preparation for the actual interviews.

Human Subjects Protection

This research proposal was submitted to and approved by the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) at Michigan State University. Suggestions for changes were addressed before the actual study began. The individual responses and identification of participants were confidential, and the identity of each participant was protected. Pseudonyms were used instead of actual names, and no identifiable information was included in the reporting of the data. This study did not harm or identify the participants in

any way, and audio recordings were erased and notes discarded upon completion of the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection, transcription, and data interpretation (Creswell, 1994). As soon as possible after the interview, I organized notes, transcribed tapes, recorded survey form data, and documented the sequence of events, atmosphere of the room, and nature of the interview, and conveyed probable meanings associated with the participant's comments. Using a constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998), responses were compared among the interview participants to discover any variations and to uncover how the occupational deans experience work/life, how closely they align themselves with the ideal worker perspective, what they do when they encounter work/life conflicts, and how they manage their multiple roles. Data reporting was based on interpretations of the participants' comments. Responses were compared and categorized according to emerging themes from the interviews.

Study Accountability

To ensure accuracy in this study, I used member checks in which data and the interpretations of those data were taken back to the interview participants for verification (Merriam, 1998). This was done electronically by email to give each participant an opportunity to read through the transcript from the interview to check for any misinterpretations or misunderstandings on the my part.

To guard against generalizations, I used rich description in my reporting to provide readers with enough information so they are to determine how closely their work/life situations match the situations reported in this study, thus helping to determine if the findings of this study can be transferred (Merriam, 1998).

Despite my efforts to adhere to these research guidelines, I realize that any study can reflect researcher bias. Knowing this, I made every effort to remain neutral during the data collection and data reporting procedures. The data collection methods and the member checks helped to ensure the accuracy of this study.

Study Limitations

Since this study was conducted using one interview session with each participant, the results are limited to a snapshot of time and activity. However, this study may encourage a future, more comprehensive investigation of work/life issues for occupational deans at community colleges.

The results of this study were limited to occupational deans in a Midwestern state; therefore, future studies of deans from other states and other dean roles (such as academic or student services) or other community college administrators, as well as university administrators, would be beneficial. Also, a comparison of different deans' roles, such as occupational versus liberal arts or student services, would shed light on differences in experiences or work/life perceptions.

The results of this study would be transferable to many deans and other administrators, perhaps vice presidents, program directors, and faculty

chairpersons. Many of these positions also require heavy and varied workloads, causing the people who take on those responsibilities to juggle their personal and work lives. Because this study investigated work/life from a community college perspective, it also sheds light on the work/life challenges of faculty at community colleges and the need to begin investigating their roles from a work/life perspective.

The Researcher's Role

Work and life balance has been a personal interest of mine for several years. I became aware of this topic due to personal circumstances that led me to my own conclusions about how I want to manage my life and what I need to do to maintain my own sense of work/life balance. My studies of higher education literature and my experiences in the community college setting, first as a faculty member and now as a dean, have guided me to this investigation of occupational deans, which is one of the responsibilities of my current position (see Appendix G). In this position, I recognize a need for exploring the experiences of this group.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

To examine work/life from an occupational dean's perspective, the community college occupational deans for this study were selected from a statewide Midwest occupational deans' organization. Eligible study participants were identified as those who have been members of the organization for at least one year. With recent retirements and attrition, the maximum sample size was 19. Once UCRIHS approval was granted, an email message was sent to all eligible deans. Of those 19 members, 11 responded indicating an interest in participating in the study. Due to personal conflicts, 9 of the 11 deans participated in the study. This number met the initial goal of 6 to 10 deans.

Data Gathering

Five women and four men were able to participate in this study and were invited to be interviewed at a private location during the TRENDS in Occupational Studies annual conference in October 2004. The deans were very willing to participate and supportive of the project. The interviews were scheduled at the deans' convenience throughout the conference. Each interview lasted approximately 50 to 70 minutes and was audio taped. The demographic surveys and interviews resulted in data categorized according to emerging themes.

Demographic Survey. Prior to the interview, each dean completed a brief demographic survey that asked about job title, length of service as an organization member, hobbies and outside work interests, work/life satisfaction, and other demographic information. The survey data provided a picture of the

occupational deans involved in this study (See Table 1, p. 47), and pseudonyms were used to protect confidentiality. Six participants are over 50 years of age; three are between 40 and 50 years old. Six participants hold the title of dean, one is a vice president /dean, one is a vice president, and one is an academic director. Despite these title variations, all of the respondents have similar state reporting and occupational program responsibilities. Five of the participants are fairly new to their duties as state contacts, two have been state contacts for 3 to 5 years, one has been in the state organization for 6 to 10 years, and one for 11 to 20 years.

Eight of the deans who participated in the study are in committed relationships; one of them is not in a committed relationship. Of those in committed relationships, six have partners who work full-time outside the home, and two partners are not employed. Eight of the respondents have children; four of those respondents have children living at home with ages ranging from preschool-aged up to 16 years old. Although several respondents indicated in the interviews that they have pets, only one listed pet care as an outside work responsibility. Four respondents indicated that they have childcare responsibilities, two noted grandchild responsibilities, and one has eldercare responsibilities.

Eight participants indicated that they are involved in some type of volunteer activities, four participate in wellness activities, five are involved in community activities, and three indicated involvement in other activities. Respondents indicated in the interviews that the other activities were graduate

Table 1

Table 1
Demographic Survey Results

Participant	Sex	Age	Title	Years as State Contact	Relationship Status	Partner Employment	Children Ages	Outside Work Responsibilities	Outside Work Activities	Leave work for personal reasons	Perception of Work/Life Management
April	F	51-65	Dean of Occupational Ed	6 to 10	committed	works full time	22 to 40	grandchildren		seldom	just barely
Bruce	M	41-50	Academic Director	3 to 5	committed	doesn't work	4 to 10	childcare	volunteer	occasionally	fairly well
Cindy	F	51-65	VP/Dean Career Ed	11 to 20	committed	doesn't work	11 to 15	grandchildren	volunteer wellness community	occasionally	extremely well
Donna	F	51-65	VP for Academic Affairs	1 to 2	single not committed	n/a	n/a	pet care	volunteer community	occasionally	fairly well
Elsie	F	41-50	Dean of Instruction	3 to 5	committed	works full time	2-11 to 15	childcare	volunteer wellness community other	seldom	fairly well
Fran	F	51-65	Dean of Instruction	1 to 2	committed	works full time	11 to 15 19 to 21	childcare	volunteer wellness community other	seldom	fairly well
Gary	M	51-65	Dean of Occupational Studies and Business Services	1 to 2	committed	works full time	Newborn to 3 4 to 10 16 to 18	childcare	volunteer wellness community other	seldom	fairly well
Henry	M	41-50	Dean of Satellite Campus	1 to 2	committed	works full time	22 to 40		volunteer	seldom	fairly well
Ian	M	51-65	Dean of Career and Occupational Ed	1 to 2	committed	works full time	22 to 40	eldercare	volunteer	seldom	fairly well

studies or teaching responsibilities that were not part of their normal work day.

Three of the respondents say that they occasionally leave work during the normal work day to attend to personal matters or errands; however, six said they seldom leave work for personal matters.

As for their overall perception of how well they manage their work and personal lives, seven respondents thought they managed things fairly well; one, the vice president/dean, thought things were extremely well managed, and another thought she was just barely managing.

FINDINGS

Common themes emerged as the deans shared many perceptions of how they feel about their jobs, the ways they spend their time both at and away from work, and the frustrations and satisfaction they get from their positions. Emergent themes include the nature of the job, coping strategies and support from others, perceptions of work/life management, and work/life satisfaction. However, the issue of time—how they spend it, how they control it, and the quality of the time spent, both at and away from work—was the most prevalent theme for the deans. The time theme has several facets that shed light revealing multiple time issues shared by the deans. These facets pertain to both time spent at work and time spent at home. Wherever the deans are, it is clear from their comments that time is viewed a precious commodity.

Time issues emerged during the calendar review, which was the first interview activity after the demographic survey was completed. Despite length of service in the job or title held, time is a major issue for all the deans as they

attempt to manage their various responsibilities at work and at home. As the deans took a few moments during the calendar review to reflect on a typical two-week period and to share their thoughts, it was clear that the issue of time would be a dominating theme in the interviews.

The nature of the job contributes to these time issues discussed by the deans; therefore, it is important to get an understanding of the job and the various institutional climates in order to realize the workloads, the amount of support, and the processes with which the deans work on a daily basis. The deans gave vivid descriptions of what they do and the environment in which they function. These descriptions provide additional insight into the variety of areas for which the deans are responsible and the many demands on their time.

The Nature of the Job

Occupational deans have multiple responsibilities due to the diverse nature of their job. One dean gave a clear picture of her diverse responsibilities for the college:

It's back-to-back appointments—either committees or meeting with my direct reports. I have three direct reports plus all the occupational faculty. And, you know, all the annual faculty. There are classroom visits, meetings with them, pre-conversations/post conversations. And then the involvement that I have with, I am as you know, to the Tech Prep/Perkins, I am also the coordinator for our region tech prep consortium. That takes an enormous amount of time. Plus EAG and other committees outside of the college based on what I do, and we just hired a new director of allied health, so I've passed some of my community committee work off to her

because it's health related. It's wonderful being able to pass a few committee meetings off.

After her comment about a new allied health director, I asked if she was responsible for health programs too, she replied:

Yes. Everything that's under me: nursing, allied health which includes three diagnostic medical sonography programs, radiography, EMT/paramedic, three different medical assistant type programs, aviation, business, accounting, early childhood development, corrections and law enforcement, automotive, electronics/electrical and all the computer courses, CIS. You know, a year ago when our first budget crunch hit, all of our apprentice and manufacturing programs were eliminated. All that stayed were electronics and electrical. Oh, I also have climate control.

Although each of the participants' responsibilities may not have been quite as diverse as this depiction, they are considerable. These multiple and varied responsibilities contribute to the time issue for the deans, influencing the control of time, quality of time, and way time is spent. Often, the deans are spread thinly among several different areas resulting in the ability to spend only limited amounts of time focused on each area. The diversity of their roles makes combining similar tasks for different programs challenging if not impossible, such as enforcing state regulations for various occupational programs.

Furthermore, the deans talked about additional issues and roles they assume because of staffing shortages and budget restraints at their institutions. Three of the deans operate with half-time or temporary, untrained support staff. This support staff shortage adds to the deans' work loads as they perform tasks

typically delegated to others. For example, one dean said that he helps out with reception duties when no one else is available:

I have the business office, special pops, Excel, and financial aid all working in that office that I manage the activities (for), and sometimes there are issues with one of those areas; sometimes there are front desk issues. We only have a part-time individual working at our front desk and they only come in at 11 o'clock, so sometimes there are cases where I'm answer the phone as the phone's ringing to the campus because other people are busy or people are waiting at the counter, and there are times when I (help) them quickly either tell them where the piece of paper is that they're looking for direct them to a room or if they need to see an advisor or somebody of that nature, at least I can address them and let them know that I care—I know you're here, and I can help them with whatever the situation is.

Other deans mentioned that they picked up additional responsibilities from positions that were either eliminated or not filled after someone left the institution as in the following dean's situation:

I assume that's another issue that you run into, especially in my case where I've been in this position only a year and a half, that some of the things that you used to do follow you especially these days when you have less and less people to do the individual jobs. We lost, for example, our director of educational technologies in August, and what they did was promote the one person that reported to her to her job and abolished his job. And in fact, it's even worse than that because the year before, I had

done perhaps a third of that job when I was changed. When my position was changed, my old position was abolished, she picked up some of that, too. So as a result, you can't do it all, and I'm the one he (the VP) looks to, and I end up doing some of the old things I used to do. So that's part of the problem you run into you with the old job kind of sticking to you for a while and it sticks to you for probably at least a full year as you try to learn how to do your new things. I can't imagine someone coming out of social science and having things stick to them, but out of technology it does. Not only does this result in more work, but also causes him to spend extra time keeping current in a particular field that is not technically part of his job description. As a result of filling in for an educational technologies vacancy, this dean is forced to maintain his level of expertise in a subject area he previously taught as a faculty member.

Deans who served more than one institution during their career had a perspective of the differences in scope of responsibilities among occupational deans from college to college. Some of the variability seemed a function of the size of the institution, while others saw it resulting from changes over time brought on by continued budget cuts year after year. One dean reflected on a job he had at a previous community college, saying:

The breadth is a little different. X Community College was different, and it was so much more—so many more students, so many more enrollments and actually more programs than I have, but also more staff. So the dean there, because he had at least three or four directors reporting to him that were doing the work, he could spend more time in lofty considerations and

strategic issues and leave the day-to-day operations to others. In this position I have now, I don't have that luxury. You've got to do all of it.

Institutional climate also influences the nature of the job in the way that work is conducted and relationships are maintained. Climate plays a role in the ease of accomplishing necessary tasks and the time involved in working through institutional processes aimed at getting issues resolved or actions approved. For example, at institutions with fewer layers of management on the organizational chart, the decision making and approval processes move rather quickly in a supportive climate. Decisions made at institutions that have more layers to the approval process require communication to more people, taking more time, particularly if the institution has a confrontational climate. Some of the deans commented on their institution's climate and whether it was a positive or negative factor contributing to their work experience. One dean expressed her difficulty with adjusting to a tight, unionized culture of the faculty and the unionized community surrounding the college. She was unaccustomed to working in the type of environment that includes faculty union approval in the decision-making process. Another dean discussed being careful about who she confides in because, "There's [sic] so many different agendas going on at the college, and I didn't really know. You can get burned really bad, so I was very careful. It took a while to develop some faith and some trust in someone and find out who I felt trust in."

Climate also positively influenced the job. Some deans, despite the heavy workload, enjoy the easy-going climate at their institutions and work at helping to

keep the mood light and fun. As one dean shares, having fun is a requirement for him at work.

So I would say, every meeting that we have, and there may be an exception occasionally, but just about every meeting we have, we're having some fun at some point in time during that meeting, and I think that's important. You need to laugh and that's one of the things that was emphasized when I was interviewing for this job, and it's true that we need to have some fun.

Time At Work

At work, the deans are challenged by their ability to control the use of time. Several factors influence use of time, and often these are situations beyond the deans' control such as unexpected crises or impromptu meetings. To get a sense of the time challenges the deans face, three facets of time at work will be addressed: how time is spent, control of time, and quality of time spent.

How time is spent. When discussing their typical day, the deans commented on their normal routine once they were at work. The deans stated that they arrive at work between 7 and 8:30 am. Once at the office, they usually settle in and check their email. This is a time-consuming task for many of the deans who commented that they typically spend more than an hour each day dealing with email. One stated, "I probably get 80 to 90 emails a day. I can clean them out and an hour later, I've got 70." Another dean thought that she gets between 30 and 50 emails each day. Email is just one typical task that takes their time. Phone calls are also time consuming as one dean mentioned that her phone rings constantly. These typical tasks were noted as activities later in the

day that took up a great deal of the time deans spend out of meetings and appointments or away from projects. Once they attend to the morning issues, meetings and appointments or projects begin.

The way time is spent at work is challenging. While reviewing their two-week calendars with me, the common issue deans shared was a lack of time to think, reflect, or process. One respondent commented, "I have no time to think between meetings. I go from one meeting to another, and there's not time to just sort of debrief during normal working hours 8 to 5." Also during the calendar review, many of the deans observed that they have "very little white space" in their days, meaning there is no time between appointments and that appointments and meetings are scheduled back to back often, throughout the day. One dean stated that she "generally averages about six meetings a day." Another stated, "Even lunches are considered now to be working lunches." A third dean stated that he is in constant motion when he is at his desk.

I asked whether their scheduled time is all meetings or if projects are also built into their calendars. Some deans said they schedule time to work on projects and reports in addition to meetings and appointments; however, other deans lamented that their time is filled with mainly meetings and appointments. I asked the deans if they take breaks or time out for lunch during the work day, and all but one of the deans admitted to eating lunch at their desk the majority of the time, usually catching up on reading or emails. One dean's comment was similar to the statements of many:

I eat at my desk; I eat as I'm working. People come in and talk. I have an open door policy. Even when the door is closed people knock, and of

course, I have to say 'yes' because the times when I've said nothing, they'll keep knocking 'cause they know I'm in there. So, they come in and I just continue to eat as we talk. Rarely do I actually get up and leave and go out for lunch.

The perception of constant meetings and appointments causes frustration for the deans as they question the purpose of their activities and the productivity of the time spent at work. One dean noted feelings of frustration remarking:

When I look at the calendar, the issues, to a certain extent they're unique to me and to a certain extent they're not. There are so many issues, projects, and initiatives we are dealing with that the time to think, plan, talk more than just a superficial casual discussion seems to have vanished. . . . There's really not any time to just sit and reflect and have uninterrupted time when I can just sit and say, 'What am I doing? What's important?' And I'm not alone in this—it's pretty ugly.

When I asked the deans if they ever leave work during the day for personal reasons, such as a child's activity or non-work related errand, the majority seldom do so for these types of things; the deans' personal lives rarely interrupt their work lives. Only a third of the participants said that they occasionally leave during the normal work day to attend to personal matters or errands; the rest of the deans said they seldom leave work for personal matters. Some of the deans with children still living at home occasionally leave work for personal reasons that are often related to children's activities. Those who leave early try to arrange these activities later in the afternoon so they do not return to work afterward, and on these occasions, the deans take work home or go in early

the next morning to catch up on projects. If there is a deadline to meet or a pressing issue to address, they take work home or stay at work. Most of the deans leave work by 5 or 5:30 pm on work days when there were no evening meetings.

The deans also talked about leaving work or taking time away from the work day for personal reasons including medical appointments. The issue of personal health is important, but if a conflict between work and health appointments arises, health is not an automatic priority. Four of the deans, for example, mentioned that they reschedule their health appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.) if a conflict at work arises as this dean observes.

I generally schedule (appointments) such that they don't interfere with anything. A dentist appointment gets scheduled, and I do that before I go to work. It's scheduled far enough in advance. . .so when we're setting up a meeting or something, I don't schedule it during that time, so that conflict doesn't arise. If, when I'm making that dentist appointment and I have my Palm and there's something at work, then I don't take that day. So work still does have priority.

Another dean echoed these thoughts saying:

Usually work wins out. I have rescheduled dental appointments several times. I have canceled my annual physical because my VP said I needed to be at a meeting, and he had to do something else, and I've yet to reschedule it. My husband is absolutely right—my priorities are out of whack because work is my first priority.

Two other deans weigh the importance of the conflicting health and work appointments and then decide which one to keep. By comparison, the rest of the deans feel that their health is a main concern, expressing the belief that they cannot perform well on the job if they are not healthy themselves. One dean discussed having some health issues because of neglecting personal health care and now makes time for these appointments:

Well, it used to be, before my (health issue), that I probably put that stuff off. As a matter of fact, the morning (of the health issue), I had scheduled a personal business day that day because I had been feeling so rotten, and I hadn't had time to call my doctor from work. So I was just going to take a personal business day, which I had scheduled, and I was going to make those appointments and just have time to kind of catch up and schedule some stuff. And then I woke up at 5:30 in the morning feeling like someone had shot me. But I'd been feeling bad enough to know that I needed to—I just couldn't get it done at work.

Two other deans make health appointments a priority, indicating that their health is more important than their jobs.

The deans rarely take time for personal activities or errands even when they are working late. If any of the deans have an evening college obligation that requires attendance, they usually stay at work instead of going home and returning for the activity because of the travel time involved. Staying at the office also provides time to get some work done. When asked if they make adjustments in their daily schedules for evening obligations, only one dean admitted to altering her schedule occasionally to compensate for the extra time spent on the

job. The majority of the deans take evening obligations in stride as 'just part of the job' and do not find ways to compensate with time away from work. One dean attributed her work habits to her parents,

I could come in later, I don't. It just makes that day longer. . . I have awesome parents, great role models, and work is at 8 am. And it doesn't matter that I was there until 10 pm the night before, I'm there at 7:30 am. Once in a while I might come in half an hour late or so, but I just feel guilty when I'm not there. And that's just crazy, but it's this internal thing—the day starts at 8:00.

One dean said that although she stays at work into the evening, she makes sure that there is a dinner plan at home and that evening family events are taken care of in her absence. Although she is not at home, the dean still takes responsibility for coordinating her family's evening activities.

The majority of the deans normally work 8- or 9-hour days when there are no work-related evening meetings or activities. Two women in the study who have been in their positions significantly longer than their interviewed counterparts indicated that they work more hours and spend much more time occupied with their work lives than the other deans at their colleges. Both of these women admitted to working 60 to 80 hours a week and mentioned that they work longer hours than the liberal arts counterparts at their colleges, as one mentions:

They don't have the grants. They don't have all these external—they don't have tech prep, they don't have a consortium they have to work with. They

get to just work with courses, they don't have programs. It's all about just courses. They have time to think. It's a very different life.

These women worked their way to administration from faculty positions, and their comments indicate that both are driven by their work and by keeping busy. One of the women shared her boss's comment when she asked about adjusting her work schedule and stated, "He said, 'Nobody expects you to work the hours you work—you shouldn't. Take care of yourself; put yourself first.'" When asked how well they manage their lives, this woman thinks she manages extremely well; the other woman admits that she just barely manages her work and personal activities. Despite expressing feelings of frustration with the ways they spend their time at work, both deans ended their interviews on a positive note. The woman who expressed that she barely manages work and life ended her interview with, "It's a great place to be." The other woman commented, ". . . I probably take on too much of that kind of stuff because it's fun. And my job is fun. I work hard, but I enjoy every moment of it."

Control of time. Colleagues, faculty, staff, and students need their dean's time, and because of this, even the best schedules get altered, causing the deans to adjust. These changes are often in the form of impromptu meetings or appointments. The deans also were clear that not everyone who needs to see them makes appointments, causing other schedule adaptations. One dean offered, "People don't have to make an appointment, so a lot of times people will just check with . . . my assistant to see if I'm in or if there's anybody else in my office. Sometimes I've got people three deep waiting to get in." Another dean talked about her institution's open door policy taking up her time.

Probably my greatest frustration is the perception of open door at our college. Open door means I can walk in at any time with anything on my mind and disrupt your day, and that's what you owe me because you say you have an open door policy. That's very frustrating.

I asked about the control the deans have over their calendars. Overall, they seem to have little control even though few people (usually one or two others in addition to the dean) actually were able to schedule time on their schedules. The deans typically share their electronic calendars so others can view them, which is a common courtesy among colleagues. Allowing others to view their schedules does not protect their calendars; rather, it usually adds to the load as unscheduled or project time is seen as available time and often consumed by others for meetings as a dean shared, "It's those little white spaces when they say, 'Oh, look! She's got 15 minutes right here. Let's put in a meeting.'" Another dean commented that, although she has project time scheduled on her calendar, she cannot say 'no' when someone calls a meeting during that time:

I'm not very good at saying, 'no!' I mean, when the president calls or my VP calls, I have not, when I've blocked out time for myself, I have not been able to say, 'No, I need to do some work' because then I just move it to the end of the day, which is quite foolish.

Quality of time. Time spent on the job for these deans was stressful, and this often resulted in a lower quality of time. The requirements of their positions seem to affect the quality of the time the deans spend and their work experiences. From the deans' perspective, work is extremely busy with back-to-

back meetings, constant appointments and multiple project assignments. They are in continuous motion with little time to reflect or discuss important topics. The comments the deans shared indicate that their work responsibilities are very diverse and overwhelming at times, with multiple initiatives. Some of these initiatives are seen as irrelevant to the college mission or department focus such as the tasks the deans continue to do because of the expertise they have from a former position as in the case of the dean with the technology background. The extra projects or initiatives can cause additional stress as in the following dean's comment:

In the last three positions I've had, I've usually spent the first year making sure that processes and systems are in place to protect me against fighting fires. My first priority is to get that in place. And it's usually after that that I start working on new initiatives. As a result, I am feeling a little stressed this year. This is the year that I need to start working on the initiatives, and this is October already. I've got two initiatives that I put in my work plans, so I'm going to be evaluated on whether they've been accomplished or not. They are also part of the strategic direction in which the VP wants to go, so it's important that I get started on them—this is October. So I wouldn't call it guilt as much as stress and the recognition that I'm starting to get a little bit behind and recognizing that all-nighters aren't going to help in getting this done if I botch the schedule. We're in positions now where all-nighters don't accomplish things like they used to. Many of the deans indicated that they feel stressed as a result of being behind on projects. The perception of so many projects and so much to do also results in

strategies to manage the load for many who carry work over into non-work life such as taking work home or working on the weekends. By comparison, one dean handles additional work requests quite differently from other deans who were interviewed:

I end up not doing some things, and so no one ever says anything about them. And so it seems like there's a collective A.D.D. that sets in. It's like, 'oh, yea, give me a report on this,' and I'll go, 'ok,' and then I don't do it, and nobody ever says anything to me about it. Because I will give them what they want, verbally, but they want it written out, so I just don't do it. You've got to be able to move from one thing to another and back and forth.

Recognizing the ability to waive certain requests without anyone noticing caused this dean to question the purpose of extra reporting and, at times, the overall purpose of projects assigned and initiatives assumed. However, the majority of the deans seemed to deal with workload issues by putting in more time and sacrificing quality time at home.

Time Away From Work

Time continued to be the central theme when the deans talked about their very busy lives away from work. Again, the concept of time is divided into different facets such as how time is spent, time out from work that addresses whether the deans attempt to integrate their personal lives into their work lives, and control of time away from work. Many of the specific time issues are unique to each dean depending on their personal life situation. To fully grasp the

complexity of personal time, it is important to understand the roles the deans play away from work and their life situations.

Demographic survey data shed light on the lives of the participating deans outside of work (see Table 1, p. 47), and indicate that the deans lead fairly typical lives. The majority are married and actively involved with children and extended family members. The survey data reveals that the deans are functioning in fairly traditional family roles.

It was common for the deans to prioritize work and family when they talked about activities and people who require their time. Three of the deans, all women, said that work comes first, then family. One of these women still has children at home and tries very hard to ensure that both work and home are running smoothly. She indicated that she was a devoted mother and very involved in her family's activities, but when giving her priority list, she ranked work first, family second, and herself third. The other two women have grown children living away from home. These women were the two already mentioned who said they work 60 to 80 hours a week. Four of the deans ranked family first, then work; and of these four, three were men who expressed a strong commitment to their families and the importance of spending time with their spouses and children or grandchildren. One male dean speaks to this when he says:

Well, my needs are sort of secondary, really, I don't want to sound like a lone person saying that, but there it is. It's just important to me that my wife and kids are taken care of time wise. And in particular, with my wife, that she has time to do the things she wants to do. And now that our kids

are, they're all in school all day, it's a lot easier for her to do that. Prior to that it wasn't as easy, so it's a high priority for me that she is able to do what she needs to do. So that's one reason why I really don't do anything besides my running and except going to work and coming home. . . You asked how do I fit them in, well it's a matter of priorities. They take the priority. . .

Another dean shared his priorities:

Well, number one is my family—family time either with the kids or the grandkids, my wife—doing things, going places. We like to vacation, like to travel, and it's one of the things that I have said on the various jobs at my interviews is that I work very hard when I'm at work, but you give me two weeks', three weeks', four weeks' vacation time, I'm going to take it, okay? And that's just the way it is, and I think it's extremely important for me to do that, and get away, and to spend time with my wife and my family. I work around that, sometimes, but we do enjoy our trips and vacations. And golfing, some sort of exercise, but golfing is the main thing, and that's one of the reasons I think I could be a better golfer, but my family is extremely important, and I try to work them both in. And when I have to make a choice, the choice is my family.

How time is spent. It was hard to get a clear understanding of the way deans thought about personal time or life away from the office. When discussing personal time, the topic of work often entered into the discussions, reflective of how much the job was part of the deans' lives after normal work hours. When asked to describe a typical day, the deans shared their normal workday routines.

These routines often include personal time in the morning for exercise or religious activities. Others do household activities or get children ready for the day.

When they are not attending to job-related functions and tasks, the deans take time to attend to personal activities in the evening. At home, it is common for the deans to be involved in either dinner preparation or after-meal clean up.

Usually, I call on the way home to let her (my partner) know that I'm coming, talk about what we want to do for supper—do we want to grill, what do we got (on hand), are we going to go out? We kind of sort through that, so I could end up stopping to pick up Chinese or let's all go out to a restaurant or go buy something at the store or something.

One dean describes her routine in a way that sheds light on her typical dinner and evening responsibilities at home:

I plan it all out. I do grocery shopping once a week, and I have a menu for the whole week, and it's on the refrigerator, so everybody knows what we're having that night. And if it's something they can do for me ahead of time, generally I will call from my cell phone on my way home, and I can get them going on it on my way home. Generally when mom comes through the door, it's, 'Do you have any homework?' 'Do you have any practicing to do?' 'Are we going anywhere tonight?' 'We're not going to a basketball game unless you have your homework done.' They're pretty good about that. They usually know that if they want to do anything in the evening, that requires that they have their other stuff done.

Other common activities include grocery shopping, laundry, yard work, exercising, spending time with family and/or spouses, reading, and watching television. Most of the deans end their days around 10:00 or 11:00 p.m.

When the deans are not spending time at home after work, they are involved in their community or volunteering. Because they view time after work as a precious commodity, the deans carefully choose activities that are the most important to them. In talking about this selection process, the deans observed that they have cut back on some after work activities because there just is not time to do it all. One dean commented that she has even cut back on her church attendance, something she truly enjoys, because she just does not have the energy for one more thing. She says:

Well, the activity that's the best part of my life is church, but much of last month I haven't made it because of my schedule, but Sunday morning church is delightful, and I'd like to be able go Sunday evening, but our church is 30 minutes away and sometimes Sunday evening is the only time my husband and I have to ourselves. So we've come to appreciate that.

Interests away from work and outside the home vary for the deans with volunteerism being the most common. The majority of the deans indicated that they are involved in some type of volunteer activity and five are involved in community activities such as church or children's school events. Other deans talked about past volunteer responsibilities but indicated that they are no longer as actively involved as they used to be because they just do not have the extra time. Spending more hours on the job and their commitment to family overrides

involvement in other civic activities for many of the deans, as reflected in this comment:

I don't go to a lot of evening meetings. It used to be that I was probably at some community event once or twice a week. Either it was something to do with work, and I still have stuff. I have to go to the Chamber of Commerce stuff or the mayor's cookout or whatever, but I evaluate a lot of those things and say, 'do I really need to be there?' Because I'm trying to have some time to myself—some down time, and I don't have a lot of it, but I certainly have a lot more than I used to have.

Despite the fact that they donate their time, some volunteer activities are related to their jobs at the community colleges, and a few deans mentioned that they volunteer regularly for work-related causes. For example, one dean regularly uses her lunch time to attend Rotary meetings, and another uses his evenings to help organize local economic development speakers. Here, work crosses over into personal time in the form of volunteerism.

Other things in which deans get involved during their time at home include activities related to personal growth and wellness as one dean commented, "I run and bike, and so I try and do that. Right now I'm a weekend exerciser." Health and fitness interests were mentioned by four deans who participate in wellness activities, and three deans indicated involvement in other interests such as graduate studies or teaching responsibilities. One noted, ". . . this semester when I'm teaching, most of my spare time is spent preparing for class, reading, and that kind of thing."

Control of time. The deans talked about being involved in family activities, and those with school-aged children mentioned attending school or sport activities during the week. Most of the deans talked about not being able to make it to every event because of their work schedules but that they try to make it to major events or share this responsibility trading off with a spouse. Although they attempt to keep work separate from personal time and control the ways they spend their time away from work, the topic of work crept into the conversation as one dean talked about being physically present during a child's sporting event but admitted to reading work-related materials when there was a lull in the action. Weekends, as opposed to evenings during the week, are when the deans seem best able to fit personal and home things into their lives. As one dean recalled when talking about how [she] controls the time for personal activities, "Most of the church stuff is on the weekends, and the other stuff is that little bit of time between 8 and 9 at night." It was also common for the deans to use weekends for extended family obligations like visits to parents or eldercare responsibilities that require longer blocks of time than are typically available during the week.

In addition to their immediate family and partner relationships, the deans also valued time with extended family members. Many mentioned visiting relatives on a regular basis or having extended family responsibilities such as routine elder care or regular visits to parents. As much as they care for and value their family, however, obligations to family members sometimes contributed to loss of control over free time, which was a concern for some. One dean expressed her frustration with extended family saying:

I think my in-laws are more demanding than my own family. They expect to see us more. My family is a little bit more understanding of my schedule. There are times when you don't want to but you do it (visit) because they don't understand.

Vacations are a must for the deans. They mentioned making regular use of the vacation time they accrue, and they talked about the ways they spend time away with family on vacation.

What I tend to do is either have a vacation (or) go to Chicago for a weekend. . . We come to Grand Rapids at least once a month. And then we try to go out to eat and make that kind of special. So what I tend to do, when I'm home, I work hard . . . , but then we try to plan getaways because it's so much easier to relax when you're not at home and there's [sic] 16 things that need to be done.

Vacation is one area in which the deans seemed to maintain control of the time they set aside. One put it this way, "Historically, if I'm given four weeks, I usually take four weeks. The bad news is I'm usually taking a week now to do a paper (for personal school work) or something like that. I've never ever given back unused vacation time, and I never will." Vacation is used for continuing education and personal professional development as well as time away. Because she wants to be available to her staff at all times, one dean admitted that she is available by cell phone even when she is on vacation.

I always have my cell phone with me so my secretary can reach me. She's very good—all the people who report directly to me know when I'm out of the office. They know they can call me. If no one calls me while I'm here at

[this conference], that would be a real exception. I can be at my son's, and somebody will call and it's like, yea, I'll take care of it. So I don't think when I'm not there, that they don't have access to me.

The deans attempt to manage their time away from the job; however, their work lives often control them mentally. The fact that job responsibilities invade their personal lives was evident in the deans' comments about being pre-occupied with thoughts of work. Some of the deans mentioned that their work consumes or could consume them, and acknowledging this potential seems to help them maintain an awareness of and some control over the amount of time they work. The ability to mentally escape from work is difficult, and the deans struggle to control thoughts about their jobs and to keep work thoughts from invading their minds when they are away from work. The deans mentioned thinking about work when they first wake up in the morning, and some said that they read something for pleasure at night to get work off their minds. "I can't usually get to sleep unless I read something. Because if I don't read something, my mind is on work, and I dream or think or worry about work all night." One dean commented that he uses his hobbies to mentally escape from work, and another mentioned that she picked up a hobby during the summer but has not found time to do it as she had hoped. "I took up a quilting class this summer and bought a sewing machine. And it's been wonderful, but for the last six weeks, I haven't been able to do a thing. So I need to get back. It was going to be my release. It hasn't worked yet."

For some of those who are able to spend time on hobbies, these mental escapes provided relief from stress and came in the form of intense time alone as in the following example:

I guess if I had any guilt, it would generally be that I don't do more work at home, especially with my computer games. Keeping in mind that the game I like to play takes 6 or 7 hours, and my wife helps me feel guilty about it. So she isn't necessarily supportive of my way of getting away from work, and probably it is too excessive.

The deans currently enrolled in graduate programs and taking classes indicated that their coursework is toward a professional degree related to administration; thus, they are using their time away from the job to study their work. Even though many of the deans admitted that work occupies their thoughts, one dean refuses to give in saying that, "They can't have all my life. I make a good salary, but they haven't bought me."

Work/Life Crossover

It is evident that work seeps into the deans' personal lives in many ways despite the efforts these deans make to control their time away from the job. Previously, this seepage seemed to be unintentional or unavoidable. However, the deans also purposefully steal personal time from themselves in an attempt to get caught up or ahead of schedule. The deans squeeze in work and personal activities whenever possible, and it is common for them to multitask in the car on the way to work. During commutes that range from 10 minutes and 55 minutes each way, some eat breakfast and gather their thoughts about the day ahead, others do voice mail, one reads work-related materials when stopped in traffic,

and several listen to National Public Radio (NPR). Asked when their work day begins, the deans report by 8:30 a.m. at the latest and a little before 7 a.m. at the earliest. What is also important to mention is that for some, work seeps into their personal commute time making the actual start of the day a bit more challenging to pinpoint, as seen in one dean's comments: "Anytime I'm in the car, I'm returning calls; or if I'm on the way to a meeting, I'll check voice mail from the car." Another dean shared,

I think through my day as I'm driving. On my cell phone, I call and leave messages to my office phone to remind me to do things as they fly through my brain. I'm not very linear in my thinking, so thoughts or something will pop or I'll think of something, so I'll leave a message.

Work continued to invade the conversation as the deans talked about their evening activities. Despite leaving the office between 4:30 and 6:30 pm, work does not stop after the work day technically ends for this group of occupational deans. Several of the deans admitted they take work home with them while only two of them said they do not. One of the deans in this latter group typically stays late to finish work instead. The deans also respond to email while at home. One dean shared a particular struggle with doing email from home in the evenings:

I am trying not to do email. I got into a situation about two months ago where I checked my email on a Sunday night and found some very upsetting things, and I never slept the whole night. I was a wreck for the next day, and I swore at that point I would not check my email at home if I didn't have to.

While they have interests and activities outside their professions, the deans' work lives crossover into their personal lives in many ways, and the requirements of their positions impact each dean's personal life a bit differently. The deans give up personal time for their jobs, although not on a regular basis. Typical interferences include overnight travel, evening responsibilities, and weekend work, and as one dean noted, he would rather drive three to four hours each way, to and from a meeting, to be with his family than to stay overnight at the meeting locale.

Honestly, the things that interfere are more the things that happen after hours, like (the TRENDS conference), for example. This year I left early this morning, and I'll go back tomorrow afternoon or evening, so I always try to minimize the nights away because night time is when we're all together, we put the kids to bed, but it's when I'm away in the evening that there's, I won't say that it's a conflict because our kids are old enough, but still when I'm not there, it's noticed. And those things don't come up that often. Overnight things, (state organization) stuff, (other state organization) stuff, (other state organization) is a little more—we meet three to four times a year, but quite often with (other organization) if we meet in (city), which we almost always do, I'll just leave early in the morning to get there around 9 (a.m.). I just don't have to worry about spending the night.

Another dean who lives a distance away from his community college talked about his typical work-related evening schedule observing, "To stay in touch with the (college) community, I commit to at least one evening a week."

When asked if this is a community activity, he replied, "Not necessarily a community activity. That one evening could be a (college) board of trustees meeting, for example— something work related—or it could be an evening advisory meeting. Another activity could be a golf outing that I'm participating in on behalf of the college. I could go to one of the (college) plays." This dean also teaches evening courses at his community college, so the full impact of professional responsibilities on his home life extends beyond just his official dean's obligations.

The deans put in time outside of the normal Monday through Friday work week as their work lives carry over into their weekends. Some of the deans mentioned that they work weekends occasionally, either at home or at the office, and indicated it was a good way to get caught up and ready for the next week, as discussed by one dean:

I work on the weekends, yea, on getting work stuff done, and I go into the office. I like to have a clean office, and so I go in on the weekends and go through all my piles of paper and make sure that I'm not forgetting to do things, or I'll work on something, but really I use the weekends to get the piles of paper off my desk so when I come in on Monday, I'm not feeling like, what's in that pile that I forgot to do if there's a deadline. So I like doing that—nobody's there and I turn on music and I feel like—there are no interruptions—I can seriously work on things or read some articles I might not have had a chance to read during the week.

Weekend work was regarded as part of the job and something that has to be done on occasion, yet it seemed that the choice to work weekends is made by the deans and not necessarily a requirement of their institution.

Coping and Support at Work

Other than typical daily routines, the deans shared several coping strategies they use to manage their hectic schedules and heavy workloads both at work and at home. At some point in each conversation, the deans mentioned having support from others including spouses, assistants, staff, co-workers, and hired household help. These individuals and networks help them endure the rigors of their positions, and it was evident that support is a crucial factor in both the deans' success and their ability to cope with the demands of their jobs and their home lives. It was also important for the deans to debrief with other administrators/deans for support. One of the deans noted,

I like (state organization) to that extent because you can commiserate, and I always found that was therapeutic. . . . just the ability to talk about your problems and have someone else listen and nod their head is really helpful, and that's (state organization)—we have a lot of support. Another big difference in culture between (X college) and (Y college) is politics. If I need to talk to someone at (X college), I can go to the Arts and Sciences dean and talk. I could probably even go, I don't, but I could probably even go to the president if I wanted to. So I have a lot of support at work from supervisors and colleagues.

The deans talked about their relationships with people at work, and they talked about interacting with faculty, other administrators, and staff. One dean shared her experiences,

One thing I need to tell you, too, that I think that keeps me going is that I do get positive feedback from my faculty and my direct reports, and I even get wonderful feedback from the night custodians. They always worry when I'm there—'Well, it looks like we're holding down the fort together.'

So it's nice, it's just we all need to have some positive reinforcement.

Conversations and interactions are formal and informal. Either people drop by their offices or the deans take opportunities to walk around campus, dropping in on others. Both of these activities can take up a lot of precious time. They talked about setting aside projects or reports for others at work and making the people their priority. If the deans are needed by other members of the college community, then those people are the deans' first priority. Yet, when the deans socialize, the majority of them admitted that they rarely or never socialize with people from work, explaining that they keep work and social functions separate. However, most of the deans also commented that they seldom socialize with people outside their immediate or extended families nor did they seek out activities that involved people beyond family. One dean shared thoughts similar to other participants on this topic:

I enjoy the people I work with, but I don't have a lot of time. I don't have a lot in common with the people I work with, but I don't have the time even if I did. My family is extremely important, and I spend the time that I can with them.

Only one dean socializes regularly with college friends, and another purposefully seeks friends away from the college.

Coping and Support at Home

Coping and support are also available at home. The deans in committed relationships indicated that their spouses are supportive on the home front, as one dean shares:

I have been blessed with a husband who is very supportive and the fact that our children are all grown, and so they're married and not living at home—I would not be able to do this job, with dependent children.

Partner support enables the deans to sustain their hectic work schedules while maintaining the day-to-day activities of a busy household. Spouses often carry the responsibility for errands, children's appointments, or after school activities; at the same time, the deans with children all talked about being actively involved with their families. One female dean said that her spouse helps out when asked (as opposed to taking the initiative to anticipate when she may need his assistance); nevertheless, she still considers him supportive of her despite the fact that she is the parent who organizes meals and family activities at home.

At home, the deans use other support structures and various strategies to accomplish daily tasks and chores. For example, two deans mentioned that they hired cleaning help. One participant talked about cleaning and grocery shopping saying, "You know, grocery shopping—some weekends I resent having to do grocery shopping and clean the house. And therefore, you know what? I don't clean the house. If things don't get cleaned for two weeks, they just don't get cleaned for two weeks." Other deans have spouses who help with grocery

shopping and errands. Some female deans talked about laundry routines and the ways they fit this task into their weekly schedules by either tackling the job on Friday evening or working loads of laundry into their daily routine.

To manage their work and personal lives, a common strategy for the deans in this study is to compartmentalize the different components of their lives, categorizing activities or responsibilities as either 'work' or 'personal.' As one dean put it:

Well, I think part of it is the term 'compartmentalize.' I try to, I give my all from 8:10 a.m. until 4:30/5:00 p.m. to the point where I don't usually go and eat lunch--I mean, that's work. They get me and they'll occasionally get me on a Sunday afternoon in meetings, but when I'm not at work, it's family.

Others talked about getting into or maintaining a routine, such as the one dean who shared, ". . . as far as my time goes, I try to have a lot of it be set up in a routine so that if there's something that has to be done, it gets built into a routine that I do regularly." Routine helps them manage people and activities at work and at home.

Perceptions of Work/Life Management

Responses on the demographic survey provided an overall perception of how well the deans manage their work and personal lives. On the survey the majority of the deans indicated that they manage things fairly well; one, the vice president/dean, thought things are extremely well managed, and another thought she is just barely managing. Managing "fairly well" seemed born out in the interviews, as well. In conversation, the deans' comments suggested that they

are managing as well as they can given the demands of their jobs and their personal lives – so “fairly well”.

The ability to manage work and personal lives well does not necessarily coincide with positive feelings of work/life satisfaction. Despite how they believe they manage, the deans mentioned frustrations that they have with their work situations. Two deans talked in depth about their perceptions of their positions and the work they do. One commented,

I've said the life of the dean—it's not a good life—and I think that's why we're seeing a lot of turnover with deans. You're kind of like that point of friction, and you've got a lot of basically drudge work—it is just drudge work, and the reality is given current systems, it's drudge work that's got to be done by somebody—forms signed, contracts—and I think that you step back and you say, 'well, why would anyone want to be a dean?' And the answer is you wouldn't unless you saw it as a stopping point on a career path. It's not a terminal job. Then if you accept that, then you accept the fact that it's a group of jobs that's going to turn over and over and over forever, and you're going to have to think about structuring the job of the dean differently because you can't continue to have a high rate of turnover.

He also added,

If I had a choice in the matter, it'd be that there would be less intensity at work, so a higher quality work life. Right now I feel like I spend my time doing things that don't necessarily add a lot of value, so I think it could be

a lot better. I wouldn't change the family stuff. . . . So when it's family time, it's family time.

The other dean who has several years' experience in her position echoed these comments about having a mission and a focus for the dean's job as well as for the college. She struggles with the perception of having to be all things to all people, as seen in the following,

I know there's a lot to do, and I'm not alone in long hours; we just need to figure out when/what's important. What really is our core and do it well, and we haven't figure that out yet. Because . . . we're on limited resources, we need to find more students. Well, how do you get more students? Well then you need to build new programs, and so you're always out there looking to build new relationships and jump on to do new things to get a new population of students. And at what point do we say, 'this is what we're going to do now, and we're going to do this for x number of years, and we're going to do it well.' And then as we get that going, . . . whatever that is, and then (we) look at what's next. I don't even know if that's realistic because things are changing so rapidly, and everybody's running scared for enrollment and all, and I think we don't need to be the first one on board. We don't need to be out the gate first.

Despite their perceptions about how well they manage their work and personal lives, the subject of guilt often entered into the conversations. The deans talked about both the amount of time they spent at work (guilt associated with time taken away from family) and the occasions when they had to take time away from work (guilt associated with not being able to get everything done).

When asked if they feel guilty when they leave work earlier than usual, answers varied. One dean commented:

I always go through, and hopefully someday I won't, I go through a justification in my mind. It may be that I was working late a couple nights, and so I don't have a problem with it. I've been, during this time period, faithfully there pretty much between 4:30 and 5 pm. When winter hits—December, January, February—on two nights, on Tuesdays and Fridays, when they'll have games (I leave earlier). But when you think 3 months out of 12 months. . .

Two of the female deans mentioned that feeling guilty for not being either at work or at home when they thought that they should. Another woman expanded on this topic and talked about feeling guilty for not being at home with her children as they were growing up. However, she also recognized that she made the choice to be a dean and to put in the time required by the position.

Most days I feel right about it. I feel that I'm doing what I wanted to do—that this is a choice. Because I think women in particular really struggle with raising kids, and should I have stayed at home because I've always worked the whole time. I didn't take a year off. I took maybe 6 weeks/8 weeks, and I was back at it again. So I think it's a personal choice you make and that you like to work. I try to make sure that my family priorities are still there. I still try to work around my family's needs and my own enjoyment with my family. I like to do that. But sometimes I do feel a little guilty about—let's see, if I had stayed home what might have been a little different? And I guess you don't know that.

Other deans clear their decisions to leave the office with supervisors, acknowledging that this helps them to avoid feelings of guilt. The more experienced deans used to feel guilty about leaving work but no longer have those feelings after being in the job for several years. These deans said they know they put their time in and feel that no one should question when they take time away from work.

Work/Life Satisfaction

Overall, the deans expressed that the majority of the time they feel pretty good about the choices they make to manage their work and personal lives. They mentioned the importance of spending time with their families and attempting to maintain a healthy mix of work and family activities that keeps their lives very busy, which they understand is their choice. One dean stated:

Well, generally I feel pretty good about it. I feel like I have as much time to myself as I deserve or as I think I need. I mean, everybody likes a little more time to themselves [sic], but I'm not complaining about not having enough time. Honestly, I feel like I work all day, I sort of have, that's my time, and it all comes back to having raised . . . kids. . . . And so, I think in general then, I'm fairly pleased with the way my life sort of unfolds time wise—time spent at work, satisfying job, time spent with family, what we do as a family. I think it's fairly well balanced. It's not ideal. It's always busy.

Another said, "Most days I feel right about it. I feel that I'm doing what I wanted to do, that this is a choice." Still another dean commented:

The thing that makes . . . (me) tick is balance. Maybe that's not quite the word, but what's important to me, the thing that drives me, the thing that I think keeps me going is my balance between my personal life and my professional life because if one starts encroaching on the other, then I get off kilter. If I'm working too much, then my family is not happy and I'm not happy. If I'm leaving work too much for the family, then work is not happy and I'm not happy either then, and I feel guilty. So keeping the balance to make sure the family is happy and functioning well, and work is getting the piece of (me) that they are paying me for—if I can keep that balance and throw a little bit of me in there, then I can go like the energizer bunny.

And one put it this way:

I'd say overall, yes. And in talking with other people, I think I'm probably better off than some of the other deans that I work with. And I think one of the main reasons is, right now, all the other deans are working on their PhD, and a couple of them have kids, one has one on the way, and the other one has no children. . . . I work hard, I plan my time, I get a lot done during the day. I'll come in early when I need to; I'll work late when I need to, but I think I do a pretty good job at keeping a balance right now.

When asked who demands time from the deans, one responded, "I was just going to add, 'the world sometimes'. It just seems like it, doesn't it? Doesn't it seem like sometimes the world just wants another piece of you and there's not another piece to give?" Despite perceptions of their positions as chaotic and overwhelming at times, the deans are pretty content with their lives. At the same time, they all talked about being busy, often too busy, and being pulled in several

directions at once. Some of the deans were very clear about the stress they endure at work, yet only a couple of them questioned their workloads or their purpose in the jobs they hold. One dean commented,

You know, I'm not happy that I have no balance in my life, but apparently I'm not so not happy that I've not chosen to do something about it. I like what I do. I have a passion for what I do. I feel frustrated at the end of the day when I close my door and my office is just a mess because you come in from one meeting and plop your files down, and I don't have time.

That's why I need at least 15/20 minutes between meetings so I can at least make notes and put things away. My office is just a disarray mess.

Summary

As the pieces of the conversations indicate, the life of an occupational dean is hectic. Although the participants in this study attempt to keep work and personal lives separate, work seems to crossover into their personal lives; at the same time, it seems their personal lives seldom cross into work. The deans often preempt a personal obligation in deference to job-related responsibilities but try to juggle both sets of activities when possible. Guilt is an issue for some of the deans, particularly the deans who have been in their positions for fewer years. Regardless of family obligations, some of the deans (both men and women) use tactics to avoid feelings of guilt such as clearing time away from the job with a supervisor or justifying time off by reminding themselves of the long hours they work. The more experienced deans know they deserve time away and take it without feeling guilty. They give everything they can to work during work hours,

but they try to take some time in the evenings for personal pursuits like spending time with family, teaching classes, or taking classes related to their professions.

The deans manage their lives with support from others, including colleagues at work, spouses, and hired help. They compartmentalize or use routine to organize their busy lives. They all have a few activities away from work that help them to escape the demands of the job, although over time, many of these activities are cut back or never really get started. In addition, some participants mentioned, work is often on their minds even when they are away from the college.

Overall, the deans are definitely challenged by their work and the time they spend working. However, the majority of them accept their workloads as part of the job. They just keep going and try to get everything accomplished. The vast role of the occupational dean and the work involved in the position is seen as the nature of the job whether those in the role personally like it or not. They convey that they have passion for what they do and that they have made a choice to be a dean. The majority of the deans are surviving in this role, some are even thriving.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The ways in which people manage their work and personal lives continue to be a topic of interest in our society. The increased pace of our lives has prompted researchers to investigate work/life and the effects the demands of busy lifestyles have on people. Work/life issues have been studied from different perspectives, including business, societal, and higher education. Much of the higher education literature on work/life is focused on university faculty; however, this research does not necessarily apply directly to community college faculty and administrators. To seek an understanding of how work/life issues affect one group of community college employees, this study examined the ways community college occupational deans manage both their work and professional lives. Nine deans from a mid-western state organization participated in the study, which consisted of completing a demographic survey, reviewing their calendars, and participating in an interview.

Answers to Research Questions

Several themes emerged from the data through analyses. These themes included the nature of the job of occupational dean, the use of time both at work and away from work, work/life crossover, perception of work/life, and work/life satisfaction. The themes also provided the necessary information to address the three research questions guiding this study:

1. How do community college occupational deans perceive their lives from a work/life perspective?

2. How do the requirements of their positions affect the abilities of community college occupational deans to manage the demands of their work lives and their personal lives?
3. How do community college occupational deans manage their work lives and their personal lives?

Question 1—Perceptions. The deans discussed the many characteristics of their roles as occupational administrators. While no two deans have identical responsibilities, they all share similar perceptions of their roles: overflowing workloads, chaotic pace, and diverse responsibilities. At the beginning of the interviews, each participant was asked to take some time to reflect on a typical two-week period and to share personal reflections. The common theme emerging during this activity was the perception of lack of time to think, reflect, or process. The deans lamented that they are in meetings almost constantly and that they have “very little white space” on their calendars, meaning that appointments and meetings are scheduled back to back with no time in between. The deans share their calendars with other people, but this is often to their disadvantage as members of their colleges see open time as available meeting time.

A few of the deans not only manage the responsibilities of their current jobs, but also carry responsibilities for other areas that were former interests/positions or the duties of positions not filled due to budget cuts. This extra workload sometimes requires some of the deans to remain current in a field that is not directly related to their current position.

During the interviews, it was common for the deans to prioritize work and family. The majority of the female deans put work first, then family; the majority of

the male deans placed family first, then work. However, all of the deans indicated that they are dedicated and hardworking on the job during working hours.

Often, the subject of guilt came up in conversation when discussing being away from work or home. When asked to clarify their feelings of guilt, some of the deans (both male and female) indicated that they feel guilty when they leave work earlier than usual, two of the female deans mentioned that they feel guilty for either not being at work or at home when they should, and another mentioned feeling guilty for not being at home with her children as they were growing up. The rest of the deans (both male and female) did not feel guilty, stating that they put in their time and feel they can flex their schedules when necessary. Two men indicated that they clear their decisions to leave with supervisors, acknowledging that this helps them to avoid feelings of guilt. A couple of the deans noted that they used to feel guilty about leaving work but no longer have those feelings after being in the job for several years.

Overall, the deans expressed that the majority of the time they feel pretty good about the choices they make to manage their work and personal lives. Despite hectic schedules and overwhelming workloads, most of them are content with their roles and the ways they manage their work and personal lives.

Question 2—Ways the deans' positions affect work/life management. The requirements of their positions seem to affect the quality of the work experiences of the occupational deans in this study. From the deans' perceptions, work is extremely busy with back to back meetings and multiple project assignments. They are in constant motion with little time to reflect or discuss important topics.

The comments the deans shared indicate that their many work responsibilities are diverse and overwhelming at times, with multiple initiatives. Some of these initiatives are perceived to be irrelevant to the purpose of their college mission or department focus such as tasks the deans continue to do because of the expertise they have from a former position as in the case of the dean with the technology background. The extra projects or initiatives cause additional stress for the deans with taxing workloads already.

The requirements of their positions impact the personal lives of each dean a bit differently. The deans give up personal time for their jobs, but not on a regular basis. Typical work-related interferences include overnight travel, evening responsibilities, and weekend work. All of the deans mentioned evening responsibilities, and several of the deans mentioned that they often work weekends. In addition to working extra hours, many of the deans also volunteer for community organizations affiliated with the college after normal working hours. While they put in this extra time, none of the deans admitted to adjusting normal work routines to compensate for the additional hours.

As for breaks during the day, most of the deans admitted to eating lunch at their desks the majority of the time and working through lunch to get caught up on reading or emails. Those with school-aged children mentioned attending school or sport activities occasionally during the week. Most deans talked about not being able to make it to every event, but that they try to make it to major events or share this responsibility, trading off with their spouse. They typically use weekend time for extended family obligations.

Another way that job responsibilities invade their personal lives was evident in their comments about being preoccupied with thoughts of work. They mentioned that work consumes or could consume them. The deans think about work when they first wake up in the morning, or they talked about reading something for pleasure at night to get work off their minds. Hobbies also provide a mental escape, when the deans have time to actually do them.

Question 3—Managing work and personal lives. The deans use support structures, routine, compartmentalization, and organization to manage the work and personal spheres of their lives. Occasionally the spheres overlap, and when they do, the deans compensate for the time away from work by taking work home or working late or on weekends to catch up. A common strategy for the deans is to compartmentalize the different components of their lives. Seldom did the deans mention blending the two aspects of their lives; rather, they keep things separate only allowing work to spill over. These deans seem to be operating from a separate spheres perspective, which does not lend to integration (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984).

Others talked about getting into or maintaining a routine, which helps them manage people and activities at work and at home. The deans in this study had specific daily routines that allowed them to address home or personal issues before leaving for work. Once in the car, the deans begin organizing their day either by making calls, reading when stopped in traffic, or setting up mentally for the day ahead. At the office, the typical routine is to settle in and check their email. This is a time consuming task for many, who commented that they

typically spend at least an hour each day dealing with email. Once they attend to the morning issues, meetings and appointments or projects begin.

The majority of the deans do not leave work on a regular basis for non-work events such as a child's school events, sports activities, or personal medical appointments; however, those who do try to arrange these activities for later in the afternoon so they do not return to work afterward. If they have a deadline to meet or a pressing issue to address, they take work home. One-half of the deans mentioned that they reschedule health appointments if a work conflict arises. The rest weigh the importance of each conflicting appointment and then make the appropriate decision for them. When the deans have evening work-related appointments or meetings, they seldom adjust their normal schedules to compensate for the extra time; these responsibilities are considered to be part of the job.

Other than typical daily routines, the deans shared several coping strategies to help them manage. The deans get support from others including spouses, assistants, staff, and/or co-workers. One dean mentioned the importance of the state organization members for debriefing. The deans in committed relationships indicated that their partners are supportive. Spouses often carried the responsibility for errands or children's appointments or after school activities; however, the deans with children all talked about being actively involved with their families.

The deans spoke about their relationships with people at work. One-half of the deans talked about interacting with others including faculty, administrators,

and other staff. Either people drop by their offices or they take opportunities to walk around campus dropping in on others. Yet, when the deans socialize, the majority of them admitted that they rarely or never socialize with people from work.

On the home front, the deans use various strategies to accomplish daily tasks and chores such as hiring cleaning help or getting help with general household tasks from spouses and family members. The deans all talked about spending time with family and extended family, primarily using weekends to attend to extended family obligations. In addition, the deans talked about vacation time as a strategy for coping with the stress. One-half of the deans mentioned taking regular vacations; however, sometimes vacation time is used for continuing education as well as time away.

Literature and Theory

The deans in this study provided insight into the topic of work/life with comments, shared experiences, and perspectives on their roles as community college occupational deans and the ways they manage both their work and personal lives. As a result of this insight and the corresponding data, implications can be drawn from this study that could contribute to the work/life literature base, resolve work/life management issues for the deans, and add to the understanding of role theory.

Literature Implications. This study contributes to the body of research investigating work/life and community college occupational deans in several ways. First, it looks at a population that has not been studied from a work/life

perspective or seldom studied at all. Occupational deans' roles and responsibilities differ from their liberal arts, continuing education, and student services counterparts in many ways due to the diversity of occupational programs, the variety of students enrolled in these programs, the state and federal compliance requirements, the community and business/industry collaboration, and the multitude of responsibilities that go along with these programs. Because of these varied responsibilities and the financial constraints experienced by community colleges, occupational deans are forced to do more with less, to update and/or expand programs to meet rapidly changing industry needs, and to be all things to many people. The deans in this study paint a clear picture of the actual duties and multiple responsibilities involved in the role of this mid-management position. These demands make the role of occupational dean stressful, time consuming, and challenging.

Second, the demands faced by the deans in this study result in spillover of the deans' work lives into their personal lives. This spillover is evident in the deans' comments about taking work home, working weekends, and multitasking to use time as efficiently as possible both at work and at home. The roles and rigors of the deans' positions are much different from those of faculty, yet their work/life situations are similar. As faculty answer to tenure committees and deans, occupational deans are accountable to state and federal governing bodies, business and industry partners, community members, and diverse students. This accountability contributes to the heavy workload of the deans, which results in the spillover of work responsibilities into personal time. Not only

do these work demands bleed into the deans' personal lives, work also preoccupies their thoughts, invading their mental processes when the deans are away from work. The deans have to actively divert their thinking to escape this mental invasion. Specific examples of work spillover are addressed in the literature (Hammer, Bauer, & Grandy, 2003; Rayman, 2001); however, the mental aspect of work spillover (being aware of thinking so much about work while at home and purposefully trying to divert their thoughts) in this study is different from the task oriented overflow cited in the literature

This study also provides a unique insight into the daily routines of the deans and identifies specific strategies they employ to manage work and personal lives. The comments shared illustrate the daily time challenges faced and the hectic pace at which the deans function to accomplish goals and meet established deadlines. The comments also convey a struggle with the quality and the control of time spent both at work and at home. Even as they attempt to plan or organize events and activities, time is often out of the deans' control as others, both work colleagues and family, force them to adjust schedules and spread time thinly among responsibilities.

As the deans shared their daily routines, it is apparent that their discussions weigh heavily on the work side of their lives. This prominence of work discussions could be the result of their perception of my focus as researcher, given that I am part of the work organization to which they belong. It could also stem from the interviews being conducted at a work-related conference. Presenting themselves as dedicated, hard working colleagues during

the interviews may be another factor. However, the emphasis the deans placed on work mirrors the perspectives represented in the literature that discusses work/life from a work vantage point such as higher education, business, and social and community perspectives (Hochschild, 1997; Philipson, 2002; Rayman, 2002; Schor, 1992). These perspectives are rooted in the type of work environment or social situation instead of originating from a home experience.

The data reveal real-life circumstances that highlight the nature of the occupational deans' lives and the struggles they encounter attempting to deal with both work and home. These data could also play a role in bringing about change to help streamline or adjust the workload for the position of occupational dean.

Role Theory Implications. Looking at the data through a role theory lens, it is evident that the deans are indeed strained by the demands of their work lives and the ways in which their work bleeds into their personal lives (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; O'Driscoll, Ilgen & Hildreth, 1992). However, only two deans specifically mentioned feelings of being extremely overwhelmed and dissatisfied with their workloads. The rest gave indications of being stressed and struggling to manage their work and personal lives. Despite their comments, most of the deans still feel content with the ways they manage their work and personal lives.

Role theory addresses time taken from one sphere of life for another, indicating a shifting back and forth from one area to another (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Hochschild, 2003) such as when the deans use evening and weekend time for work. Time taken for the deans seems to be in one direction: from their

personal lives to work. Seldom did they mention that their personal lives take time from work.

Time is a key component of this study relating to role theory (O'Driscoll, 1992). The deans tended to view time as a limited commodity, requiring them to multitask to carry out responsibilities and give up personal appointments and time to fulfill work obligations. The women seemed more willing to give up their personal time than the men as the women prioritized work before family. These women's comments may indicate a parallel to the literature about women faculty feeling the need to prove themselves to their colleagues to gain acceptance and receive recognition (Sorcinelli, et al., 2000; Tack, Patitu, 1992). Despite this prioritization, both the men and the women viewed their families as very important, yet they were both willing to take time from their personal lives to accommodate work obligations.

While their work situations are challenging, many of the deans also have a variety of personal situations and obligations that are different from the ideal worker, thus causing them to handle their multiple responsibilities in various ways. The ideal worker is able to subordinate non-work activities to a full-time caregiver (Bailyn, et al., 2001; Rapoport, et al., 2002; Williams, 2000). In this study, some of the deans have spouses working full-time outside the home and have children living at home ranging from 3 to 16 years old. Others have eldercare responsibilities that are part of their weekly routines. Despite these situations, the deans make few attempts to weave work and personal obligations. They leave work late in the day only occasionally for a personal commitment.

Even then, they often take work home or make up missed work time during off work hours or on weekends. Despite the ways in which their lives differ from the ideal worker, the deans still function from the ideal worker norm and conform to the traditional expectations of their work environments.

At the conclusion of the data analysis, a clear contradiction was evident in that the deans stated feeling overwhelmed and dissatisfied with their work loads yet content with what they do and how they are able to manage their work and personal lives. The deans did not indicate that they experience conflict in their various roles due to the compartmentalization strategies they employ. To apply role theory to this study forces an examination of the roles these deans play. They have a role as a dean and a role in their personal lives; however, they actually play out the responsibilities of multiple roles both at work and in their personal lives. Therefore, a more appropriate lens for this study may be one that is societal or cultural that examines work/life from a broader perspective encompassing all the various roles played, the contradictions of the statements about being dissatisfied, and the final comments about feeling content with their situations.

Discussion

After reviewing the literature on work/life and the data from this study, one cannot help but ask, "Why do these people do this job?" Perhaps the most intriguing tension in this study is the indication that the deans are overworked and stressed, yet the majority of them enjoys what they do and ended their interviews with positive comments about their lives. Some of the deans indicated

that the quality of their work lives is not good; however, none of them mentioned plans to leave their current position. This tension between the realization that work is overwhelming and the lack of comments to make change in their work lives could be a result of several factors: the deans really enjoy their work and have a passion for what they do; the deans perceive all occupational dean positions to be as overwhelming as theirs, and change in position is not a solution to the situation of being overworked; the deans are so caught up in the flurry of their lives and managing their workloads that they do not realize just how overworked they are; or the deans may be consumed with their work and may feel pressure from what is now a societal norm to endure their multiple responsibilities.

Aside from speculation or attempts to provide a rationale for the deans' comments and behaviors, it is evident that these deans also represent a dysfunctional society, one that encourages people to devote time to work above all else. This is evident in the deans' contradictory statements where they seem to be rationalizing or justifying their behavior. These deans are caught up in a societal norm that encourages earning high salaries, working long hours, doing more with less, and competing with others to be the first one to the goal. This behavior is reinforced by media and advertising that endorse overspending on material goods that supposedly make people happy. All of the time spent on work and all of the money spent on material possessions shifts the focus away from self, family, and nature, creating a disconnect with life outside work. This phenomenon might be better explained through a cultural or societal perspective

that investigates the shifting values of working people and the global effects of this shift. Is this predominately a U.S. issue or is it becoming more apparent in other countries and cultures?

The heavy workloads, the misalignment of work requirements and personal responsibilities, and the stress levels, whether stated or implied, reflect issues about balance and work/life management presented in the literature (Bailyn, 2002; Bright & Richards, 2001; Wild, 2002). These issues are discussed, yet few solutions to the increased stress and demands placed on workers are offered in the literature (Hochschild, 1997; Kossek, 2003; Sorcinelli, Austin, & Rice, 2000). While the deans in this study are currently able to keep up with this lifestyle, it is questionable whether they will be able to sustain it as their work responsibilities continue to increase due to the constantly changing work environment for which they prepare students. The rising number of community college administrator retirements (Barwick, 2002; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Fisher, 2002; Wolf & Carroll, 2002) may be one indication that the position of occupational dean is getting too demanding; lack of willing and qualified applicants to fill the vacancies may be another (Barwick, 2002). How long will it be before these deans reach their workload capacity and what will happen when they do? Community colleges need to critically examine the role they play in higher education and to re-evaluate the responsibilities of these middle managers and the general community college philosophy of being all things to all people.

Additionally, the hectic pace of the workplace and the priority values assigned to work above all else, as in the case of the deans who ranked work first then family, are symptomatic of a misalignment between doing what some feel obligated to do for the job and doing what is necessary to nurture the human spirit. It is as if the deans resist the opportunity to critically examine their job situations for fear that they might not want to continue doing the job they have or continue down the career path they have chosen. They also indicate that their needs often come last as they put work and family first and put their own self-nurturing needs on hold. Confronting their lifestyle might cause the deans to question their purpose and to recognize their own needs for a more realistic lifestyle.

The nature of the position contributes to this all-consuming mentality by providing a constant array of distractions from life outside the institution, causing even those striving for a more balanced lifestyle to struggle. It is easy for the deans to head down the road of chaos simply by combining their passion for what they do with the endless list of work responsibilities. This is similar to the plight of the community college instructors who become overwhelmed with their teaching loads and varied assignments (LeCroy & McClenney, 1992). These deans' experiences mirror the literature in the types of responsibilities they have (Stalcup & Wilson, 1981). What stands out is that the nature of the responsibilities seems much broader than initially anticipated (J. Jacobs, personal communication, October 5, 2004) as in one dean's listing of programs ranging from health care to aviation.

Finally, as a researcher who is also an occupational dean, I find that I must make some comparisons between this study and my situation. Several of these deans' experiences seem more extreme and diverse than what I experience as an occupational dean. This is not to say that I do not travel down that road of chaos on occasion, but I am able to carve out personal time on a fairly regular basis to reflect on my work and explore my hobbies. My experiences are more in line with the deans from smaller, rural institutions, which causes me to speculate that there may be a correlation between institutional size and workload. I am also able to function from an ideal worker model because I have full-time support at home that allows me even more flexibility to manage my work and personal lives.

This study brings to light serious work/life issues that involve a perception of work being more important than personal life. These issues are eroding the value of personal time and resulting in potentially negative implications for community colleges and for our society.

Future Studies

The occupational deans in this study all mentioned workloads and work pace as a part of the jobs they do. Yet, despite the overloaded view they portray of their jobs, they all seem content with what they do and the ways they spend their time at work and away from work. The deans seem to have adjusted to the reality of budget cuts and staffing shortages by taking on extra assignments or assisting in various ways to meet the institutions' needs. This causes one to ponder what is a 'normal' workload for these deans and how much longer can

they maintain these multiple and often conflicting responsibilities and the stress levels associated with them.

To answer these questions and to contribute to an understanding of role theory as it relates to higher educational administrators, it is important to continue researching community college administrators.

One such research activity would be to conduct a focus group with the deans participating in this study to see how their comments in a more interactive format compare to the comments recorded during the individual interviews. Typically, research literature argues for individual interviews and the forum for delving deeply into a topic (Creswell, 1994; Merriam, 1998). However, a focus group setting might get beneath the surface of the comments made to reveal the inconsistencies and to uncover an awareness of the work/life situation for these deans. The outcome of this focus group along with the findings of this study could also serve as a topic for professional development conversations and activities leading to a broader awareness of the work/life issues faced by many in mid-level management positions and ideas for doing the job of occupational dean differently in the future.

Other studies may investigate whether the experiences shared by the occupational deans are similar to those of other community college deans, such as those in the areas of liberal arts, continuing education, or student services. Is there a difference in burn-out rates between occupational deans and other deans? If so, what are the issues leading to the difference of burn-out rates? Are the workloads of occupational deans significantly more demanding than workload

of deans in other areas? Another focus would be to study deans at different institutions to see how workloads and responsibilities vary from smaller institutions to larger community colleges. Institutional culture may be another factor influencing the role of the community college occupational dean and an important area to investigate as culture can contribute to ease of accomplishing tasks, expectations about work and one's physical presence at work, etc. Finally, a comparison of roles of community college deans and four-year institution deans could reveal some interesting differences in the responsibilities and the ways these positions function. A tangent from this study to an examination of literature on mid-level management positions in business and industry would provide a comparison of workload and responsibilities to uncover whether the demands of occupational deans are unique to these positions or whether workload and diversity of responsibilities are a universal issue in middle management positions. This study offers a brief look into the work/life issues of nine Midwest community college administrators. It would be interesting to talk to other Midwest occupational deans not included in this study, as well as occupational deans from around the country, to compare their work/life experiences to those presented here. A lot more research needs to be done to reveal the true nature of the occupational dean positions. Additional research and investigation will help promote necessary change to attract future deans and higher educational administrators to these positions.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A

Initial Email to Organization Members

To: Qualifying Members
From: Jean Bailey, Montcalm Community College
Date: September 28, 2004
Subject: Work/Life Person-to-Person Interview

As many of you know, I've been working on a research project investigating work and life balance as it is experienced by community college occupational deans. More specifically, I am trying to determine how we manage our work and personal lives—how do we fit everything in?

I am asking for your help and participation in a person-to-person interview after the next organization meeting in Grand Rapids. I will conduct interviews after the meeting and TRENDS sessions, October 6 through 8, 2004. I am anticipating that this activity will take no more than 1 hour of your time. Your input, comments, and ideas will be used as data for my dissertation; your participation is completely voluntary.

Please reply to this message by *Friday, September 30, 2004*, if you are willing to be part of this experience.

Thank you for your support, and I hope to hear from you soon!

APPENDIX B

Appendix B

Follow-Up Email to Identified Participants

To: (Individual email addresses)
From: Jean Bailey, Montcalm Community College
Date: October 4, 2004
Subject: Work/Life Person-to-Person Interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a person-to-person interview on (date). I look forward to this activity and to hearing your thoughts and comments on work/life.

One of the exercises will include a planner/calendar review of a typical two weeks in your life during September 2004. ***Please bring to the interview your planner or calendar for any two week period that you feel appropriately reflects your schedule.*** Planners or calendars will be reviewed by you only.

The document attached is a consent form for you to read and sign. ***Please bring this signed form with you to the interview or submit it to me electronically (jeanb@montcalm.edu) as an attachment prior to the October organization meeting.***

Again, I appreciate your willingness to be a part of this study.

See you in Grand Rapids!

APPENDIX C

Appendix C

Work and Life Balance: A Study of Community College Occupational Deans

Dear Organization Member:

You have been asked to participate in a person-to-person interview activity to help develop an understanding of how community college occupational deans manage their work and personal lives. By signing this form, you agree to participate in a research project on "Work and Life Balance: A Look at Community College Occupational Deans" conducted by Jean Bailey through Michigan State University.

The activity will last no more than 90 minutes and will be audio-taped. The audio tapes will be transcribed to produce a record of the interview, and the tapes will be erased at the end of the study. A participant is free to turn off the tape recorder at any time. If a participant withdraws from the study, his or her taped contributions will not be included in the transcription and will be erased at the end of the study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and should not involve any personal risk. You will receive a \$25 bookstore gift certificate, and your participation may help other deans. If you chose not to participate in an activity, not to answer particular questions, or wish to withdraw from the study or to leave, you may do so at any time, without explanation, reason, or penalty. If you do withdraw from the study, your withdrawal will have no effect on your relationship with the organization.

As a participant, your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your name or institution will not be reported in the study.

If you have any questions about the study or the person-to-person interview, please contact the investigator at any time at 2800 College Drive, Sidney, MI 48885; by phone (989.328.1234); or by email (jeanb@montcalm.edu). You may also contact the primary investigator, Dr. Marilyn Amey, at 428 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824; by phone (517.432.1056); or by email (amey@msu.edu.) If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact – anonymously, if you wish – Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) by phone: (517) 355-2180, fax: (517) 432-4503, e-mail: ucrihs@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Please sign below and bring this form with you to your interview October (day), 2004, **or** return the form to me electronically as an attachment to jeanb@montcalm.edu to indicate your agreement.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand this information and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature

Date

Print Name

☐ I agree to be audio taped _____
Signature

APPENDIX D

Appendix D

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Please answer the questions below by checking all the appropriate boxes.

1. I am a: ☐ Female ☐ Male
2. I am ☐ 20 to 30 ☐ 31 to 40 ☐ 41 to 50 ☐ 51 to 65 years old.
3. My occupational title is _____.
4. I have been an occupational dean/state contact for ☐ 1 to 2 ☐ 3 to 5
☐ 6 to 10 ☐ 11 to 20 years.
5. I am ☐ single ☐ in a committed relationship
6. My spouse/partner ☐ works full time outside the home ☐ works part time
outside the home ☐ doesn't work outside the home.
7. I have a child or children between the ages of
☐ newborn to 3 years old
☐ 4 to 10 years old
☐ 11 to 15 years old
☐ 16 to 18 years old
☐ 19 to 21 years old
☐ 22 to 40 years old
8. I have ☐ childcare ☐ grandchildren ☐ eldercare ☐ pet care
responsibilities. (Check all that apply)
9. I participate in ☐ volunteer ☐ wellness ☐ community ☐ other outside work
activities. (Check all that apply)
10. I ☐ often ☐ occasionally ☐ seldom ☐ never leave work during the day for
personal reasons or responsibilities.
11. I feel I juggle my work and personal life activities
☐ extremely well
☐ fairly well
☐ just barely
☐ not well at all

APPENDIX E

Appendix E

Proposed Interview Topics

1. Describe a typical day.
2. Who in your life requires your time?
3. What activities require your time?
4. How do you fit people and activities into your life?
5. What factors do you consider when you have schedule conflicts?
6. Describe a typical day with an evening work-related meeting.
7. How do you cope with multiple responsibilities?
8. How do you manage your work and personal lives? What works well?
9. How do you feel about the choices you make and the ways you spend your time?

APPENDIX F

Appendix F

Interview Outline

I. Introduction—3 minutes

II. Calendar Review—15 minutes

A. recording reflections—5 to 10 minutes

B. grouping issues/identifying topics—5 minutes

III. Issues Conversation—25 to 40 minutes

IV. Summary of discussion—5 minutes

APPENDIX G

Appendix G

Researcher's Role

My relationship to this study is unique in that I am an occupational dean at a mid western community college, yet I am committed to managing my work and professional lives using a more balanced approach. To understand the judgment I used in assessing the comments of the deans, it is important that the reader understands my perspective.

For me to be effective in my job, it is important that I take care of myself. Therefore, I plan exercise time, reflection time, and personal time away from my institution and seldom do I sacrifice this time to perform work tasks. In this respect, I am somewhat less compulsive than many of the deans interviewed. In addition, I have a strong support base at home which allows me to pursue hobbies and interests instead of reproductive labor activities during my time away from work. This support base and my personal work/life practices contribute to my interpretation of the data in this study.

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