Structuring a Supportive Environment for Women in Higher Education

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Structuring a Supportive Environment for Women in Higher Education

Abstract

After participating on a search committee for an academic leader, the authors conduct an empirical and philosophical analysis of factors that influence the work and productivity of women in higher education. The authors query--how can women achieve more balance in educational institutions so they can pursue careers that reflect the complexity and creativity of their lives?

Findings from their data suggest that many women perceive that the academic environment can be more supportive.   A review of the literature suggests that these perceptions are widespread in higher education.

The authors conclude that there is a need for transforming the academic environment so that it produces more productive and less stressed, scholars and leaders who are women. Women in the academy must share the responsibility for articulating and shedding light on their issues.

Keywords: women in higher education, women and workloads in higher education, women and mentoring, women and scholarship

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> For most women, success is a big picture encompassing many factors, not the culmination of a clear focused route to a high professional level. Mary Doyle-*Mentoring Heroes* -2000

> The inner battle that professional women fight is particularly difficult because its terms are rarely clear. Unpredictably, women will encounter trouble that looks like a knot of circumstance that they seek to pull loose, not recognizing at its center—except possibly in retrospect—a profound conflict concerning their own identities. Aisenberg & Harrington, *Women of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove* -1998

> Ideally, there should be a balance of all elements. Where one dominates or is lacking, then difficulties occur. Gill Hale, *The Practical Encyclopedia of Feng Shui,* 2003.

It is time to take a good look at the academic environment.

Recently while browsing in a popular bookstore, we became intrigued with a volume on Feng Shui. After reading various passages that describe the wisdom of this ancient concept and practice, we noticed some useful parallels and parables to the cultural and environmental issues that often face women in higher education. At the heart of Feng Shui is the assumption that some environments are supportive, contribute to personal harmony, and enhance our creativity. Others are not. The thesis is, of course, that we can apply specific concepts to affect our environment so that the energy in it works for us and not against us. (Hale, 2003).   Sometimes it takes letting the light in a room, rearranging the furniture, painting the walls different colors, and/or adding a garden to bring about the desired changes. We surmise that it might also be important to examine our preconceived notions. This article is an attempt to take a look at the environment in our academic institutions and to think about how it can be rearranged to produce more supportive structures in which women can flourish.

Several years ago, both of us had the opportunity to serve on a screening and selection committee to recommend a suitable candidate for a senior administrative position at a comprehensive, public university. Even though we talked sporadically during and after the experience, it was almost a year later at a social gathering when we spontaneously compared the intensity of our experiences. During our conversation, it became apparent that there was a need to assess the environment for women in higher education, if more women are going to fulfill their leadership potential.

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As we reflected on the environment in which the search was conducted, it became obvious that there were preconceived (and we suspect outmoded) notions about what constituted research, what disciplines were valuable to have in the resume pool, and what attributes would make the choice for this academic leadership position palpable to the faculty.   We both remembered differences in the publication and research records that the male and female candidates submitted. As women, we had experienced factors that could result in women publishing less and engaging in less research. The search committee, however, was not conducive to discussing these factors or to discussing the merits of applied scholarship or community engagement.   When one of the women on the search committee argued for the inclusion of a female candidate with a doctorate and experiences in nursing, her response was dismissed. One of the male faculty members stated that nursing was too narrow a discipline for the university-wide leadership position. At the heart of these discussions, we believe, were male-oriented presumptions about leadership.

Years later, we still bristle at our male colleagues' assumptions. Were their paradigms the only way to assess potential leaders for academic institutions? Was it so alien to imagine that female faculty might experience multiple priorities or commitments external to the academic community that men usually did not experience?   We both knew that hidden workload issues such as multiple familial responsibilities might contribute to differences in publications records, grant writing, and even disciplines pursued.   More specifically, we assumed that female faculty and administrators were juggling multiple priorities that included childcare, lifestyle maintenance, and familial nurturing. How could such an environment be conducive to the highest degree of academic productivity and contentment for most women? It appeared that the *academic* environment in many institutions in higher education did not lead to balance in the lives of many female faculty and administrators. Rather, women are limited by the environment.

It was probably at our informal social gathering that we decided it was time to let in the natural sunlight, move some furniture around, and rid ourselves of this stifling environment in higher education. Of course, some women accomplish extraordinary feats while juggling numerous career and life challenges, but those do not balance the losses. Can we bear any loss of intellectual capital? What can be done to affect more of a balance in the lives of women (and men who are caregivers) in higher education? Higher education is too significant a social institution to ignore the talent and leadership potential that we might be losing from women in our society.

We believe that because the search committee counted publications and research grants, there were fewer resumes of women that emerged in the early screening process to be considered in the final stages of the search. Moreover, women who were professors in nursing or who had conducted research in areas such as nursing or education were not regarded highly by the male dominated search committee on campus. One male colleague stated, "How will the institution be regarded with a leader with expertise in_____? "

In order to take a good look around the neighborhood of higher education, we reviewed the literature and decided to survey females at a comprehensive university,

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before recommending changes in the houses of others. In our readings, we reviewed the work of numerous researchers including the work of Becky Ropers-Huilman (2000). She surmised that women gain satisfaction from scholarship that relates to social change. Using the wisdom of Feng Shui, social change scholarship might be providing more of a balance in the lives of women, and such research could be meeting a creative need. Helon Theron, UCT (2000) who studied the position of women in academics in South Africa believes that the situation of women in South Africa mimics a global pattern -- the higher the status, the fewer the women. The search committee experience, however, might also suggest that social change research is sometimes viewed by others as less rigorous than the "hard" research of chemistry, physics, mathematics, or other such disciplines.

Nonetheless, we are both grateful for our experiences on the search committee because they heightened our awareness to unresolved issues swirling around women in far too many institutions in higher education. In our increasingly complex and interdependent world, the loss of any intellectual capital or potential in academic institutions, or the larger society, hampers our national and international well-being.

Assuming that women will continue to outnumber men in some areas of inquiry such as nursing and will continue to adjust multiple priorities as they pursue academic careers, how do we awaken our colleagues to the need to reexamine some preconceived perspectives? How do we construct more supportive and balanced environments for women in higher education? We found that some universities have studied the experiences of women on campus and have recommended flexible tenure tracks, daycare, and review of the faculty reward structure. These institutions include the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the University of Michigan, Arizona State University, Duke University, and the University of California at Los Angeles. Hopefully, these recommended changes have resulted in improvements in working conditions for women and quantifiable results (i.e. women earning tenure, more women presidents, etc.)

The history of women in coeducational higher education is fascinating, and there is much material for future articles. Oberlin College, Ohio is purported to be the first coeducational institution to admit women around 1833. Oberlin also lays claim to awarding the first baccalaureate degree to an African American woman, Mary Jane Patterson in 1860. We can only surmise the academic environmental in which these early women endured to obtain their degrees.

In 1975, women composed 22.5 percent of full-time faculty in American higher education. By 2000-01, women constituted 36 percent of full time faculty (AAUP, 2001). In the last 30 years, there have been federal laws enacted that prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on pregnancy and/or family care leave. Judging from our colleagues' experiences, the literature, and our experiences, balanced and supportive work environments still seem to elude many women in higher education.

 In 1993 the Office of Women in Higher Education at the American Council on Education published a study of women college and university presidents. This study was

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stimulated by the first summit of 200 women presidents held in 1990 in Washington, D.C. The results of the study were disseminated to help support the role of women as leaders in higher education. It should be noted that 50 percent of the 260 women college presidents who responded to the survey were single and had never been married. Thirty-two percent were married at the time of the survey. Less than 40 percent of the college presidents reported having children at any time.

Also in 1993, the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty revealed that there were fewer women nationally who had achieved the rank of professor (15 percent) as opposed to male professors (39 percent). Further, women on average earned $10,000 less than males in higher education and fewer women were tenured than men (42 percent and 66 percent respectively). A very telling indicator was the amount of time women and men academics reported that they spent teaching and engaging in research. Fifty-one percent of full-time faculty women reported that they spent much more time in teaching as opposed to research.   In fact, female respondents said they spent 10 percent of their time in research activities, while male respondents on average devoted 15 percent of their time in such pursuits (Nettles, M. T., 2000).

Awareness is a necessary step

How can we achieve more balance in educational institutions so women can pursue careers that reflect the complexity and creativity of their lives? Theron (2002) identifies several factors that influence the careers of women in academia including perceptions of what constitutes a career and career development, multiple responsibilities, the influence of childbearing and rearing on academic productivity, masculine institutional cultures, and the absence of supportive networks among women. Further, the research of Finkel and Olswang (1966) supports our supposition that there are identifiable factors that correlate with more balance, creativity, and an overall feeling of progress for females in academia. When they surveyed female, tenure-track, assistant professors at a research institution about serious impediments to tenure in the academic environment, the participants replied that lack of publications was detrimental to tenure quests, that time required by children detracted from their tenure quest, and that lack of grant support were all serious detriments to attaining tenure.

One result of the aforementioned is that fewer women, in academic institutions, reach the final stages in search processes for coveted, leadership positions.
Since publications and grants are often valued by search committees, as a consequence, fewer resumes of women survive the early screening process to be considered in the final stages.   Judging from the conversations in the search process in which we participated, it would also appear that research and grant records in nursing or education might be viewed as peripheral and not "mainstream."   Certain areas of expertise, it was affirmed in the search process in which we participated, would not be assets for leading the *entire* university. We noted, also, that there were few discussions about some significant leadership qualities that were desirable like establishing collegiality, demonstrating collaborative decision making, team-building, mentoring, or developing good staff into leaders.

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We believe that it is necessary for women in higher education to articulate how specific factors in the academic environment can be revisited and refurbished to be more supportive and nurturing of the talents and challenges of lives of women and men. There is a need to transform the academic environment so that it produces more productive and less stressed, scholars and leaders who are women. As women, it is necessary to make our colleagues aware that there are assumptions, practices, policies, and values in the current environment that are detrimental to supporting our talent and producing more intellectual talent.

Characteristics of an Academic Environment

In light of our experiences on the search committee, a review of the literature, and anecdotal data, we sought to compare our perceptions with others by conducting an exploratory study of female faculty and administrators on the campus of a comprehensive, public university dedicated to serving regional needs. This university enrolls approximately 11,500 students, and nearly sixty percent of the students are females. As a Carnegie MA I Master's (comprehensive) institution of higher education, its primary focus is to foster strong undergraduate teaching in the liberal arts tradition. The academic mission has also expanded to include a growing graduate school.

In our study, we sought to query full-time tenure and tenure-track female faculty and administrators about their professional experiences and personal lives to see if patterns would emerge. Specifically, we used as bases of comparison the work of Aisenberg and Harrington, authors of *Women in and of Academe: Outsiders in the Sacred Grove* (1988); research articles by Finkel and Olswang (1996), O'Laughlin and Bischoff (20 01), and Theron (2002); as well as data from the 1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty.

After reviewing the literature, consulting with colleagues, and piloting a survey, we developed a 35-item survey entitled, "Work Analysis for Female Faculty (Tenured, Tenured-Track) and Administrators." Closed-response categories included questions on **levels of contribution** (e.g. significant hours at current institution); **personal information** (marital status, number and ages of children, childcare issues, shared household responsibilities); **scholarly activities** (e.g. hours a week engaged in scholarly activities, reading, research, writing articles, engagement in creative activities, etc.); and **mentoring** activities (e.g. amount of time talking with and interacting with mentor— areas discussed with mentor). The open-ended items asked participants to reflect upon such issues as **managing a career with personal life concerns** (e.g. handling yourself with conflicts between career and personal life). Participants were also asked what they would recommend to a young woman about to enter the profession regarding balancing personal life and career choices. Assistance was obtained from the institution's research office to conduct an on-line, electronic questionnaire and to send it through email to 224 women who were full-time faculty and administrators. Statistical data were also provided by the institution's research office.

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What did we find in one academic environment?

Ninety-six women on the campus participated in our survey, which represents a 43 percent response rate. In analyzing these data, we found more similarities than differences between the respondents of our current study and the previous research.

From our research review, it appears that the **personal characteristics** of the respondents resemble those of the larger pool of female tenured, tenured-track, and administrators in academia.   The majority of the respondents (66 percent) were 46 years of age or over; only 11 percent of the respondents were in the 20-35 age category.   The majority of respondents (83) identified themselves as white (90 percent) and 5 percent were African American. There were two Hispanic and two identified as "other" (each 2 percent of the total). Of those responding, 61 percent were married. The majority of the respondents (69 percent) who are married have been married for over 11 years. Forty-one percent of the respondents revealed that they have been married for twenty years or more. These data do not appear to depart from the national data.

Regarding children, 42 percent of the respondents stated that they did not have any children. The aforementioned finding is very similar to the finding from the ACE survey conducted on college and university presidents. Our study found that only 1 percent of the respondents reported that they had more than three children. Nineteen percent of the females stated they had one child, and 33 percent reported having two children. Likewise, 50 percent of the respondents reported that they did not have any children living with them. When asked to indicate the number of children age 18 and younger living with them, 46 percent reported there were none. Thirty percent of those having children stated that they had one child younger than age 18 living with them, and 21 percent of the respondents reported that they had two children under the age of 18 living with them.

The aforementioned findings are also similar to results of a study of faculty at a Carnegie I Research University which found that 44 percent of women assistant professors had no children at the time of the study. Thirty-three percent of the women assistant professors at the Carnegie I Research institution reported that their desire not to have children was influenced by their career goals (Finkel & Olswang, 1996).   Clearly, the balancing of children and work is an area we need to rearrange in our academic environment. Have we agreed that having children is incompatible with an academic career? What are we modeling for younger women and our granddaughters? How can the academic environment be altered to allow women to experience parenthood and explore specific fields of inquiry- at the same time?

When describing their **home situation**, 78 percent of the respondents, in our survey, reported that their spouse or significant other worked outside of the home. Moreover, when asked who maintains the household (i.e. laundry, cleaning, grocery shopping, cooking, lunches, etc.), 38 percent reported that they did. Four percent replied that her significant other maintained the household, and 47 percent replied that she and her

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significant other shared this responsibility. Eighty-eight (88) percent of the respondents reported that they were pleased with the level of support they received from their significant others.   Conversely, 12 percent were not pleased. This high level of satisfaction probably accounts for the long-term stability of spousal/significant other relationships observed in our study. According to Laughlin and Bischoff (2001), the perception of spousal support is related to the degree in which both parents share viewpoints and values regarding childcare and home maintenance. Maybe technological advancements will continue to minimize the time need to prepare meals, clean laundry, complete errands, too.

In terms of **childcare**, 88 percent did not need preschool childcare services. Fifty-three percent of the respondents' children attend a public school. The most popular forms of transportation to and from school tended to be the school bus (30 percent) and/or transportation by one of the parents (30 percent). Forty-two (42) percent of the respondents replied that their child or children go home alone after school. Twenty-three percent have scheduled after school activities for their child or children in an after school program or agency. Thirty-percent of the respondents indicated that "other" arrangements were made for their children after school.

Responding to questions regarding **homework and school related activities**, 64 percent of the respondents affirmed that these activities were shared with their spouses. Sixteen (16) percent of the respondents stated, however, that they helped their children with homework and school related activities.   When queried about the amount of time they spend in helping their child or children with homework, 58 percent of the respondents reported that they spend between 1-3 hours each day with homework or extracurricular activities (including sports).   Nineteen percent indicated that they spent four or more hours a week engaged in homework or school related activities.

When it was necessary to travel to a **conference or professional meeting**, 71 percent of the respondents report that they leave their child or children at home with their significant other. When asked to report how many hours they spend on average engaged in scholarly activities (reading, research, writing articles, writing grants, engaging in creative projects), respondents reported that 33 percent spent less than five hours in these areas. Thirty (30) percent revealed that they spent 5-10 hours a week in scholarly pursuits, and 34 percent stated that they spent more than 11 hours a week on these activities. A review of the reward structures at specific institutions of higher education for scholarly activities might lend some support to women in these areas.

As we observed in the campus we studied, respondents did not report numerous **academic articles, grants or professional presentations**, on a yearly basis. Thirty-three percent of the respondents stated that, on average, they did not publish one article a year. Forty (40) percent reported that they published one article a year in a refereed or non-refereed journal.   Seventeen percent reporting publishing two articles a year, and 10 percent reported publishing three or more articles a year.   Similarly, when counting the average number of grants written in a year, 60 percent indicated that they did not write any grants. Eighteen (18) percent reported writing one grant a year, and four percent

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reported writing two grants a year. Six percent of the respondents stated that they had written three or more grants in a year. More respondents appear to present at professional conferences in a given year.   Forty-five percent of the respondents revealed that they, on an average, present at one professional conference in a year.   Thirteen percent do not report presenting at any conferences in a given year.   Twenty-four percent state that they present at two conferences on average. Fifteen percent reveal that they present at three or more conferences on average.

 Our data add to the research that women in academia perceive that they have to work hard to succeed. Their work differs from men in the academic work environment because of the greater potential for family responsibilities to interfere with scholarly accomplishments (Gerdes, 2003). The socio-cultural expectations regarding women's role in childrearing may lead to greater emotional stress which could also interference with a female faculty member's feeling of well-being. Thus, the balance or lack of balance between academic career and family seem an important factor for female faculty or administrators to succeed. Hence, it was not surprising to discover that a 1996 survey of 3,343 higher education institutions found that 40% of respondents had stop-the-clock tenure policies (Friedman, Rimsky, & Johnson, 1996). However the latter study also found that stop-the-clock policies were one of the policies most associated with career penalties and least likely to be used. The aforementioned suggests a continual need to view the values of our institutional of higher educations regarding producing supportive environments for women with renewed vigor and from diverse perspectives.

In our study, the majority of the women responding had long-term relationships with spouses or significant others. We assume that the long-term relationships added to a balanced home environment necessary to balance an academic career and a family. We also noted that most women might benefit from guidance on how to produce academic scholarship efficiently by collaborating with other writing teams or partners.

Does mentoring help women in Academia?

The research on mentoring certainly suggests the answer is yes to our question.   In his article, "A Delicate Balance: Women in Academic," Gilbert A. Bouchard (2003) reports that a multi-year research study at the University of Alberta concludes that it is important to not overlook women in the early administrative rungs. It is there that mentoring is pivotal. In "Perspectives in Mentoring," Carol Williams-Nickelson (2000) affirms, " while I do not intend to ignore or invalidate the mentoring needs of men, concerns about balance seem to be an emerging theme in the professional development of women as we work toward merging our identities as psychologists and women. Female students wonder if having it all (including a thriving / diversified / exciting career, family, holding professional leadership positions, engaging in community service, lobbying for political change, advocating for disadvantaged populations, and even learning new skills such as cooking and sewing) is a possibility or simply an unattainable fantasy. Are the female leaders of our academic disciplines living balanced lives, and are they able / willing to guide the new generation of women psychologists toward this end?

Thirty-seven percent of the respondents in our survey report that they have a mentor, while sixty-three (63) percent state they do not have a mentor. A higher percent of

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respondents reported that their mentor was a tenured-female faculty member at the same institution. Eighty- eight (88) percent of the respondents who did have mentors replied that they conversed with their mentor frequently (more than five times an academic year). Fifty eight (58) percent of those responding that they did have a mentor also responded that they had maintained this mentor relationship for less than five years. Thirty percent of the respondents have been engaged in mentorship relationships from 6-10 years. Only six percent (6) of the respondents had been engaged in a mentorship relationship for more than fifteen years.

When rating the effectiveness of the aforementioned **mentorships,** three percent of the respondents replied that they were not effective. Seventy (70) percent, however, reported that the mentor relationship were very effective. Six percent related that they were not sure how effective these mentorship relationships were. When asked if they mentored other faculty, 51 percent responded in the affirmative, and 49 percent responded they did not mentor others. Seventy five (75) percent of those who did mentor replied that they interacted with the person they mentored frequently.

What did our respondents share with us about their lives?

When asked if they could recall a situation when their career and personal life were in direct conflict, seventy percent (70) stated they could recall such a situation. When asked if they were pleased with their contributions to the university, 96 percent responded that they were pleased with their contributions.

We found the **open responses** from participants very informative. Most reflected, in a very personal way, many of the issues concerning career/personal conflicts are captured through statistical data, but the numbers do not capture the opportunities lost. Appendix I provides a sample of responses to two of the survey open response queries. We asked, (question 34a):"If you could make an improvement (e.g. better organized at home, more time for scholarship, etc.), in what areas would you seek improvement? (Please list them.)" and question 35: "What would you recommend to a young woman who is about to enter the profession regarding balancing personal life and career choices?"

As we continue to explore this area, we hope to gain more insights about the environment for women in higher education. Although we have focused on one academic house and read about the houses of others, there are similar feelings of discomfort, frustration with the limits imposed by others, and lack of flexibility in many institutions of higher education. Clearly there are tensions for many women that influence their contributions in the academy, their self-esteem, and their perceptions of what is possible. What we do not know is how many women might have participated in our survey if the academic environment had been more conducive to their choosing academic careers. Can we afford this lost of intellectual capital?

What do we recommend?

1. **Awareness that the academic environment is not as supportive as it could be for most women and some men.**

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2. **Similar confidential surveys or mechanisms for gathering information on a campus to inform other faculty and academic leaders about the academic environment on campus for women.**

3. **Articulation of the academic environment issues that need to be changed or rearranged by women and men leaders in higher education. (College presidents should examine the environments at their colleges to determine how the practices, policies, institutional values, and reward structure can be improved to support male and female faculty and to improve the contributions of larger groups of faculty.)**

4. **Organized and systematic negotiation by academic women to better harmonize themselves with the environment. (Should the choice be between having a family and having a career? How would on-site daycare facilities, working in teams, or tele-commuting minimize some of the challenges of balancing parenthood with an academic career?)**

5. **Discussion in the faculty senate (or other appropriate venue) on the American Association of University Professor (AAUP)'s statements on family responsibilities and academic work, equity in pay, and other issues of particular interest to women (http://www.aaup.org/Issues/WomeninHE); adaptation of statement and policies that fit specific institutions.**

6. **Recommendations for quality and convenient child care (AAUP suggests that colleges and universities should share the responsibilities with faculty for the provisions of child-care services (AAUP 2001).**

APPENDIX I: SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

"If you could make an improvement (e.g. better organized at home, more time for scholarship, etc.), in what areas would you seek improvement? (Please list them.)"

Selected Responses:

Better salary would enable me to work more without having broken cars, etc.

More time for scholarship.

Ability to say no to tasks that are unfulfilling.

Scholarship times has been eked out of private time and can be rewarding except increasing leadership and administrative responsibilities competes for time not advising, teaching, holding meetings and writing accreditation reports. Professional practice time is also a competing force which I would like to do more with.

We would have a work culture that allows both men and women some flexibility when it comes to child care needs. Schools would also adjust their schedules to fit current needs for parents, vs. staying with an agriculturally based schedule, which is what we still use today. There would also be day care provisions for employees on campus; that is not that unusual of a request; many publics and privates have this provision for faculty and staff.

I sometimes feel that I expend such tremendous amounts of energy on my students and preparing for classes, that my family has to settle for "leftovers" at times. Learning to balance life at work and life at home kept me from "burning out."

I want to continue to be more productive at work.

If I could afford to pay for house cleaning, yard care I would do so.

Better organized both at home and work.

Put as much time into home projects as I do into work projects. Also get organized everywhere – home and work.
If I could make an improvement, I would get more support at home for the household chores from my spouse. I would also be more focused.

I would like more time to spend on research and less on stupid meetings. I find I can only get 1 hour of work in before I have to run to a "meeting" that ends up being a total waste of time. In the brief 4 years I've been at this institution the paperwork (even though most is now digital) has greatly increased, while I still need

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to teach and perform research at the highest level. No raise and more work makes for an unhappy work environment.

Delegate more to my staff rather than doing it myself. Get more organized at home and at work (although I am very organized). Schedule vacation and recreational time in my overall time management.

> **"What would you recommend to a young woman who is about to enter the profession regarding balancing personal life and career choices?"**

VERY DIFFICULT…this is my first year doing this! But I am enjoying it.

Think carefully about what is important to you, what is rewarding what is unacceptable to you; open your eyes widely when choosing your work place, the "culture" for or against working women in management will be a strong agent in your success; be willing to change and be flexible, while staying true to your values and ethics. Find your personal strengths and interests. Take time to rejuvenate and relax, get up early on Sunday mornings, enjoy the quite and peace, and watch the sun rise.

STAY OUT OF ACADEMIA UNLESS SHE WANTS TO STAY SINGLE OR MARRY PROFESSOR ONCE SHE GETS TENURE. OTHERWISE, I ADVISE THEM TO ENTER THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

What else can I say but make sure to provide time for yourself even if you don't have a family. Time to relax and enjoy.

Balance is key – keep in tune the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual well-being of yourself.

Insist on a good orientation program, find a mentor early, develop a research program, hook up with faculty with like interests across the country of region, plan percentage or work with administrator e.g. 20% research and writing and less other things that semester, develop a team approach with other people in the dept., plan ahead to leave campus on breaks or you will find work taking the place of down time and serve your health and wellness ahead of the family and job.

You can't get back the time you wasted in the office when your children were young. I wish I wasn't always in a hurry when my child was small and I spent more time enjoying the small moments rather than hurrying to get back to work. Keep your priorities in order. Work can wait.

Learn the value of planning alternate ways to achieve goals. What might seem to be the most direct route to achievement may not necessarily fit with reality. Don't get discouraged. There are many paths.

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That you CAN have it all, but not all at the same time. Figure out what your [sic] value most in life let that guide you. Some things may have to wait till later…
Do not marry and do not have children. You won't MAKE it.

Prioritize and make time for yourself.

It is a juggling act and sometimes you have to choose between family and career. Always choose family!!

Only do it if you are single or if your partner will take on the majority of the responsibilities at home.

Marry someone who will value what you do and is responsible. Be aggressive in securing a decent salary. Domestic help would make a big difference in my life, but I can't afford it or a decent car.

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