

# Work/Life Balance

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Materials for this presentation were adapted from materials prepared by  
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## “Balance” is the Wrong Concept- Integration is key

“Work-life balance is an unfortunate phrase because it denotes a sense of opposing forces—work versus life—and a steady state between them. We argue that work and life are intertwined and, therefore, must always be considered in tandem” (p. 60)

Benko, C. & Weisberg, A. (2007). *mass career customization: aligning the workplace with today's nontraditional workforce*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

# Work-Life Integration

- Is universally sought
- 86% of U.S. workers said that ensuring work fulfillment and balance is a top career priority
- 81% of U.S. workers work for employers that do not have programs that help them balance work and life

# Generational Thinking Matters

- Traditionalists (1925-1945) “Keepers of the Grail”
- Boomers (1946-1960) “Thank God its Monday”
- Gen X (1961-1980) “Work to Live”
  - Will (often) choose quality of life over pay and start-up package
  - Balance/integration extremely important
  - Flexibility is required
  - Feedback is desired
  - Protection from “too much” teaching and service desired
- Millenials (1981-2000) “It’s all About Me”

# Some of the things that should be done

- **Active Service Modified Duties (ASMD)**
  - Offer flexible part-time option for tenure-track faculty
  - Tenure-Clock Extension (Stop-the-clock)
    - ASMD and tenure clock extensions are automatic entitlements (opt-out policy)
- **Parents**
  - Paid Childbearing Leave, unpaid Parental Leave (up to one year)
  - High quality university-sponsored infant and childcare
  - University-sponsored emergency back-up childcare system
  - Portion of childcare expenses covered for travel related to research grants
- **Dual Career Hiring Practices**
- **Mentoring: Formal and informal**
  - A mentoring mosaic –peers, near-peers (recently tenured), and senior colleagues
- **Family friendly scheduling of meetings**
- **Campus work-life advisory committees**

# Integrating Work and “Life”

- Key ingredients:
  - Focus
  - Willingness to work
  - Willingness to not work
  - Priority setting
  - Organization/ time management
  - Management of expectations (especially your own)
- The mix of ingredients- different for everyone!
  - Continuous monitoring and adjustment required
    - Beware the slippery slope
  - Distinct strategies for family-work interface and personal time-work interface

# Some observations and strategies that have worked for me...

- Spending enough time on “work” is not a problem
- Spending enough time on “life” can require discipline
  - Define obligations in a synergistic manner, to the extent possible
    - In research, in research and teaching, in service, in academic and professional service...
  - “Deadlines”
    - Time by which you leave the office
  - “Schedule and Commit” to “leisure time”
  - Exploit flexibility of your job
    - In schedule
    - In what you do
  - Prioritize responsibilities
    - Make lists
    - Don’t do some things
    - Let someone else do them if it isn’t a priority for you