

## **Career, Community, and Family Connections: Addressing the Complexities of Life Work in Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education**

Wendy L. Way  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

*The Career, Community, and Family Connections standard calls for family and consumer sciences teacher educators to help future teachers learn to “analyze family, community, and work interrelationships; investigate career paths; examine family and consumer sciences careers; and apply career decision making and transitioning processes” (National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences [NATEFACS], 2005) This article describes how career, community, and family connections frame the content of the field, points out the limitations of dominate frameworks that work against use of a “connections” viewpoint, and suggests alternate frameworks, as well as strategies and resources, that can be used to implement the standard.*

The nature and significance of life work roles, how they are enacted and connected across multiple contexts, and how they change over time, are arguably some of the most fundamental concepts in family and consumer sciences teacher education. To use an artistic metaphor, what this standard means is that family and consumer sciences teachers should be able to develop programs that fully capture the paintings and symphonies of life, and not just its individual colors and notes. Mary Catherine Bateson, who has researched the life stories of women and men who have made difficult life transitions successfully, put it this way:

...women have [long lived] their lives experiencing multiple simultaneous demands from multiple directions. Increasingly men are also living that way. So thinking about how people manage this is becoming more and more important. One way to approach the situation is to think of how a painter composes a painting: by synchronously putting together things that occur in the same period, and finding a pattern in the way they fit together. [Another way is to] look at the change that occurs within a lifetime – discontinuities, transitions, and growth...like that of a symphony with very different movements that can characterize a life. (Bateson, 2005, n.p.)

At its most basic level, family and consumer sciences education seeks to help learners develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to make intellectually and ethically defensible decisions regarding the significant challenges of everyday living and to prepare for family and consumer-related careers (Fox, 2000). As I have argued elsewhere (Way, 2000), the real demands and responsibilities of everyday life are not easily compartmentalized, and many of today’s most challenging questions, involve continuities and discontinuities among family, career, and community roles and responsibilities. For example, many adults have trouble reconciling work and parenting responsibilities, education leaders face controversy over business incentives to sell products in schools and the value of employment for school-age children, and communities struggle with how to balance private and public responsibility for youth behavior. The family and consumer sciences teacher education standard concerning career, community, and family connections challenges teacher education candidates to develop an understanding of

the complexity of life work (including the continuities and discontinuities among life work roles), and its significance to professional practice and the quality of personal and public well-being. It also calls for beginning professionals to develop an understanding of strategies and tools for designing educational programs that make ‘life work’ possible, meaningful, and productive.

### **Limitations of Dominant Frameworks and Practices**

Thinking holistically about life roles and the multiple, interacting contexts within which they are enacted may seem straightforward and non-controversial. Most of those engaged in the modern field of family and consumer sciences understand that the field has recognized the need to address family issues critically, and within the broader societal context since the field was founded during discussions at the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics in the early 1900s.<sup>1</sup> And, family and consumer sciences education has been included as a specified and/or allowable use of funds under federal career and technical education legislation since its inception with the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917. The problem is that federal policy has variously cast family and consumer sciences education as principally: (a) preparation for the work of homemaking (e.g., Smith-Hughes); (b) preparation for home-related occupations such as food services or child care services or more recently as education which could also facilitate “balancing” work and family (e.g., federal Perkins legislation), as if they were not really integrated with either each other or other kinds of work such as community contributions. Several deeply ingrained traditions, often ones that have served the interests of those in positions of relative power, have worked against use of a more holistic view in the development of educational policies and practices.

A number of these conceptually-limited traditions have been discussed elsewhere (see, for example, Gregson, 1995 and Way & Rossmann, 1994) so they will be touched on only briefly here. One tradition is the industrial-era philosophy termed scientific management or “Taylorism,” which served as the foundation for industrial-era manufacturing (Taylor, 1911). Assembly lines were originally conceived as a way to increase efficiency by breaking production into small tasks with workers specializing in only one task at a time. During industrial times, such compartmentalization of work did serve this purpose. However, some scholars have argued that such principles no longer serve the increasingly complex economy well, and in fact serve as outdated models for contemporary schools where subjects are dished out like they have little connection and teachers are not able to plan or teach collaboratively across disciplines (Way & Rossmann, 1994; Wilms, 2003). Terms like “core” and “encore” are, for example, used to distinguish academic subjects from others such as career and technical education programs, art, and music; as if they had little or nothing to do with one another or as if some were more “central” to being an educated person. It is interesting to speculate what it might mean to leave “no child behind” if Taylorist principles were not driving current federal education policy. Would the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) still focus mainly on increasing test scores in highly separated academic areas (e.g., science, reading/language arts, and mathematics)? Might it instead include teaching and testing related to life course planning? Community leadership? Financial literacy? Parenting? And the academic skills clearly associated with those subjects?

A second tradition that mediates against educational coherence is the widespread use of a male experience standard as a foundation for personal action and public policy. For example, it is still much easier for men than women to select a career based solely on personal goals and interests. One illustration is that the vast majority of U.S. children growing up in single parent

families live with their mothers only; over 80%, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (2006). Thus, public policy is more likely to call on mothers than fathers to consider how to meet children's needs and work demands at the same time. Welfare reform requires adult recipients to work in order to receive benefits for dependent children and places a lifetime limit of five years on those benefits (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, 1996.) But most parents receiving public assistance are single women.

Still another tradition that works against developing programs to consider life as lived holistically is the present dominance of the instrumental action perspective in Western society. Instrumental action is the framework underlying the view that education for paid employment is more "valuable" than education for unpaid work roles in family and community, because the benefits (e.g., wages) are more easily quantified (Way & Rossmann, 1994). One visible example of this view is the manner in which the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is calculated (What's Wrong with the GDP?, 2006). Neither the dollar value of household work nor of community volunteer service is included. However, most would agree that our nation could not function economically without these contributions and, in fact, losses of these resources are routinely considered in wrongful death litigation (Stephenson, 2005).

### **Contemporary Frameworks for Professional Action**

Fortunately, there are a number of more contemporary frameworks that can be used to conceptualize and implement family and consumer sciences education programs that more accurately reflect today's interrelationships among career, family and community roles. Ecological systems theory, the theory of life careers, and social capital theory represent ways of thinking about how family, community, and work interrelationships affect personal and social development. These are important concepts to introduce to students as part of the content of both family-focused and job-focused family and consumer sciences education programs.

Two other frameworks, Epstein's (1995) concept of school, family, and community partnerships and Bryk and Schneider's (2003) model of relational trust, emphasize how interrelationships among those situated in various contexts such as family, community, and schools can positively affect educational outcomes among students. Family and consumer sciences teachers can use these concepts to enhance the effectiveness of their own programs and to serve as important resources on the topics in schools and communities more broadly. Brief descriptions of the frameworks follow.

#### ***Ecological Systems Theory***

Ecological systems theory, proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1977, suggests that human development is a function of the interactions within and between the variety of physical and social contexts in which the individual resides. These contexts exist in a nested arrangement, one within the next, as follows: the *microsystem*, at the center, which is the immediate physical setting containing the individual, such as the family, school, and work site; the *mesosystem* which is the interactions among the microsystems, such as between family and work; the *exosystem* which is the broader social structures that do not themselves contain the individual, for example, the world of work or educational system; and finally, the *macrosystem* which is the belief systems of the culture that determine the existence and functioning of the other systems, for example, whether polygamous (versus monogamous) marital relations are permitted or whether capitalist (versus socialist) principles should govern economic matters (Bronfenbrenner). Much more information about ecological systems theory is available at the Psi

Café, a psychology resource site: <http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/EcoApp.htm>. Using an ecological systems framework would suggest that family and consumer sciences education programs focus on how development occurs over time and in particular, how the variety of physical, social and ideological contexts may facilitate and/or impede development.

### ***The Theory of Life Careers***

The theory of life careers, originally proposed by Donald Super (Super, 1980; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996,) suggests that individuals participate in an array of interacting and interdependent roles throughout five stages of the lifespan (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement), including child, student, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, citizen, leisurite, and eventually pensioner. The theory further posits that the roles are played out in four contexts or theaters: home, school, workplace, and community. Because both intrinsic and extrinsic values may be sought through any of these roles, the theory is useful in considering the interrelationships between various roles at different stages of the lifespan and in examining how much time/space is devoted to each of the roles in relation to what might be desired. Many resources for learning more about life careers frameworks can be found at Contact Point, a Canadian website focused on career-related resources, learning, and networking. It is located at: [http://www.contactpoint.ca/resources/dbase.php?type=user\\_list&cat=&format=10&searchText=&maxResultsPerPage=10&section=&sortBy=authors](http://www.contactpoint.ca/resources/dbase.php?type=user_list&cat=&format=10&searchText=&maxResultsPerPage=10&section=&sortBy=authors).

### ***Social Capital***

Social capital is another useful framework (rather cluster of frameworks) that can be helpful in teaching (and learning) how to analyze family, community and work interrelationships. Social capital can be thought of as non-economic resources that are gained by an individual (or community) as a result of the relationships that the person or community has. These non-economic resources can in turn enhance acquisition of economic resources (such as greater income).

James Coleman (1988) posited that people acquire social capital because of knowledge, norms, and reciprocal obligations that are shared among individuals who know each other. For example, I am more likely to go to college or get a “good” job if I know others that can tell/show me how to do it. Robert Putnam (2000) pointed out that relationships also produce social capital for communities (e.g., crime is reduced when neighbors know and watch out for each other). Pierre Bourdieu (1986) noted, however, that not everyone has access to the same kinds and levels of social capital. Such differences can seriously disadvantage those who are already less privileged in society (e.g., women, those with low income, and members of minority groups). Social capital theory suggests that family and consumer sciences education programs should give attention to how relationships provide resources for individuals and communities and, in particular, how important non-economic resources may be unfairly distributed because of such relationships. One of the best websites for learning more about social capital and how it can be used in teaching and learning is the Social Capital Gateway located at the University of Rome: <http://www.socialcapitalgateway.org>.

### ***Concept of Family, School, Community Partnerships***

Family, school, community partnerships is a concept that has been utilized by Joyce Epstein (1995) to create the National Network for Partnership Schools located at Johns Hopkins University. Using research suggesting that family and community involvement can enhance

student learning and development, Epstein created a model of types of involvement that schools can use to foster positive outcomes. These include promoting (a) positive parenting, (b) regular school-home communication, (c) volunteerism at school and in the community, (d) learning at home, (e) participation in school-related decision making, and (f) school-community collaboration. Family and consumer sciences education teachers are well versed in concepts such as the importance of parenting and home-school communication to educational achievement. Thus, teachers should be prepared to model development of such partnerships and also to point out how they and the family and consumer sciences education curriculum can serve as natural sources of expertise on these issues in the school setting. More information about the National Network for Partnership Schools and the types of involvement it seeks to promote can be found at: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/program.htm>.

### ***Model of Relational Trust***

Relational trust is a construct that has recently been highlighted as necessary for building effective partnerships between schools, families, and communities, and also for building effective partnerships within the school that contribute to high levels of student academic achievement. Based on a 3-year study of 12 Chicago schools, Bryk and Schneider (2003) of the University of Chicago concluded that trust, between principals and teachers, between school personnel and parents, and among teachers themselves, was a critical resource for boosting student achievement over time. Four indicators of trust in these relationships were identified, including presence of respect (e.g., courteous interaction, listening in genuine ways), personal regard (e.g., caring about each other both personally and professionally), personal integrity (e.g., trusting each other to put the interests of children first, keeping one's word), and competence (e.g., believing in each other's ability and willingness to fulfill responsibilities). A particularly helpful resource on building trust in schools, which addresses the relationship between trust and family involvement, how to work with diverse families, and how to overcome obstacles to trust building, was developed by Brewster and Railsback (2003) and is available from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory at <http://www.nwrel.org>. Another interesting resource describing the importance of school culture in nurturing academic achievement, and in particular how teacher/student relationships can positively affect student academic identity and achievement, is discussed by Schaps (2003).

### **Strategies and Resources for Implementing the Standard**

Helping pre-service teachers analyze the interrelationships among work, family, and career contexts from both personal and professional perspectives is an important first step in addressing this family and consumer sciences teacher education standard. Beginning professionals should also become familiar with strategies and resources for designing programs that help students investigate and prepare for family and consumer sciences careers and build capacity for meaningful lifelong career development.

### ***Program Alignment - Career Clusters and Pathways***

One of the most important strategies for designing and implementing family and consumer sciences education programs today is to ensure that programs are aligned with what are now being called programs of study, also often called career clusters and career pathways. The latest federal legislation that provides support for career and technical education programs, including those in family and consumer sciences education, was signed into law on August 12,

2006. Perkins IV (officially the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006) contains several new emphases that apply to family and consumer sciences education, including a requirement that the local career and technical education program content be:

aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses [connecting] secondary education with postsecondary education...leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree. (n.p.)

The idea of career-related programs of study has actually been under development for several years, as a result of funding through the U.S. Office of Education and the support of the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education (2006). The original work was based on an analysis of occupations listed by the U.S. Department of Labor in the O'NET (Occupational Information Network) database (<http://online.onetcenter.org>) and resulted in 16 clusters of occupations and a total of 81 career pathways within those clusters. The 16 clusters are: agriculture, food, and natural resources; architecture and construction; arts, audio video technology and communications; business, management, and administration; education and training; finance; government and public administration; health science; hospitality and tourism; human services; information technology; law, public safety, and security; manufacturing; marketing, sales and service; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; transportation, distribution, and logistics. Now, with Perkins IV in place, states are free to either use the 16 career clusters identified by the United States Department of Labor or develop their own career clusters based on identified regional employment-preparation needs. The challenge for family and consumer sciences educators is that these clusters now vary across states (e.g., Indiana is using 14 clusters while Michigan is using six; see other state career and technical education profiles on the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium website located at: [http://www.careertech.org/state\\_profile/](http://www.careertech.org/state_profile/)). Also, there is not just one cluster to which family and consumer sciences education programs may obviously relate. Some states and local districts are designing programs that align with several clusters such as hospitality and tourism (culinary arts), education and training (child care services), and human services (family and community services programs). To be consistent with the new Perkins legislation (Perkins IV), states and local districts must not only design programs so that they link secondary and post-secondary education coursework and reinforce challenging academic content addressed in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002) legislation, but also lead to industry-recognized credentials, certificates, or associate or baccalaureate degrees. In addition, they must also focus on high wage, high skill, and/or high demand occupations.

Family and consumer sciences professionals should be prepared to articulate how their programs address these imperatives of the legislation. The most recent National Assessment of Vocational Education (Silverberg, Warner, Fong, & Goodwin, 2004) indicated, for example, that child care and education and food service and hospitality programs were two of the four fastest growing career and technical education programs and were associated with occupations reporting higher than average employment growth. Secondary-level family and consumer sciences education programs are being designed in many states to lead to industry-recognized certificates such as child care teacher licensure and/or ServSafe food safety certification (<http://www.nraef.org/servsafe>) and are also being articulated with associate and baccalaureate degree programs in areas such as child development, family studies, textile and apparel design,

interior design, nutritional and food science, culinary arts, hospitality management, and consumer science.

Besides focusing on how to develop family and consumer sciences programs that focus on “occupational work,” pre-service teachers should also be prepared to articulate how family and consumer sciences programs provide an important foundation in “family work” that is relevant to the entire family and consumer sciences education program as well as all other career and technical education programs. A growing body of literature shows, for example, that personal and societal economic well-being depends not just on having marketable job skills, but also on being able to manage personal financial resources effectively and successfully balance work and family demands. A number of resources are available for exploring these ideas, including the Families and Work Institute at <http://www.familiesandwork.org>, the Jump\$tart Coalition at <http://www.jumpstart.org>, the National Council on Economic Education at <http://www.ncee.net>, and the National Endowment for Financial Education at <http://www.nefe.org>. A wealth of additional information about family and consumer sciences career pathways is available in the teacher resource directory posted on the website of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences a <http://www.aafcs.org>.

A second change in new Perkins legislation is an increased emphasis on accountability. Under the prior (1998) Perkins Act, the major provisions of the Perkins accountability system applied only to states. The new law extends the accountability system to local programs, which will now be required to report on separate core performance indicators for secondary students (Perkins IV, 2006). These will include factors such as student attainment of academic content standards and career and technical skill proficiencies, as well as student graduation rates, placement in postsecondary education and employment, and participation in programs that led to non-traditional fields. Performance data will also have to be disaggregated by special populations. Local recipients that fail to meet at least 90% of any level of performance for any core performance indicator will be required to develop a program improvement plan (Perkins IV).

To meet these new requirements, teachers will need to be proficient in collecting and using data, including student assessment data, for school improvement purposes. Basic familiarity with survey research methodology, descriptive and inferential statistics, and data analysis software such as *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* would be extremely helpful. An excellent example of a conceptual framework for data-based decision making is *At Your Fingertips: Using Everyday Data to Improve Schools* (Levesque, Bradby, Rossi, & Teitelbaum, 1998). Creighton’s (2007) *Schools & Data: The Educator’s Guide for Using Data to Improve Decision Making* provides an outstanding introduction to quantitative data analysis software and its use in answering significant educational questions.

### ***Work-Based Education Models, Tools, and Issues***

There are a number of work-based education models and tools that can be used to help students prepare for family and consumer sciences careers and/or develop meaningful lifelong career, community, and family connections. To start, beginning family and consumer sciences professionals should become familiar with the broad concept of career education which suggests that career development is a lifelong process which ideally begins with opportunities to learn about work in elementary school (awareness), then middle school (exploration), and finally high school and beyond (preparation). This model suggests that career education should be included as a topic in family-focused parenting and child development classes as well as occupationally-

focused middle and high school family and consumer sciences classes. For both uses, it is important to distinguish between traditional and newer models of career development, which now give much more attention to lateral, versus simply vertical, career transition; the role of computer technology in career development; and the unique needs of ethnic minorities, women, and students with special needs, and the trend toward greater integration of life roles as technology blurs traditional boundaries of time and place. A great resource on career education trends and resources was developed by Brown (2003).

A number of other models are available for structuring middle and high school career-focused family and consumer sciences programs. In general, the models include some combination of school-based learning, workplace-based learning, and connecting activities. These include cooperative education programs, career academies, service learning programs and activities, and school-based enterprises. Pre-service teachers will want to become familiar with these general models (e.g., see Gray & Herr, 1998) as well as the job-focused family and consumer sciences curriculum guides in their home state available through state departments of public instruction. They may also benefit from reviewing exemplary programs in family and consumer sciences education. A number of the recent national teacher of the year awards, for example, have gone to individuals who have developed innovative career-focused family and consumer sciences programs at the middle and high schools levels. These awards have been published by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) and can be reviewed at: <http://www.aafcs.org/resources/index.html>.

Service learning, used as a stand-alone approach or in combination with one of the other career-focused models, seems to have particularly good potential for helping students understand career, community and family connections, which is the focus of this standard. Two great resources related to service learning are the National Service- Learning Clearinghouse located at [www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org) and the independent federal agency, Learn and Serve America, which can be found at <http://www.learnandserve.gov>.

Other resources available for implementing career-focused family and consumer sciences programs that simultaneously give attention to family and community connections can be found sprinkled in a number of other locations. The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America student organization has an array of programs and activities that have long been successfully engaging students in exploring these relationships, including for example, the Career Connection and Community Service programs. These can be found at <http://www.fcclainc.org>, and are particularly useful because they also emphasize development of leadership, decision making, and problem solving skills that are highlighted in the national standards for family and consumer sciences education (National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences [NASAFACS], 2008).

Computer-based career development sites, many of which evolved from early occupational information systems, are also rich resources for implementing family and consumer sciences programs focused on career, community, and family connections, although they may not be identified as such specifically. Several of them, for example, include activities designed to help the user examine the relationship between desired lifestyle and career choices as well as educational requirements and opportunities. WisCareers (<http://www.wiscareers.wisc.edu>) is an example of a state-focused site of this kind. The most comprehensive government-supported career-related resource is the CareerOne Stop website maintained by the United States Department of Labor and located at <http://www.careeronestop.org>. It contains an extensive array of career information, labor market data, a searchable national job bank, and career-related

services locator. Persons responsible for secondary-level family and consumer sciences career-focused programs will also want to be familiar with state and national employment laws, and particularly those pertaining to youth employment. Typically, these cover such aspects of employment as work permits, minimum wage requirements, labor standards (e.g., hours of employment, breaks and meals, honesty testing, plant closings), fair employment laws, and family and medical leave policies. Most are administered through state departments of workforce development and in some cases, the equal rights divisions of these departments (see for example, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development website located at [http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/er/labor\\_standards\\_bureau/default.htm](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/er/labor_standards_bureau/default.htm)). Such topics related to the employment of children and young adults are certainly relevant to both family-focused and job-focused secondary family and consumer sciences education programs, and more importantly, serve as a good example of why it is important to link preparation for career, community, and family roles in the secondary school curriculum.

### **Assessing the Standard**

Since the career, community, and family connections standard focuses on helping teachers learn to prepare students for multiple life roles, it may go without saying that future teachers also need to be able to assess the relevance as well as the rigor of their instruction, but there are important forces working against such an approach. Current provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act have made “high stakes testing” the norm, despite the warnings of educational leaders (e.g., Cawelti, 2006, Daggett, 2005, Guilfoyle, 2006) that such approaches to assessment will lead to greater fragmentation of the curriculum and greater emphasis on rigor to the exclusion of relevance. Future family and consumer teachers need to understand these pressures and concerns, and be aware of alternative frameworks that can be used for assessing both the rigor and relevance of instruction.

Two such frameworks provide good examples. One is the Rigor/Relevance Framework developed by Daggett (2005) of the International Center for Leadership in Education and the other is the Guide to Authentic Instruction and Assessment developed by Newmann, Secada, and Wehlage (1995) while they were at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Daggett’s Rigor/Relevance Framework is a tool that can be used to distinguish assessments that merely measure knowledge acquisition from those that also assess students’ ability to think about content in complex ways and apply what they have learned within and across multiple, unpredictable, and real-world situations. For example, a low-rigor, low-relevance student assessment might ask learners to plot data on a grid. A high-rigor, high-relevance assessment might ask students to devise a scale to measure the “family impact of public policies,” graph test results, and describe how such data might be used in the family, community, or workplace.

The Newmann, Secada, and Wehlage (1995) framework is similar, but uses seven standards for judging assessment tasks and the extent to which they reflect authentic human achievement. These criteria are organized into three categories: (a) organization of knowledge (the degree to which learners can organize information and consider alternative ways of doing so); (b) disciplined inquiry (extent to which students understand key concepts/theories of the discipline, can use methods of inquiry of the discipline, and communicate understandings to others in writing); and (c) connection to the world beyond the classroom (task reflects a problem that is relevant to life beyond school and involves sharing or acting with an audience beyond the school). Extending the example above, in this model, students might be asked to share their

results with relevant community leaders such as the school board, city council, or state legislators.

### **Principles for Further Action**

This brief review of models and strategies for helping pre-service family and consumer sciences teachers learn to address career, community, and family connections in secondary family and consumer sciences programs certainly cannot address all the possible options and opportunities, or barriers, that might be encountered in attempting to do so. Several overall principles can be used as guides for identifying and adopting other approaches for addressing the standard that may not have been mentioned here. These principles include the following.

1. *Considering a variety of subject-matter connections is fundamental to designing high quality FCSE programs.* It is important to give attention to the fact that student development will be shaped by interactions that occur both within and between career, community, and family contexts across the lifespan. Educators should seek to prepare students for life roles holistically and help learners appreciate that there is no one ‘right’ formula for composing a meaningful and satisfying life over time. Students will need learning opportunities that promote both personal and professional development and academic as well as occupational/vocational development. This underscores the importance of both family-focused and job-focused FCSE and explains why academic education must be well integrated with career and technical education.
2. *Relationships are as important to nurturing student development as academic, and career and technical education subject matter.* Secondary school students need opportunities to become familiar with the non-economic resources (e.g., norms, reciprocal obligations, and understandings known as social capital) that can only be harnessed through the relationships that are built in career, community, school, and family contexts. They need to know how these resources can contribute to academic achievement and career development. Also future teachers need to be mindful that establishing trusting relationships with others – students, administrators, parents, fellow educators - can pave the way for individual commitment, innovation, and program growth in ways that would not otherwise be possible.
3. *Career, community, and family connections are best addressed within a critical science-based educational framework, because the connections can work both for and against human development.* New FCSE professionals need to move beyond the status quo ‘balancing work and family mindset’ that suggests career, community, and family connections can be satisfactorily addressed through technical or technological solutions like simply accessing more career information or developing child care contingency plans. Unless, pre-service FCSE teachers also recognize, and learn how to address gender, race, and class-based challenges associated with career, community, and family roles, we will fail to realize the potential benefit of this teacher education standard.
4. *Considering both rigor and relevance in instruction are key to developing effective approaches to assessing the career, community, and family standard.* Future family and consumer sciences education teachers should be mindful of current pressures to emphasize primarily academic knowledge in student assessment systems. However, they should also be familiar with the limitations of such approaches to assessment and

prepared to implement more authentic forms of student evaluation that give attention to both rigor and relevance. Such approaches will better ensure that instruction organized around the career, community and family standard prepares students for life, and not just further schooling.

#### Footnote

<sup>1</sup>“The demand for [our field] which will be met in time is a different kind. It is the demand which shows that the making of bread is not an essential part of the making of a home...that the obligations of home life are not by any means limited to its own four walls, that [family and consumer sciences] must always be regarded in light of its relation to the general social system, that men and women are alike concerned in understanding the processes, activities, obligations, and opportunities which make the home and family effective parts of the social fabric.” -Marian Talbot, Fourth Lake Placid Conference, 1902 (Stage, 1997, p. 28).

Family and consumer sciences education programs have historically been funded through federal vocational education legislation which has focused on preparation for work. The Smith-Hughes Act, which was passed in 1917 as the first piece of such federal policy, included funds to support family and consumer sciences education (then called home economics education), as well as agricultural education and trade and industrial education. It was argued that home economics was needed both to prepare girls for their future as homemakers as well as provide technical training for gainful employment. While family and consumer sciences education serves both domestic and occupational purposes and now serves students of both genders in nearly equal numbers (Werhan & Way, 2006), there is still very little acknowledgement in either education policy or practice of the interconnectedness of life roles. There have long been calls for more instruction within family and consumer sciences education focused on “balancing work and family” (e.g., Felstehausen & Schultz, 1991) and much has been written within the general education literature about home-school connections and in particular, the need for more parental involvement in education. However, strong traditions persist that work against designing educational programs that address career, community, and family roles equally.

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#### **Author**

Wendy L. Way is a Professor and Associate Dean in the School of Human Ecology, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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