ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATORS have a responsibility to prepare students for the profession of athletic training beyond graduation. Athletic training education program curricula are designed to develop clinical knowledge and skill, but they often overlook practical components of managing an athletic training career. As students enter professional practice, they will be faced with many new challenges, including the need to balance their professional and personal lives. Recently, the athletic training literature has presented an increasing number of reports that pertain to quality of life and work-family conflict (WFC) among athletic trainers (ATs). WFC occurs when individuals are unable to meet the demands of their personal lives due to the demands of their professional lives and is influenced by several factors, including organizational, individual, and socio-cultural ones. Additionally, WFC has been linked to job burnout and job dissatisfaction.

The primary purpose of this paper is to offer WFC instructional ideas for educators to integrate into their curricula. It also addresses the manner in which WFC concepts are presented. One approach to teaching WFC concepts is through dialogue that engages students in high-level thinking. Casa and Casa previously addressed the difference between univocal and dialogic discussions. Univocal discussions impart knowledge to students. Lower-level learning objectives such as reviewing, listing, identifying, and memorizing information can be conveyed through univocal discussions. Dialogic discussions encourage students to interpret and understand higher-level concepts. Through dialogic discussions, students develop an understanding of the concepts through analysis, imagining, evaluation, judgment, and other higher-order cognitive skills.

This paper presents a lesson-planning process, called backward design, that helps an athletic training educator identify the core understandings that students should acquire...
about WFC through dialogic discussions. The lessons are designed to help students in senior-level courses gain an understanding of WFC at a level that will allow them to better prepare for their future professional endeavors. An overview of backward designed is presented, followed by the application of the process to generation of WFC lesson ideas.

**Overview of Backward Design**

Backward design is an approach to curriculum planning that initially focuses on what Wiggins and McTighe\(^{13}\) call “priority learnings.” Identification of priority learnings will help to clarify the major concepts that should anchor discussions about a given topic (e.g., WFC). Subsequent discussions activities and assessments should support these priority learnings. There are three stages to backward design.

- **Stage 1:** Instructors *identify desired results* in order to prioritize what they want students to come to understand. They identify what content is valuable for students to understand over the long-term.

- **Stage 2:** Instructors *determine acceptable evidence* that will indicate students gained understanding of the previously identified concepts. Rather than instructors thinking of the WFC lessons as content that has been covered, instructors approach the lesson by trying to determine what students will have achieved.

- **Stage 3:** Finally, instructors *plan learning experiences and instruction* that will achieve the desired results. As Wiggins and McTighe note, “the specifics of instructional planning—choices about teaching methods, sequences of lessons, and resource materials—can be successfully completed only after we identify the desired results and assessments and consider what they imply.”\(^{13}\)

**Application of Backward Design to WFC**

Through application of Wiggins and McTighe’s\(^{13}\) backward design approach, we provide an outline of a lesson addressing WFC that can be completed in two to three 60-min class sessions. The amount of time required will depend on the number of recommended activities that are utilized. The quality of discussions will increase as students have more opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of WFC. We suggest that the general topic of WFC should be introduced when presenting the roles of an athletic trainer in an introductory class. Early introduction of the WFC topic and subsequent clinical experiences will facilitate deeper discussion in senior-level classes.

**Stage 1: Identify Desired Results**

In this section, we begin to outline the results we hope to achieve with the WFC lesson. Notice that the goals, desired understandings, and knowledge and skills parallel each other.

**Established Goals**

For this particular unit, two cognitive competencies outlined in the professional development and responsibility section of the CAATE Standards and Guidelines can be addressed. PD 14 addresses interpretation of research within athletic training, and PD 16 centers on the evolution of the athletic training profession.\(^{14}\) The first objective of this lesson is to develop student understanding of essential concepts about WFC. The following factors describe the concept.

- **Organizational factors** are those factors defined by workplace characteristics such as work hours, work scheduling, organizational culture (family friendly or family supportive), and job responsibilities.\(^9\) For athletic trainers, long work hours, travel, inflexible work schedules, and lack of staffing have been documented as organizational factors influencing the occurrence of WFC.\(^3,5\)

- **Social-cultural factors** are based on the social norms and values, which are particularly related to gender ideology. More specifically, these factors are influenced by the manner in which male and female roles are defined by society. The current research literature indicates that further investigation of this factor needs to be conducted in athletic training. Typically, this is centered on women experiencing more WFC than males, due to their inherent dual roles as caregivers and breadwinners.\(^9\) However, for a sample group of Division I ATs, gender was not found to be a factor contributing to WFC.\(^5\)

- **Individual factors** related to WFC center on the premise that the experience of WFC is vastly different for each individual person. They are based upon the manner in which an individual negotiates work and home demands to find satisfaction within both domains.\(^9\) Personality, work and personal values, and...