

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES
University of Nevada, Reno
FALL 2008

HDFS 202

Introduction to Families

Fall 2008

T Th, 11:00 – 12:15 p.m.

WRB 2003

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Office: ABB 523G (682-8710)

Office hours: Email to schedule an appointment

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Course Description:

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the formation and maintenance of primary relationships, from a variety of theoretical and socio-cultural perspectives. The focus of the course is on family diversity, making informed relational choices, and enhancing individual and family strengths. Definitions and functions of family are examined, and common myths, societal issues and specific challenges related to diverse family systems are explored. Prerequisites: *HDFS 202*; *PSY 101* or *SOC 101*.

Required Reading:

Text: Knox, D. & Schacht, C. (2009). *Choices in relationships* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publishers.

Other required reading will be posted on the following website...

<http://hilton391.pageout.net>

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Examine marriage and families in socio-cultural and historical contexts
2. Compare various theoretical frameworks used to study marriage and the family including structure-function, conflict, feminist, symbolic interaction, family development/family life cycle, social exchange, family systems, and stratification/race frameworks.
3. Discuss how one's family of origin, unconscious motivations, habit patterns, personalities, and previous relationship experiences influence choices in relationships
4. Examine various forms of pair-bonding contexts, including marriage, family and cohabitation
5. Identify common myths and realities associated with gender roles, sexuality, and parenting
6. Examine various adult lifestyles including remaining single, single parenthood, same-sex relationships, and intentional community living
7. Examine relationship formation, maintenance and dissolution as they occur across the life course and across cultures, including hanging out, hooking up, dating, mate selection, marriage, choosing whether to become a parent, rearing children, divorce, remarriage, widowhood, aging and death
8. Identify the characteristics of abusive partners and relationships, and learn ways to end these relationships

9. Identify the characteristics of stable and fulfilling marriages and those that end in divorce
10. Analyze the challenges and strengths of single-parent, step-parent, and blended families
11. Consider intergenerational influences on family functioning across the life course, including the contributions of grandparents, relationships between adult children, their parents and in-laws, and the care of aging parents

Student Learning Outcomes:

The HDFS department is engaged in ongoing assessment of how effectively our undergraduate program prepares students for their professional careers. Mastery of five student learning outcomes (listed below) will be assessed when you graduate from the HDFS program. This course contributes to each of the student learning outcomes for the HDFS undergraduate program in the following ways:

1. **Demonstrate knowledge of the bio-psycho-social elements of the human lifespan, with in-depth expertise in at least one developmental stage.** Not addressed in HDFS 202.
2. **Demonstrate knowledge and application of the interplay of issues and processes in diverse family systems.** Introduced in this course. Objectives 1 - 11. Assessed with exams and written report.
3. **Demonstrate the ability to clearly articulate knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, and synthesis, and evaluation in oral and written communication.** Introduced in this course. Objectives 1-11. Assessed with exams and written report.
4. **Demonstrate the ability to locate and critically evaluate prominent theories, research studies, and practices relevant to the field.** Introduced in HDFS 202. Objective 2. Assessed with exams and written report.
5. **Demonstrate the ability to apply field-related knowledge, theory, and practices in a professional setting.** Not addressed in HDFS 202.

Evaluation:

1.	<u>Three Exams</u>	300
2.	<u>Family Assessment Paper</u>	200
3.	<u>Participation</u>	100

The group process requires full participation by all group members. When a student is late or absent, other members of the group will have to fill in. Therefore,
 3 points will be deducted for each unexcused absence
 1 point will be deducted for coming late/leaving early

TOTAL POINTS = 600

- 540 - 600 = A
- 480 - 539 = B
- 420 - 479 = C
- 360 - 419 = D
- Below 360 = F

Policies:

The following policies have been developed to help the class run smoothly and to avoid unnecessary disruptions and distractions.

1. No make-up exams will be given. If you know that you are going to be absent on the day of an exam, we can make arrangements for you to take the exam early. Three exams will be given throughout the semester; if you miss exam 1 or exam 2, you will be given a comprehensive final exam instead of exam 3. If you miss the final exam without making prior arrangements, no make-up will be allowed, and you will lose the points. ***Under no circumstances will students be allowed to take an exam after the date that it is scheduled.***
2. I only accept printed copies of assignments (no emailed assignments). If your assignment is late, please bring it to the HDFS office and ask a staff person to date stamp it and put it in my mailbox for you.
3. A 10% per day penalty will be assigned to late assignments. If you have a problem, please let me know before the due date.
4. Assigned groups. It is important that you stay in your assigned group. If you have a problem with your group, let me know and I will make adjustments.
5. Talking during lecture is disruptive to the class and disrespectful of students who are trying to learn. Those who hold side conversations during class will be asked to leave, and repeated offenses will result in a loss of participation points. If you are having problems with students nearby who are constantly chatting, please report which group is causing the problem in an anonymous note or send an email. I will let the offending group know that there have been complaints, but will not reveal the source of the information.
6. Students are expected to be able to write clearly and concisely. Papers will be graded on your ability to communicate clearly and concisely with no grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors. If you have trouble with writing, please visit the Writing Center or ask someone who writes well to help you proofread your papers.
7. Students are expected to be computer literate. You need to know how to use the internet for this class, and you are expected to maintain and use an email account (preferably the one assigned by UNR). Please inform me of any changes to your email address.
8. Academic dishonesty violates university policy. According to the UNR Student Handbook, academic dishonesty is defined as cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses. Plagiarism is defined as submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as your own, or by allowing your work to be used by someone else in this same fashion.
9. Disability statement. If you have a disability and need to request accommodations, please let me know and contact the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building, Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.
University of Nevada, Reno
Thompson Bldg. Suite 101, MS/079
Contact: Mary Zabel, Director
Phone: (775) 784-6000 | Fax: (775) 784-6955 | TTY: (775) 327-5131
E-mail: drc@scs.unr.edu
Website: <http://www.unr.edu/stsv/slservices/drc/>
10. Please turn off all electronic devices during class.

Organization of the Class

This course is organized around a group process that is designed to enhance your learning and makes the handling of paperwork easier and more efficient.

How the groups are organized:

- Each student is assigned to a particular group for the semester
- Each group has a colored folder that will be used to handle all paperwork
- Each group has a name based on a playing card and a color (e.g., yellow aces; blue kings)
- Each student in the group will be assigned to one of four suits (♥ ♦ ♣ ♠)
- Each week, roles will be assigned to the four suits (♥ ♦ ♣ ♠) and the roles will be rotated so that everyone in the group has a chance to fully participate in the class
- The four roles are: folder monitor, recorder, discussion leader, and spokesperson
- The **FOLDER MONITOR** picks up and returns the group folder and distributes materials
- The **RECORDER** takes roll and sends the teaching assistant a weekly report via email
- The **DISCUSSION LEADER** keeps the group on task and makes sure that everyone participates
- The **SPOKESPERSON** takes notes during the discussion and gives the group's oral report

Organization of the Folders

<u>Yellow</u>	<u>Blue</u>	<u>Green</u>
Aces ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	Aces ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	Aces ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠
2s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	2s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	2s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠
9s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	10s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠	9s ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠

- Each student has a unique identity (e.g., Five of hearts in the Yellow “Fives” folder)
- Identify all work with your **FOLDER ID** (e.g., B-A = blue aces; G-4 = green fours)

What is in the Folders:

- Explanation of how the folders work
- Schedule of assigned roles in your group for the semester
- Tent card to put on the table each day of class
- Answer cards for ungraded quizzes
- Instructions for each of the four roles
- Roll sheet for the group
- Any handouts or returned assignments/tests
- Instructions and forms for any Activities

All work is turned in and returned using the folders, except for the exams.

What is the purpose of:

- **Group work**...allows you to see different points of view and learn from each other as well as from me. It also helps you retain information better, helps you socialize with others in class, and is a lot more interesting than listening to lecture for extended periods of time.
- **Assigned groups**...are used to make sure that diversity is included in each group and to make sure you sit with students you do not already know. The more diverse and unfamiliar the various viewpoints in your group, the more you will learn.
- **Roll sheets**...are used to track attendance and tardiness so that I can give participation points to students who contribute to the class and track those who are chronically absent. This class is highly interactive and it is only fair that those who are consistently in class and doing the work should be rewarded for their contributions.
- **The rotation of roles**...is used to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate fully in the class, and no one is overburdened with a particular task.
- **The ungraded quizzes**...give you the opportunity to discuss why an answer is right or wrong. They also help with your learning and retention, and prepare you for the graded exams
- **The quiz cards**...let me instantly know when students are not getting the material so I can correct any misperceptions and explain why a particular answer is correct or incorrect.
- **The optional weekly email reports**...give you a way to alert me to any difficulties in your group so that I can try to resolve them quickly (e.g., someone in your group is chronically absent, has switched to another group, is disrespectful, or is not participating). They also give you a way to give me feedback if you have questions, comments on the material, or interesting information to contribute to the class.

Remember to put your group name (e.g., Y-A for yellow aces) on all exams and assignments!

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Aug 26-28	<u>Introduction</u> Definitions of marriage and family; Theoretical frameworks; Careers in marriage and family; Becoming a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)	Chapter 1 Special Topic 5 in text
Sep 2-4	<u>Diversity and Change in Families</u> The family in historical perspective; Challenges and strengths in various ethnic and socio-cultural groups	Reading #1 (online) Assignment 1: due Sep 4 th
Sep 9-11	<u>Intimacy, Friendship, Love, and Commitment</u> Theories of love; Types of love; Intimacy and commitment; Commitment to self, family and community	Chapter 3
Sep 16-18	<u>Single Lifestyle, Cohabitation and Other Nonmarital Options</u> Myths and realities about nonmarital options; Why the number of singles is increasing; Trends in cohabitation; Types of cohabiting relationships; Issues of cohabiting couples; Ending a relationship	Chapter 4 Assignment 2: due Sep 18 th
Sep 23-25	<i>Exam 1: September 18</i> <u>Sexuality and Sexual Expression</u> Psycho-sexual development; Sexual values; Sexual behavior; Sexuality in relationships;	Chapters 5 Special Topic 2 in text Reading #2 (online)

Sexual fulfillment; Sexual dysfunction; Infidelity;
Sexual responsibility

Sep 30-Oct 2	<u>Dating and Mate Selection</u> Historical and cross-cultural patterns of courtship; Theories of mate selection; Social and behavioral processes involved in mate selection; Conflict and violence in dating; Ending a relationship	Chapter 7 Assignment 3: due Oct 2 nd
Oct 7-9	<u>Marriage and Same-Sex Relationships</u> Marriage patterns; The transition to marriage; Internal dynamics of marriage; Marriage and religion; racial and cultural diversity in marriage; Sexual orientation; Same-sex relationships; Discrimination against same-sex relationships	Chapters 6 and 8 Reading #3 (online)
Oct 14-16	<u>Gender in Relationships: Communication and Conflict Resolution</u> Theories of gender and gender role socialization; The social construction of gender; Variations in gender roles; Gender differences in communication; Gender and power; Using communication to manage conflict and foster intimacy; What couples fight about; Effective communication patterns	Chapters 2 and 9 Assignment 4: due Oct 16 th
Oct 21-23	<u>Choosing Whether to Have Children</u> Fertility patterns in the U.S.; Forgoing parenthood; Postponing parenthood; Parenthood outside marriage; Social influences in making the decision to have children and how many to have; Contraception; Abortion; Infertility; Adoption Exam 2: October 23	Chapter 10
Oct 28-Oct 30	<u>Parenting</u> Transition to parenting; Myths about parenting; Parenting functions; Principles of effective parenting; Diversity and parenting; Parenting across the lifecourse; Outsourcing childcare	Chapter 11
Nov 4-6	<u>Families, Work, and Finances</u> The multiple meanings of money; Fighting about money; Coping with financial stress; Single and dual-earner marriages; The two-person career; Division of household labor; Social class differences in work and family; The two-income trap; Children and work	Chapter 12 Special Topic 1 in text
Nov 11-13	<u>Distressed Families</u> Crisis in relationships; Prevalence of family violence; Cycle of abuse; Types of abuse; Prevention and intervention	Chapter 13-14 Assignment 5: due Nov 13 th

No Class on Nov 11: Veteran's Day

Nov 18-20	<u>Separation and Divorce</u> Historical patterns; Factors contributing to divorce; Alternatives to divorce; The divorce process; Effects of divorce on parents and children; Post-divorce adjustment	Chapter 15 Optional Reading (online)
Nov 25-27	<u>Single Parent Families</u> Adjusting to divorce; Consequences of divorce; Single-parenting after divorce; Successful single-parent families	Reading #4 (online)
<i>No Class on Nov 27: Happy Thanksgiving!</i>		
Dec 2- 4	<u>Remarriage and Stepfamilies</u> Historical patterns; Pathways to remarriage; Marital satisfaction and stability; The stepfamily as an incomplete institution; Types of stepfamilies; Issues of stepfamilies; Developmental tasks for stepfamilies; Successful stepfamilies	Chapter 16
Dec 9	<u>Family Relationships Across the Life Course</u> Relationships between aging parents and adult children; Grandparenting; Intergenerational support; Loss of the spouse; Closing the final chapter in life	Chapter 17
Dec 11	Final Exam: 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	

Instructions for the Family Assessment Paper
HDFS 202

The purpose of the Family Assessment Paper is to help you become more aware of family dynamics and to better understand and appreciate the complexity of family systems. You will use your family of origin (the family that you were raised in) for this assignment. The paper will be developed in stages, with separate assignments that are due throughout the semester. Each assignment will be given a separate grade that contributes to the overall grade for the final paper. The final version of the paper will include a global analysis of your family of origin.

All assignments must be typed (12-point font, black ink, double spaced, and 1 inch margins), completed in order, and on time. Make sure that you proof read your work and get help with writing if you need it.

Papers that have 5 or more typographical, spelling and/or grammatical errors will lose 10 points on the assignment.

It is your responsibility to get a **printed copy of the assignment** to me **on time**. I will not accept papers submitted as an email attachment, so be prepared to have an alternate way to print your paper if you should have problems with your computer. One idea would be to make arrangements within your group to help each other out if you have computer problems.

Please use the following outline to identify the sections of your assignments/paper. Be sure to **label each section of the paper exactly as shown below** so that I can identify each section that I am grading:

1. Family Background (2 pages total, 40 points)...**due September 4th**
 - a. Personal Information: describe yourself, including your age, gender, ethnicity, place of birth, etc.
 - b. Background: Describe the education, occupation(s), and social class of your parents, and the family structure(s) you lived in while you were being raised.
 - c. Home and Community: Describe the size and type of home and community you lived in as a child.
 - d. Family Structure: Identify the number and gender of your siblings and your birth position; include any half- or step-siblings in your discussion. How did you feel about your "place" in the family? How do you feel now?
 - e. Extended Family: Describe your contact and relationships with extended family members
 - f. Relationships: Which family members are you closest to right now? Why?
 - g. Happiness as a Child: On a scale of 1-10 (10 = highest), how happy were you when you were growing up?

2. Family Profile Summary (3 pages total, 40 points)...**due September 18th**
 - a. For this part of the assignment, you will use the Family Circumplex Model to describe your family of origin. The Couple and Family Rating Scale is the tool that is used to place a couple or family in the Family Circumplex model. There are six steps to the process:
 - Make sure you understand the concepts
 - Use the set of questions about cohesion and flexibility to help you gather information and think about how your family system worked
 - Use the Couple and Family Rating Scale to assign a number to each of the 7 characteristics of cohesion, flexibility, and communication
 - Use the Couple and Family Rating Form to calculate a global rating score for cohesion, flexibility, and communication

- Plot the global ratings on the Family Circumplex Model
 - Write a brief summary statement (one page maximum) describing the type of family system you were raised in and what you learned about your family of origin from doing this assignment?
- b. **Handouts and forms for this assignment are posted on the website for you to print. If you have trouble printing the forms, you can pick up the forms from an envelope posted in the HDFS office. Print your forms early, so you know whether you need to pick up a copy from the office.** Fill out the forms, and turn in the following pages in this order:
- Your summary statement on the Summary Statement Form (Typed)
 - The Couple and Family Rating Form
 - The Circumplex Model
3. Social Class, Attitudes, and Values (2 pages total, 40 points)...**due October 2nd**
- a. Responsibility in Relationships: What you were taught in your family about manners, consideration for others; responsibility; commitment; and independence?
 - b. Intimate Relationships: What were you taught about sex outside of marriage; the importance of being married; qualities of a desirable spouse; children; and the role of elders?
 - c. Diversity: What were you taught about religion; homosexuality; people of color; people with disabilities; people with more/less education; and people with more/less wealth?
 - d. Social Class: Describe your family's social class, and the effect that it has had on your choices, opportunities and well-being. How have the career choices and social class of your parents influenced what you hope to achieve for yourself and your family?
 - e. Positive Parental Influence: What is the single most important thing that you mother and father, respectively, said or did that has affected your life in a positive way?
 - f. Parental Mistakes: What is the single biggest mistake that your mother and father, respectively, made in raising you?
 - g. Enduring Values: Would you choose to teach your own children similar or different values compared to those you learned as a child?
4. Personal and Family Crises (4 pages total, 40 points)...**due October 16th**
- a. Personal Crises: Everyone experiences one or more crises that have had a dramatic impact on his or her life. Identify and discuss each major crisis that **you** have experienced and describe your response and adjustment.
 - b. Parental Response to Personal Crises: How did your parent(s) respond to these crises that you were experiencing? To what degree did their response help or hinder your adjustment? What different choice or choices (if any) could they have made to assist you more effectively?
 - c. Family Crises: Identify and discuss each major crisis that your **family** has experienced. How did each member of the family respond and adjust to each event?
 - d. Map of the Family in Crisis: Choose the most serious family crisis, and use the global rating of family cohesion, flexibility, and communication to plot a relationship map of the family at the time of the event (turn in the rating form and the Family Circumplex Model).
 - e. **The forms for this assignment are posted on the website (see 2b above).** Fill out the forms and turn in the following materials, in this order:
 - 2 pages of typed narrative addressing items a, b, and c above
 - The Couple and Family Rating Form
 - The Circumplex Model

5. Family Strengths and Challenges (2 pages, 40 points)...**due November 13th**
- a. Strengths and Challenges of My Family System: Now that you have described your family of origin as a particular type of family system, indicate the major strengths and challenges with this type of system. **Be sure to state the type of family system that best describes your family (as identified on your Circumplex Model)**. Then discuss the strengths and challenges of that type of family system (in general) and how you can see these characteristics manifested in your particular family.
 - b. Application of Course Content to Family of Origin: What have you learned during the semester that will help you interact more effectively with your family of origin?
 - c. Application of Course Content to Future Family Relationships: What have you learned that will help you to have stronger family relationships across the life course?
-