UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, COUNSELING, & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

HDFS 436/636: FAMILY INTERACTION
Spring 2015
Mondays 5:30pm – 8:15pm
WRB Room 2006

INSTRUCTOR
Bret Davis, MA
Email: bretd@unr.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00pm – 3:00 pm
or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course facilitates understanding of the major family theories and concepts in the dynamics of family interaction and process in family relationships, along with an understanding of how culture influences each theory and concept. An important goal of this class is to foster students' insight into their own experience of family and to enable students to apply course-related concepts to case studies of family dynamics, and apply them to broader global contexts. Specifically, this course facilitates students’ understating of the role culture plays in applying theory to families and individuals.

Lectures, discussion, case studies, classroom exercises, written assignments, and in-class and out-of-class observations will be used to aid the development of knowledge and skills relating to the study of family interaction. Although culture influences all of the theories discussed in the course, culture has a specific role for 50% percent of the theories covered in the course. Additionally, for the remaining 50% of the theories, the course will discuss how culture influences interpretation and application of theory to the family. Thus, students should be able to apply any theory covered in this course in most global contexts. Students will demonstrate their ability to apply theory and discuss the role of culture in their applications of theory in their written assignments.

The aim is to merge theory and practice throughout the classroom experience. To this end, we will maintain a stimulating, interactive, open, and friendly classroom environment that fosters self and other insight, critical thinking, intellectual growth and communicative competence.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Specifically, upon completing this course, you should be able to:
1) Apply human ecological theory, family development, family systems, symbolic interactionism, and other family theories and models to explain family interactions.
2) Critically analyze and discuss family research in the area of family dynamics and process.
3) Demonstrate the ability to construct a family genogram and assess family interactions.
4) Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze a family case study from various theoretical perspectives.
5) Demonstrate an understanding of the role that culture plays in how families develop, interact, and communicate.

6) Apply culture to contextualize current events and experiences in relation to historical and current global context as they apply to the family.

7) Identify and apply multiple perspectives of family pertaining to global issues.

REQUIRED READING

Required books:

Additional required readings:
Additional required readings are posted on WebCampus. Readings are in .PDF file format. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer (or an available computer) can open/read these files.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Class attendance
This course meets only once per week, thus it is extremely important that you attend class. Formal attendance will not be taken, but there will be weekly quizzes that will help track participation. Additionally, attendance can impact your participation grade (see below). It is expected that you will be here each week for the entire class.

Being on time
It is very important that you are on time for class. It is very distracting to the instructor and other students when people arrive late. *All assignments are due promptly when class begins at 5:30pm.*

Reading is an integral part of this class!
It is not sufficient to skim readings and memorize facts or definitions. Instead, you are expected to carefully read and process the readings for deeper comprehension and to apply the information from the readings to all portions of the class. You are expected to complete the required readings before coming to class so you can actively engage in lectures and activities.

**Tips for reading The Family Crucible:**
- It is critical that you carefully read the assigned chapters, but do not get caught up in the details of the family therapists, or how exactly family therapy is used to help the Brice family. The goal is to understand the story of the Brice family at a broader level and how each family member relates to one another. This book is meant to be a break from the more academic course readings, so try to enjoy! 😊
- Required chapters: 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20. A suggested reading schedule is posted in the course outline.
ASSIGNMENTS
A Note on Assignments
All assignments are due at promptly at 5:30 pm on the day they are due. Please be sure to make sure that your assignment has your name and the name of the assignment. Additionally, if you are turning in your papers by email please put your name and the name of the assignment in the subject line. Assignments that are turned in past 5:30 pm will be marked as 1 day late. Grades will be reduced 10% per day they are late.

Assignments All Students

Genogram analysis – All students
Each student will complete an oral interview with a member of their family of origin and construct a genogram to analyze family interactions. Additionally, students will discuss the cultural influences that have influenced the development of their family. Complete assignment directions will be posted on WebCampus and discussed in class. The Genogram analysis is due on March 30th, promptly at the beginning of class at 5:30pm. Genograms may be emailed to the instructor at bretd@unr.edu or you may turn in a hard copy on or before the due date.

Family Crucible Paper – All students
Each student will write a 4-page paper, critically analyzing the Brice family from the perspective of various family theories. Additionally, the papers will also discuss how culture influences the interpretation of the theory as it is applied to the Brice Family. Complete assignment directions will be posted on WebCampus and will be discussed in class. The Family Crucible paper is due on April 27th, promptly at the beginning of class at 5:30pm. Family Crucible papers may be emailed to the instructor at bretd@unr.edu or you may turn in a hard copy on or before the due date.

Quizzes
There are no exams in this course however students will complete a total of 11 in-class quizzes, the lowest quiz score will be dropped and a total of 10 quizzes will count toward your final grade. Quizzes will take place the last 30 minutes of class. Quizzes will cover lecture material and all readings from the previous lecture. Quiz format and structure will be made up of any combination of multiple choice, matching, and true or false questions. Since students can drop their lowest quiz score, quizzes cannot be made up at a later date unless you will be out for more than one quiz and you have valid documentation (Dean’s excuse, doctor’s note). This documentation must be presented to the instructor the next day you return to class.

Research Participation
This class has a research participation requirement. Students will learn about the field through class materials, as well as through direct experience in social research. There are several ways to fulfill the research participation requirement: the Social Research Participation Credit (SRPC) option, the research paper option, the article critique option or a combination of these. All are designed to be
learning experiences closely integrated with the classroom-based and textbook-based work in this course. See the attached separate document for full details on how to fulfill this requirement.

Failure to fulfill the research participation requirement for this course will result in an incomplete grade for the course. If you have any questions about the requirement or your status during the semester, please submit them via email (include your name, email address and phone number) to the Social Research Subject Pool Administrator, at socialscienceresearchSONA.unr@gmail.com. If you choose the SRPC option, you will participate in 4 hours of research approved by the UNR Office for Human Research Protection. There are many opportunities throughout the semester to participate in approved research projects. Note that the 4-hour criterion is mandatory, and completing fewer than 4 hours will result in your receiving an incomplete grade for the course. **Note: All research participation hours must be completed no later than April 26th at 11:59 pm. Extensions will only be given with instructor approval, on a case-by-case basis.**

**In-class Participation**

Learning is not simply a passive process where you sit in class and I talk. Student participation is vital to the success of the course, and your development as a student. Each student is expected to participate in class discussions and in-class activities. This may entail asking questions, participating in a dialogue with the instructor during lecture, and generally being an active participant in the course. Additionally, attendance is also part of class participation. If it is noticeable that you are not attending class or missing part of class this will affect your in-class participation grade. Many students falsely believe that I will not notice if you miss all or part of class, please let me assure you that I do notice and it does not only impact your learning, but the learning of other students as well. As such you will be evaluated on your in-class participation as part of your grade. Lastly, I am not looking for correct answers during the lecture, however, I am looking to see that you have read the assigned material and that you have come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

**Graduate student assignments**

**Reaction papers. – Graduate students**

You will write a total of four graduate level reaction papers. Graduate students must complete a total of four reaction papers; the first two are due the week before exam 1, and the last two are due the week prior to the final (see below for due dates). **You can hand them in any time before these dates.** Reaction papers are **3-4 FULL double spaced pages. Please do not cheat me on the 3 pages (e.g., 12 pt. font, 1” to 1” margins and do not overuse headings to waste space)** and are based on class readings or similar topics. You may integrate the readings (e.g., pointing out consistencies or inconsistencies), incorporate what you know from your field of expertise, or discuss in depth some underlying assumption about the readings. You can integrate readings from multiple weeks. You can also integrate the readings with current events in the news (e.g., apply the principles you read about in class with current events in the news). You should introduce your paper by very clearly stating a main point/thesis statement and how you will back it up. Then spend several paragraphs supporting your position, and then make a final conclusion. You should convince me that you did the readings and can think in-depth about them. You should write on a topic that you could also discuss in class.
Just like any other paper, you should have a clearly explained thesis statement. This can be a position (e.g., "based on the principles of Ecological Systems theory, policy makers should consider the role of poverty on children’s emotional development when they are developing family policy") or purpose (e.g., "The purpose of this paper is to apply queering theory to modern perceptions of same-sex families."). The preferred approach is to apply the theories discussed in class or other readings from class readings to back up your position. One common approach (although not required) is to use something you read or saw in the news as a starting point for your paper, which is perfectly fine. However, you need to show you are doing the ACADEMIC readings (e.g., text book, family crucible, and journal articles) not just reading newspaper articles. Thus, you should talk about a newspaper article and apply the theories you learned from the assigned readings. There are lots of directions you can take the paper. No matter which you take, it should be related to the readings and show that you can think more in-depth about the topics. It is not just a literature review. It is not just agreeing with and restating the position of authors that we read. Reaction papers should be your own unique thoughts. Further, papers are not simply a diary of miscellaneous thoughts. Instead, the entire paper should be built around that thesis statement. Think about every statement, every paragraph. Do they all further the thesis statement? If they are just random thoughts, they should get cut out. Every thing you say should advance your arguments or analysis. The conclusion should summarize and make conclusions about the implications of your paper. The papers should be in proper format (APA) and be professionally written. Reaction papers may be emailed to the instructor at bretd@unr.edu or you may turn in a hard copy. Graduate students must complete 2 reaction papers on or before March 2nd and 2 Reaction papers on or before May 4th. Note: you can hand them in any time before these dates.

In class presentation – Graduate Students

Graduate students will select one of the theories presented in class and become an “expert” on that theory, and its application to a topic of interest to the student. Each grad student will give a 10-15 minute presentation on his or her topic. The presentations will take place on May 4th at the beginning of class. Presentations should include:

- A summary of the topic or problem (explain why this topic is important)
- A justification for the theory chosen (why do you feel this theory is best suited for your topic?)
- A review of the literature (5 – 7 sources).
- Implications of the findings (what do the findings mean for your topic or problem?)
- Summary of your main points.
**EVALUATION & GRADES:**

### Undergraduate Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research participation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genogram analysis</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Crucible paper</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>300 (10 x 30 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>750</strong></td>
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### Graduate Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research participation</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction papers</td>
<td>100 (25 points x 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genogram analysis</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Crucible paper</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>300 (10 x 30 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>900</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*All graduate student work will be held to a higher standard for critical reflection and integration of course material*

**Grading Scale**

- 100 - 93% A 76-73% C
- 92-90% A- 72-70% C-
- 89-87% B+ 69-67% D+
- 86-83% B 66-63% D
- 82-80% B- 62-60% D-
- 79-77% C+ < 60% F

**CLASS POLICIES**

**Common Courtesies**
Due to the content of this senior-level course, student should be aware that subject matter of a very personal and mature nature may be discussed in class. Please respect your fellow classmates and maintain confidentiality of these matters. It is important to remember that everyone is coming to this class with a unique perspective. In order to create the best possible learning environment we must all be respectful of one another. It is perfectly acceptable to disagree with others, but keep comments focused on the topic and not on personal attacks. Any statements that could be construed as a threat of any kind will result in removal from the course and the student will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Statement of Disability Services:**
Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building, Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. Please notify the instructor in advance of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The instructor can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

**Statement on Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty is against university as well as the system community standards. 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 one's own; or assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one's work to be used in this fashion. Cheating is defined as (I) obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual or unauthorized use of books, notes, text and other materials; (2) obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination; (3) taking an examination for another student, or arranging for another person to take an exam in one's place; (4) altering or changing test answers after submittal for grading, grades after grades have been awarded, or other academic records once these are official.

Disciplinary procedures for incidents of academic dishonesty may involve both academic action and administrative action for behavior against the campus regulations for student conduct. The procedures involve the determination by the faculty member pursuing concerns over alleged cheating or plagiarism as to whether administrative action is warranted, in addition to making a determination as to any academic consequence. Academic action may include: (1) cancelling the student's enrollment in the class without a grade; (2) filing a final grade of "F"; (3) awarding a failing mark on the test or paper in question; (4) requiring the student to retake the test or resubmit the paper.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student's enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course or for the assignment. For more details, see the [University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog](https://catalog.unr.edu).

**A Note on Plagiarism**
Plagiarism (copying all or part of someone else's work and passing it off as your own) is a serious form of academic misconduct and will not be tolerated in this class. The following definitions and possible courses of action are taken from the Academic Standards section of the university catalog:
"The work of another" does not just mean whole papers or articles copied from another source. It includes any information, ideas, sentences, or phrases that came from somewhere other than your own head (i.e. books, articles, internet sites, videos, documents, lecture notes or handouts from other courses, and any other sources used in your paper). These must be properly acknowledged by providing references either in the text or in a footnote, along with a bibliography giving the complete publication information for all sources used in your paper. Even if you paraphrase someone else's ideas and do not quote them directly, you still must acknowledge your source. Citations should also be given for little-known facts and statistics. Ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism. If you are not sure whether you need to provide a source for a piece of information or how to cite a source, ask the instructor.

**Statement on Audio and Video Recording:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

**Grade Appeals**

It is your responsibility to track your grade on WebCampus. If you would like to appeal a grade you should do so in writing to the instructor within 7 days from the day the grade was returned to you (i.e., entered to WebCampus or returned in hard copy). Any appeal that does not come in writing and within 7 days will not be considered.

**Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecture Readings Due</th>
<th>FC chapters due</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Quiz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td>Introduction to course/ Review Syllabus/Introductory lecture</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>No quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 2</td>
<td>What is theory?/Symbolic Interactionism/Definition of Marriage</td>
<td>EFT Intro (p. 1-9)/EFT Chap 1 (p. 11-20)/Curran et al. (2010)</td>
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<td>No quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td>President's Day No Class!</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Start reading Family Crucible (FC) chap 1, 2, 5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>No quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 23</td>
<td>Ecological Theory Part 1</td>
<td>EFT Chap. 6</td>
<td>FC chap 7,8,9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Family Development quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 2</td>
<td>Ecological Theory Part 2</td>
<td>Eamon (2001)</td>
<td>FC chap 10,12</td>
<td>First two reaction papers due (grad students)</td>
<td>No quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 9</td>
<td>Family Systems Part 1</td>
<td>EFT Chap. 5/Segrin &amp; Flora (2005)/Genograms Chap 1, 2</td>
<td>FC Chap 13, 15</td>
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<td>Ecological Theory quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>Spring Break No Class!</td>
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<td>FC chap 16, 18</td>
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<td>No quiz</td>
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<td>Mar. 23</td>
<td>Family Systems Part 2/Family Crucible</td>
<td>All chapters due FC</td>
<td>FC Chap 19, 20</td>
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<td>Family Crucible quiz</td>
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<td>Apr. 6</td>
<td>Queering Theory</td>
<td>Oswald et al. (2004)</td>
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<td>Feminist Family Theory quiz</td>
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<td>Apr. 13</td>
<td>Attachment Theory in Children</td>
<td>Phelps et al. (1998)/ Simpson et al. (2007)</td>
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<td>Queering Theory quiz</td>
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<td>Apr. 27</td>
<td>Social Exchange Theory</td>
<td>EFT Chap 8/ Rusbult &amp; Buunk (1993) pages 175 - 189</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>FC paper due/Research participation due Sunday April 26th at 11:59 pm**</td>
<td>Adult Attachment quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Biosocial Theory/ Grad student presentations</td>
<td>EFT Chap. 10</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Last two reaction papers due (grad students)/ Grad student presentations due</td>
<td>Social Exchange Theory Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Prep Day (no classes)</td>
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<td>May 8</td>
<td>Final Exam 6 pm - 8 pm</td>
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<td>Biosocial Theory quiz</td>
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