



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

Psychology 303
Family Relations in Contemporary Society
Spring, 2005; Mon., Weds., Fri. 10:00-10:50 SCI B 133

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Office Hours: Mondays 3:00-4:00, Wednesdays 12:00-1:00, Thursdays 12:30-1:30 HGH 120E.

Required Texts: Schwartz, M.A., & Scott, B. M. (2003). *Marriages and Families: Diversity and Change (4th Edition)*. Prentice-Hall Publishers. AND Golden, L.B. (2004). *Case Studies In Marriage and Family Therapy (2nd Edition)*. Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall Publishers. AND *Articles available on BLACKBOARD.*

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Course Description:

This course introduces the student to the bidirectionality of interactions between individuals in families and their support (or non-support) systems. We will examine the child's role in his/her own socialization, as well as how parents, gender, socioeconomic status, class, and culture affect family development. We will also explore the links between these diverse systems of influence. The relationships between people and social contexts will be of particular interest. This course allows a *systemic* orientation for evaluating the forces that impact individuals, intimate partners and families in contemporary society. This course satisfies 3 units of upper division GE units in Area D (social and behavioral sciences). It also satisfies 3 units of upper division elective for the Psychology major.

Course Goals:

- To gain knowledge about factors that foster meaningful close relationships.
- To understand the influence of your family of origin, socioeconomic status, gender, and culture on the relationships you now hold.
- To understand complex theories and contemporary research on the ever-changing institution we call "family."
- To understand that families come in all shapes, sizes, and levels of biological relatedness and to gain knowledge regarding healthy and unhealthy functioning in *any* type of family.
- To apply course content to making informed choices in your own close relationships and hopefully to improve the quality of the relationships you engage in.

- To hone your critical thinking and communication skills so that you can analyze scientific research on the family and can discuss this work both orally and in writing.

Please see the activity assignments to understand how these goals will be met by completing course assignments.

Expectations:

You are required to contact me *before class* if you will miss class. Otherwise, I expect you to come to class every day, on time, and not leave early. *It will be extremely difficult to pass this course without doing all of the readings and coming to all of the lectures.* I expect that you will not hold side conversations during lectures. I assume that you are adults who will value and respect the classroom environment, including the comments made by your classmates, and the work being done by anyone at the podium. I also assume that you will do all of the assigned readings by their due dates so that you may engage with us in scholarly conversations each class period.

Although a class of this size necessitates a primarily lecture format, I love when students pipe up in class. Please ask questions often, make comments, and even criticize what I am saying. My teaching and your learning will be greatly enriched if we enter into a relationship where we are all engaged with the material and discuss it together. There is no such thing as a dumb question! I encourage you to come to office hours to discuss questions or concerns about the class. I want this to be a positive and challenging learning experience for all of us.

Course Requirements:

Grading is on a straight scale (80-82% = B-, 83-86% = B, 87-89% = B+) with no adjustments. The fine points of our grading scheme will be discussed in class, with sample papers available to interested students.

Exams: 4 Exams @ 50 Points Each	200 points
Activities: 2 @ 25 Points Each	50 points
Integrative Case Study Analyses: 2 @ 25 Points Each	<u>50 points</u>
	300 points possible

Exams: The exams are not cumulative, except for the expectation that you will have retained basic theories and knowledge from our repeated course discussions of them. Exams will be based on integrative and critical thinking regarding lecture and reading material. Exams are not based on memorization of facts. Due to class size, these exams are multiple choice in nature (*Get 4 copies of Scantron Form 882-E*) but still require you to move beyond relaying “facts” back to me. There will be no make-up exams available. If you fail to take an exam, your score will be recorded as “0” without exception. Any emergencies must be brought to my attention **BEFORE** the exam and arrangements will be made only with proper documentation of said emergency.

The “Questions for Study and Reflection” and the other resources listed at the end of each chapter will REALLY help you in obtaining good grades on exams and other assignments. I will take many exam questions from the textbook's online quizzes so be sure to take all of the available practice exams for each chapter.

Activities: Seven activities will be posted on Blackboard, with various due dates spanning the semester. You may do as many activities as you wish, and your highest 2 scores will be recorded. These activities require you to apply class material to your own life or to the “real world” in some fashion. They are fun but also require critical and integrative thinking on your part. *Be sure to check Blackboard at least weekly for updates, announcements, due dates, etc.*

Integrative Case Study Analyses: We will be reading and analyzing case studies in marriage and family therapy throughout the semester. *There will be questions on each exam regarding these cases and our analysis of them.* You also have the opportunity to explore two cases of interest in more depth in two case study analysis papers. The goal of these papers is to show that you can examine what a professional has said about a family and can apply the research from class in a way that enriches our understanding of that family/case.

In your 3 page paper (1" margins, double space, 12 pt font), you will comment on the adequacies and inadequacies of what the counselor or therapist did and said. You will apply specific theories, research, lectures, and concepts from class, to show how we might better approach a family like the one in the case. You may comment on any or all of the sections in the casebook: conceptualization, process, outcome, and discussion. Point out what areas you think were well thought out and which areas could have been enriched by the knowledge you have gained in class. You may turn in as many case analyses as you wish and the top 2 grades will be recorded.

You must have 2 of your 4 papers turned in by the half-way mark of the semester, or Spring Break (this can be any combination of case study analysis or activity papers). This means that you may ONLY turn in TWO papers AFTER March 21st! Therefore, you must have 2 paper grades recorded by March 11! Please use good time management skills and schedule your due dates accordingly. Grades will only be recorded for 2 papers before March 11 and for 2 papers after March 21. This ensures that we can give your papers full attention and feedback so that you may improve your performance over time. Most students perform significantly better on their later papers, especially if they spread their assignments out and do not cram them all in at the end. This deadline should help. Please note that if you'd like to improve your paper grades, feel free to turn in more than the required 4 papers and older grades can be replaced with new grades, as long as your first 4 papers were turned in on time.

Grading Criteria for Activities/Case Studies: You will need to show that you have integrated material from the current chapter into what you turn in for your activity. You should be sure to integrate things we have discussed previously, previous chapters, theories, guest speakers, films, and other applicable material that make your activity report are well-rounded and thoughtful. Writing style does matter, so please proofread. ***Poor writing style and lack of proofreading will result in point deductions.*** We will discuss paper grading and good approaches to writing papers in more detail in class.

Critical thinking, analysis, critique, and use of class material will make for good activity/case study analysis papers. Carelessness in presentation or content will result in points lost. Please keep these papers brief (about 3 pages typed/double spaced/12 pt font) and to-the-point. Because I expect high quality writing, rough drafts received two class periods before the paper due date are always welcome. They will be returned the period before the paper is due.

Late Paper Policy: Activities and Case Studies must be turned in *by 11am* on the due dates listed on Blackboard. If they are turned in after 11am on the due date, they will be considered late. If they are turned in within 24 hours of their due dates (THIS INCLUDES WEEKENDS; SUBMIT THEM BY EMAIL WORD ATTACHMENT ONLY), a letter grade deduction will be taken. Papers will not be accepted after 24 hours of their due date (11am the day following the due date) without an officially documented emergency (e.g. hospital admission form).

Date	Topic	Text/CaseBook/Articles
<i>January</i>		<i>Articles are on Blackboard!!!</i>
Weds. 19	Intro./History & Blackboard	Pp. 1-13
Friday 21	History&Definition of Family	Pp. 1-13
Monday 24	History Continued	Pp.13-28/Coontz Article
Weds. 26	History Continued	Pp. 13-28/Coontz Article
Friday 28	History Continued	
Monday 31	Contemporary Society	Murray Article/Silverstein Art
<i>February</i>		
Weds. 2	Research Methods	Pp. 30-37
Fri. 4	Research Methods Continued	Pp. 30-37
Mon. 7	Theories	Pp. 38-57/ Case Study 11
Weds. 9	Theories Continued	Pp. 38-57
Fri. 11	EXAM #1!!!	BRING SCANTRON 882E
Mon. 14	Gender Issues	Pp. 59-66/Case Study 16
Weds. 16	Gender Issues Continued	Pp. 67-84/Faludi Article
Fri. 18	Love & Intimacy	Pp. 86-98
Mon. 21	Love & Intimacy Continued	Pp. 99-116/Case Study 17
Weds. 23	Mate Selection	Pp. 117-130/Case Study 3
Fri. 25	GUEST LECTURE	
Mon. 28	Mate Selection Continued	Pp. 131-151
<i>March</i>		
Weds. 2	Sexuality & Intimacy	Pp. 153-174
Fri. 4	Sexuality & Intimacy Cont'd	Pp. 175-198/Appendix A & B
Mon. 7	Nonmarital Lifestyles	Pp. 200-210
Weds. 9	Nonmarital Lifestyles Cont'd	Pp. 211-224/Case Study 10
Fri. 11	EXAM #2!!!	BRING SCANTRON 882E
14-18	SPRING BREAK!!!	

Mon. 21	Marriage	Pp. 226-243
Weds. 23	Marriage Continued	Pp. 244-260/Case Study 18
Fri. 25	Reproduction and Parenting	Pp. 262-272/Hollingworth Art.
Mon. 28	Reproduction & Parenting Ctd	P. 272-283/Appendix C+D/Case 2
Weds. 30	Parenting	Pp. 283-304/Collins Article
<i>April</i>		
Fri. 1	Parenting Continued	Case Studies 4 & 14
Mon. 4	Parenting Continued	
Weds. 6	Violence in Families	Pp. 336-345/Jacobson Article
Fri. 8	Violence Continued	Pp. 346-361/Collier-Cool Art.
Mon. 11	Violence Continued	Goodrum Article/Case St.19
Weds. 13	EXAM #3!!!	BRING SCANTRON 882E
Fri. 15	Child Abuse	Pp. 362-373
Mon. 18	Child Abuse Continued	Pp.468-472; Pp. 477-91/Case7
Weds. 20	GUEST LECTURE	
Fri. 22	Divorce	Pp. 375-386/Case Study 5
Mon. 25	Divorce Continued	Pp. 387-402
Weds. 27	Remarriage	Chapter 13
Fri. 29	Individual Differences-Income	Pp. 318-334/Pp. 455-468
<i>May</i>		
Mon. 2	Individual Differences-Income	Hays Article & Luthar Article
Weds. 4	Individual Diffs.-Ethnicity	Pp. 472-477/Sudarkasa Article; Baca Zinn Article
Fri. 6	Individual Diffs.-Religion	Sherif Article
Friday the 13 th !! (10:20-11:20)	FINAL EXAM!!!	BRING SCANTRON 882E

Reading List

- Baca-Zinn, M., & Wells, B. (2000). Diversity within Latino families: New lessons for family social science. In D. Demo, K. Allen, & M. Fine (Eds.), *Handbook of Family Diversity* (pp. 252-268). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Collier-Cool, L. (2004, December/January). The unspoken pregnancy danger. *Babytalk Magazine*, 61-64.
- Collins, P. (2004). Shifting the center: Race, class, and feminist theorizing about motherhood. In M. Hutter (Ed.), *The Family Experience: A Reader in Cultural Diversity* (4th ed., pp. 244-257). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Coontz, S. (2000). Historical perspectives on family diversity. In D. Demo, K. Allen, & M. Fine (Eds.) *Handbook of Family Diversity* (pp. 15-29). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Faludi, S. (2004). A Christian quest for manhood. In S. Coltrane (Ed.), *Families and Society: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (pp. 261-269). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Learning.
- Goodrum, S., Umberson, D., & Anderson, K. (2001, Spring). Family stress, crisis, and violence. *Sociological Inquiry*, 71(2), 325-340.
- Hays, S. (2003). Work, the family, and welfare. In S. Coltrane (Ed.), *Families and Society: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (pp. 481-489). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Learning.
- Hollingworth, L. (1916). Social devices for impelling women to bear and rear children. *American Journal of Sociology*, 22(1), 19-29.
- Jacobson, N., & Gottman, J. (1998). Basic facts about battering: Myths vs. realities. In S. Coltrane (Ed.), *Families and Society: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (pp. 402-413). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth Learning.
- Luthar, S. (2003). The culture of affluence: Psychological costs of material wealth. *Child Development*, 74(6), 1581-1593.
- Murray, J. (2003, Winter). America's crisis of maturity. *Reclaiming Quarterly*, pp. 11, 51-52.
- Sherif, B. (2004). Islamic family ideals and their relevance to American Muslim families. In M. Hutter (Ed.), *The Family Experience: A Reader in Cultural Diversity* (4th ed., pp. 183-189). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Silverstein, L., & Auerbach, C. (2005). (Post)modern families. In J. Roopnarine (Ed.) *Families in a Global Perspective* (pp. 33-47). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Sudarkasa, N. (2004). Interpreting the African heritage in Afro-American family organization. In M. Hutter (Ed.), *The Family Experience: A Reader in Cultural Diversity* (4th ed., pp. 30-40). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Activity Assignments

Students choose at least two and can do more than two to improve grades.

Activity #1

Activity #1 is due in class Wednesday, February 9th.

Were families of yesterday really the way we have perceived them to be?

For this activity, you will need to interview someone who was alive in the 1950s (if you were, you can do this on your own). Ask this person about his/her family structure, composition, and healthy vs. dysfunctional relationships. Ask about other families he/she knew at the time. Were they mostly SNAF families? Does your interviewee remember the 1950s as "the good old days," as they are portrayed to be in the media? Were the predominant family forms really that good for all family members or community members (women, children, etc.)? If not, did they harm anyone?

An essential question to address is: "Why is valuing FAMILIES, regardless of the form or structure they take, considered to be 'antifamily values' by some groups?"

To complete this assignment, you may reflect on material from any combination of these sources: your interviewee's answers, the Coontz article, the Silverstein article, the Murray Article, chapter 1 of the text, lecture material, the handout, and your own critical thinking.

Write your 3 page (double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins) analysis of your interpretation of the truth regarding the "disintegration" of the family. Be sure to use class material to support your arguments.

See the syllabus for exact details on how to write these papers. Starting the papers early increases your chances of having good grades recorded!

Activity #2: Sex and Gender Roles due Weds. Feb. 23.

We have been discussing sex, gender, and gender roles. Part of your analysis involves looking at the socializing forces that influence gender role development.

For 48 hours, take detailed notes and make tally marks regarding gender role behaviors you see in your socializing environments. Take notes whenever you are: talking on the phone, watching/listening to media, talking with friends and family, observing/listening to strangers, going to class, etc. Write down every instance you hear or see regarding sex, gender, or gender roles/stereotypes. Be sure to record sexism as well as non-traditional gender behavior, speech, or depictions.

The second step involves interviewing a person of the other sex. This person should be from your same generation, ethnic background, and socioeconomic status. So you will be very similar to each other except for your biological sex. Ask this person what it is like to be either male or female on a daily basis. What are the pros and cons? Benefits and challenges?

Based on your 2 day tallies and your brief interview, write an essay analyzing the current state of sex and gender. Use any combination of class lectures, texts, Case Study #16, the Faludi article, the video, etc. to support your arguments. Integrate your personal experience with class material to illustrate in a brief 3 page (double spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt. font) paper, a nice snapshot of gender roles in current society. As always, integrations of class material, critical and analytical thinking, and good writing are keys to good grades. Use the Writing Tips.

Activity #3 Due Wednesday, March 9 at 11am.

We have been discussing sex, love, intimacy, and how we choose our mates. For this activity, interview 4 very different types of people (e.g. married, divorced, re-married, never married, homosexual, elderly, differently-abled, people of color, women, men, adolescents, poor, rich, urban, rural, etc). Ask each of the 4 people to define what "love" means to them. Ask them if they have ever been in love.

How did they know they were in love? How was that mate selected? How important do they feel sex is in a love relationship? If that love relationship has ended, has their definition of love changed? Why do they think it has changed or stayed the same?

After analyzing your interview material, you will start to see patterns, similarities, and differences, in the responses. You need to find a way to boil all of this down into what you think are the essential components of "love." Also, what seem to be the most effective mate selection strategies? Note any major differences you found in ideas about love, sex, etc. Explain why you think these differences exist, **BASED ON MATERIAL FROM CLASS!**

Your job for the paper will be to integrate the 4 diverse definitions of love and the 4 different mate selection strategies with their views on sexuality. Analyze any patterns you see by using class material to support your points. You may integrate lecture material, articles, case studies, films, text material (theories, concepts, research), etc. As always, writing style matters and can make a letter grade difference in your score! Use writing tips. Rough drafts accepted until Friday, March 4.

Activity #4 due Fri. April 1

We have covered a lot of material that I am hoping will aid students in improving their own family relations, as well as providing them ideas to discuss with others close to them. This assignment focuses on marriage (official-legally-sanctioned marriage between a male and female for this assignment please).

You have received 5 handouts so far that you should review for this assignment (one on family strengths, one on love, one on sex, one on marriage communication, and one on attachment [with two parts]). Analyze either your own marriage or the marriage of someone close to you, who would feel comfortable enough talking to you about personal issues like those on the handouts. The couple should be beyond the "honeymoon" period of the first year.

First, ask this couple (or ask yourself and your spouse) why they think their marriage is a success (or still going, even if they feel it's not great). Have both partners write down SEPARATELY some key aspects they think have led to their longevity.

Your job for this assignment will be to combine your and your spouse's (or your 2 friends' responses) with the information on the handouts, and the information from the text (esp. ch. 8, but include any relevant other material as well).

In your 3 page paper (double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt. font), describe key elements that make a marriage successful, what makes an unsuccessful marriage stay together, and what elements from class you think would be essential to include in premarital counseling or marital communications courses. If the couple is yours, has class material helped your relationship in any way? If the relationship is someone else's, talk to them about a few of the things you think are essential "take home" messages from class and ask if they find them helpful. The best paper will be able to seamlessly integrate: interview, handouts, text, and analysis. And yes, writing style counts! Rough Drafts accepted until Monday, March 28.

Activity #5 Due Friday, April 8.

Activity #5 is about parenting. That means you need to review all textbook sections, class notes, case studies, and articles regarding parenting. For all activities you should review the theories from class also. I am always looking for insightful integrations of various class material.

For this activity you will need to rent 2 movies and compare their depictions of reproduction and parenting issues. You must stick to this list of movies because I have seen all of these movies and can understand your analyses better. I also love each one of these movies for very different reasons.

Watch both movies and take notes regarding how they depict sex, reproduction, pregnancy, childbirth, parenting styles, motherhood, fatherhood, childhood, etc. Analyze what factors you think led to such different (or similar) depictions.

Think about all the levels of Bronfenbrenner's theory to generate a lot of ideas about what went into the film-maker's choices for depiction of these issues in their own specific ways. What were their goals? Were these goals achieved? How and in what way?

Make sure that your arguments are supported by class material. I would like to see a specific emphasis placed on social constructionism and structural-functionalism. The end result will be a VERY SHORT summary of each movie (no more than 1 paragraph of RELEVANT points) and then about 2-2.5 pages of analysis answering the questions above using class material.

Choose 2 out of these 22 films:

Bastard out of Carolina, Beloved, Boyz in the Hood, Parenthood, Traffic, Thirteen, Real Women Have Curves, Whale Rider, Monsoon Wedding, Rabbit Proof Fence, 9 Months, Frailty, Good Boy, Secondhand Lions, My Dog Skip, This Boy's Life, I am Sam, Man on Fire, Donnie Darko, Pieces of April, Garden State, Saved! (end of list)

Activity #6 is about domestic violence. Therefore, you must review all class notes (including films and handouts), text, article, and casebook readings. INTEGRATION of class material to support your analyses is the key to "A" papers. Not to mention that poor writing style always results in points lost. You are embarking upon your last chance to show me what you can do! There will only be ONE more activity posted after this one!!!!

Your job will be to interview someone "just like you." Interview a person of the the same age, ethnic background, sex, socioeconomic status, etc. You want to find out how much someone just like you knows about domestic violence. Start with this very general/broad question: "For one of my classes, I need to interview someone similar to myself in regard to domestic violence. First, what do you think domestic violence is? How would you define it?"

From the very general to the very specific, design 5 more interview questions of your choice. They can focus on prevalence, (e.g. "how common do you think DV is in white vs. minority families?") or on statistics (e.g. "where do you think domestic violence falls in terms of causes of hospital admissions for women?") or on any other specific material we covered. Make sure you design these 5 questions based on CLASS MATERIAL! Write the questions very clearly and practice asking them before the interview.

AFTER your interview (DON'T discuss anything BEFORE the interview!), discuss with this person a few of the myths and facts related to the 6 questions you asked, based on CLASS MATERIAL. Take notes regarding the person's reactions, comments, questions, etc.

Your paper will be a commentary on how much someone just like you knows or does not know about DV. Be sure to include specific points from the interview as a framework for your analysis.

Comment on why you think this person knows so little or so much. Comment on what pieces of information were most helpful or informative to your interviewee. Did you sense any personal resistance to discussing this topic? Was it awkward? How did you feel during this process?

Be sure to integrate class material (theories, research, etc.) to explain why you think you found the things above that you did.

ATTACH YOUR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES TO YOUR PAPER (3 pages, double spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt. font).

LAST ACTIVITY! DUE FRIDAY, MAY 6, BY 11AM.

Activity #7 is an "integration" assignment. It requires that you reflect on all you have learned this semester. By reviewing all of your notes, book chapters, articles, case studies, guest speaker notes, film notes, etc., you will also be helping yourself study for the final exam.

In this paper, you need to think about what you would tell someone who asked about this class. What are three "bottom line" or "essential" take home messages you got this semester? These 3 things should NOT be isolated facts, statistics, or terms. They should be broader overarching THEMES, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS, OR LARGER ENCOMPASSING CONCEPTS, that you think were important for changing your thinking about families.

For each of the 3 concepts or themes you choose, integrate several items from various class sources (cases, text, guests, articles, lecture, class discussion, films, handouts, etc.) showing that each item points to the importance of that theme.

In other words, you will choose a "take home message" and argue why that is the most important thing you got out of class. This argument will be supported by several sources of class material, illustrating that, indeed, this is an overarching important concept that was covered in many forms. You will do this procedure with all 3 themes you choose.

The final 3 page paper will consist of 1 concept or theme per page, with about a page of analysis using diverse class material, supporting your argument for the importance of this theme.

Keep in the back of your mind that you'd like someone who hasn't taken this class to read your paper and get a really clear idea about some of the essential issues they will examine in the class, along with the specific examples from various sources, illustrating those issues.