FATHERHOOD

Family and Consumer Studies 3260
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:45 a.m. to 12:05 p.m., in HPR E 206

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The focus of the course is the social, cultural, historical, and psychological study of fatherhood over the life span and corresponding perspectives regarding masculinity and manhood. We will analyze the role of fathers in the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children and the role of fathers in the development of gender identity and sexual orientation in children. The course will examine the various and controversial roles and images of fathers as nurturers, co-parents, providers, protectors, patriarchs, “dead-beat dads,” and sperm-donors in our culture and the media. We will also explore and discuss processes for establishing, maintaining, and strengthening relationships between fathers and their children and between children and their fathers.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE COURSE

1. How is father care different from mother care and how and why does it matter so much to children?

2. How are children who have been raised with an involved father different from children raised without an involved father or without a father?

3. What are the effects on men of being involved in the raising of children?

4. What are the costs to fathers, children, and fatherneed due to divorce?

5. What are the varieties of fatherneed among different kinds of dads in our society today — dads of color, teen dads, stepdads, gay dads, adoptive dads, etc.?

6. What is the role of women in men’s involvement in the raising of children?
7. Why and how can so many men have children, leave them, then have more children, then leave them, etc.?

8. What is the role of fathers in the development of aggression and violence in children?

9. What are the barriers in our culture that discourage fathers from becoming more competent and from being more involved as fathers?

10. How can public policy help create father-friendly environments in and out of the workplace?

REQUIRED TEXT


RECOMMENDED BOOKS


COURSE LEARNING DEMONSTRATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

**EXAMS** (80% of total course grade). There are three in-class exams. The highest two of three exam grades are counted for the final grade and the lowest of the three exams is dropped. If you know that you will miss two of the three exams, please realize it will be difficult to get a grade higher than a D. This also means that if you are satisfied with your first two exam grades, you do not have to take the third exam. The exams contain approximately 55 to 65 items that are primarily multiple-choice items with some matching, true/false, and short fill-in items. Exams cover both topics and content discussed in class and in the readings. **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS. THE FIRST TWO EXAMS ARE TYPICALLY GIVEN DURING THE FIFTH AND TENTH WEEKS OF THE TERM. THE THIRD EXAM IS DURING THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM PERIOD FOR THIS CLASS AND IT IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE EXAM.**
IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (20% of grade). During most class meetings we engage in activities, as individuals and/or in small groups, that build on your class preparation, readings, and other class activities. A few activities may require work outside of class but most are completed in class. For these activities, you receive credit if you are present, participate, and turn your work in at the end of the particular class meeting with your name on it. Since these activities take place and have their intended meaning within the context of a particular class meeting, you have to be in class to participate and receive credit. Parts of activities missed because you were late in coming to class or activities missed because you were not in class at all, cannot be made up. These exercises are intended to provide experiences with additional forms of learning in addition to reading and listening to lectures. Your grade for these activities will be determined by the percentage of the total number of these activities that you complete in class. There will be at least ten of these activities. One of your first assignments is to send me an email message (at the address listed above) by 5:00 p.m., Friday of Week 2, that includes your email address so that I can send course-related materials to you by email as they become available.