FALL 2009  STRENGTHENING FAMILIES
Family and Consumer Studies 3630.01   Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:10 to 10:30 a.m., in AEB 310
Fulfills Social/Behavioral Science Exploration Requirement — 3.0 credit hours

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ON-LINE COPY OF CURRENT SYLLABUS IS AT: <http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/herrin/>

NOTE: This syllabus is not a binding, legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor as long as students are given reasonable notice of any changes. Such modifications will be discussed during a class meeting and/or by notification via email.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Families have long been considered the basic unit of our communities and society. From this vantage point, as go families, so go communities and society. The institution of the family can then be understood and studied as a microcosm of neighborhoods, communities, and society. We also have come to understand much more clearly how our neighborhoods, communities, and society shape our families and provide (or do not provide) them encouragement, support, and protection in varying degrees and forms as families endeavor to fulfill their pivotal roles. While these matters are at once social and psychological, they are also economical, political, and philosophical. For us to understand these interdependent relationships we must also become mindful of those things that will make them healthier and stronger as well as more responsive, adaptive, and resilient. Not everyone agrees on what this means should be done, how it should be done, and who should do it. But just about everyone agrees that something should be done. One very important question we will explore is whether families are declining and doing poorly or adapting and doing well. The experts do not agree. However, the experts do agree that there are a number of very critical issues facing contemporary families and, therefore, our communities and society.

There are a host of family issues (some consider them “problems”) — cohabitation, same-sex marriage, out-of-wedlock births, single parenting, divorce, fathers who don’t provide economic and social support to their children, child and spouse abuse, to name a few — that involve individuals and couples in partnerships, marriages, and families in ways that result in great costs to those individuals and families. Such costs are even more enormous and consequential as they are carried into and manifested in our neighborhoods, communities and society. Part of our course of study will be to assess and understand these costs and what can be done by individuals, families, and our communities to understand them and resolve the related problems where possible. Before we study some of these problems in greater depth and detail, we need to become familiar with some of the important questions regarding contemporary families that are being asked by interested parties in our culture and society today. A major objective of this course is to understand these important questions and how they are variously perceived and answered within different relevant points of view.

What are families? What are families for? Who belongs to them? How do you become a family?
Is cohabitation with someone else sufficient to become a family?
Is marriage to someone else necessary to become a family?
Does your partner have to be a member of the opposite sex or can he or she be of the same sex?
Do you have to create or adopt a child before you can become a family?
Can all adults parent children well enough?
Should all adults be allowed to adopt and rear children?
Who are the best parents for the optimal development of children?
Do these parents need to be coupled in some way?
Do the couples need to be heterosexual or can they be homosexual or bisexual?
Although we may not be able to explore all of these questions, it is through our study of them that we will learn that the experts on these matters do not agree on the answers to these questions. We will also become more aware of the complex concerns and issues that are relevant to the study of strong, resilient, and successful families and the things that make them important and meaningful to us personally, our families, and our communities. Fortunately, there is much more agreement amongst the experts on the characteristics of strong families and the family processes they practice that allow their members to make and share meaning. Other matters of focus for this course are building and preserving (1) successful, strong, healthy, and resilient individuals and families, (2) secure, stable, warm, and open home environments to house and sustain them, and (3) supportive, responsive, and cohesive communities to surround and sustain them.

**REQUIRED COURSE READINGS AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH BOOKSTORE**

1. Some of the required readings are on “Electronic Reserve” through the Marriott Library. You may access these reserved readings through the student portal. Login into My.Utah.edu, click on “Academics” and a link to the E-Reserve readings for this course should be available there for you.
2. Several required readings for the first half of the term can be accessed directly from web pages on the internet.

Lecture notes for the different reading assignments are available to read and/or download to your own computer from my faculty web site which is located at: <http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/herrin/>. Simply scroll down to the relevant items listed under the section labeled “Current Course Syllabi, Overhead Notes, and Materials.” The notes are essentially the text of the overheads that I use in class lectures. Hopefully, by having the notes for a particular lecture when you attend, you can listen more for things that are of interest to you and how the things we are learning might be applied in your own lives and jot down some notes about such things rather than having to copy down all the information on the overheads.

**RECOMMENDED BOOKS AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH BOOKSTORE**


**COURSE LEARNING DEMONSTRATIONS, ACTIVITIES, AND GRADING SCALE**

**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 after 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. If you are satisfied with your first two exam grades, you do not have to take the third exam. The exams contain approximately 100 or so items that are primarily multiple-choice and true/false items with some matching and short fill-in items. Exams cover both topics and content discussed in class lectures and/or the readings. **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS. THE FIRST TWO EXAMS ARE SCHEDULED ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th AND THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5th. THE THIRD EXAM IS DURING THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM PERIOD WHICH IS MONDAY, DECEMBER 14th, FROM 8:00 TO 10:00 A.M. THE THIRD EXAM IS NOT COMPREHENSIVE.**
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.

GRADING SCALE. Letter grades are assigned to exam scores and to total points at the end of the term according to the scale of percentages listed below.

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<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<td>94 - 100</td>
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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

SEPTMBER 2     !!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES!!!
SEPTMBER 8     !!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO ADD COURSES!!!
SEPTMBER 8     !!!REMINDER: TUITION DUE OR YOUR CLASSES WILL BE CANCELLED!!!
OCTOBER 23     !!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM TERM COURSES!!!
DECEMBER 29    !!!GRADES AVAILABLE ON THE WEB!!!

SEPTMBER 7     ☺ LABOR DAY — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! ☺
OCTOBER 12 — 16 ☺ FALL BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! ☺
NOVEMBER 26, 27 ☺ THANKSGIVING BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN! ☺

CLASS MEETINGS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is flexible with respect to timing since we may spend more or less time on a topic as determined by class interest. Exam dates can be taken seriously and planned for accordingly. The reading assignments itemized below a particular date or dates are to be completed before coming to the date’s class meeting. Before each reading, you will find one of several symbols. A ‘⬦’ means the reading can be found on the Web; a ‘⬦’ means the reading can be found on e-reserve; and a ‘⬦’ means the reading can be found in one of the course textbooks.

Class Meeting 1: August 25

INTRODUCTION TO STRENGTHENING HOMES AND FAMILIES

Meetings 2, 3: Aug 27, Sep 1

Meetings 4, 5: September 3, 8

Meetings 6, 7: September 10, 15
Meetings 8, 9: September 17, 22 TO COHABIT OR TO MARRY OR FIRST ONE THEN THE OTHER?

  http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/swlt2.pdf
  http://www.unmarried.org/10-problems.html
  http://www.unmarried.org/cohabitation-f.a.q.html
  http://members.iquest.net/~dkoons/marriage.html

Meeting 10: September 24 EXAM ONE on materials thru September 22

Meeting 11: September 29 THE QUEST FOR THE PERFECT SOUL MATE — GOOD OR BAD?

  http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200403/great-expectations-the-soul-mate-quest
  http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200512/lust-the-long-haul

Meetings 12, 13: October 1, 6 PURPOSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE

  http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/118879272/PDFSTART

Meeting 14: October 8 PREPARATION FOR REMARRIAGE

  http://www.smartmarriages.com/remarrying.html

Meeting 15: October 20 WHO CAN MARRY? WHO CAN PARENT? SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO MARRIAGE AND PARENTING:

  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/future_of_children/v015/15.2meezan.html
  http://www.narth.com/docs/gendercomplementarity.html

Meeting 16: October 22 MYTHS AND REALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL, HAPPY MARRIAGES


Meetings 17, 18: October 27, 29 WHY MARRIAGES FALTER

- Gottman. “How I Predict Divorce,” in The Seven Principles... (Chapter Two, 25-46).

Meeting 19: November 3 BE INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER’S WORLD

- Gottman. “Principle 1: Enhance Your Love Maps,” in The Seven... (Chapter Three, 47-60).
Meeting 20: November 5  EXAM TWO on materials from September 29 thru November 3


Gottman. “Principle 3: Turn toward Each Other Instead of Away,” in The Seven… (Chapter Five, 79-97).

Meeting 21: November 10  HONOR AND RESPECT EACH OTHER and BE EMOTIONALLY ENGAGED, CONNECTED, AND INDEPENDENT

Meeting 22: November 12  SHARE POWER AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S VIEWPOINTS


Meetings 23, 24: November 17, 19  UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF YOUR CONFLICTS


Meetings 25, 26: Nov 24, Dec 1  RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP


Meetings 27, 28: December 3, 8  COPING WITH AND SOLVING THE RESOLVABLE


Meeting 29: December 10  IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND, AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S IMPORTANT DREAMS and BUILD DEEPER, MORE MEANINGFUL AND REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS


MONDAY, December 14  EXAM THREE, in regular classroom on materials from November 10 thru December 10, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.

DECEMBER 29  !!!GRADES AVAILABLE ON THE WEB!!!

COURSE “ODDS and ENDS”

ATTENDANCE POLICY. You should register only for those courses for which you have no scheduling conflicts that will interfere with your class participation or your ability to complete course requirements. As a general rule, you need to attend class in order to participate in and receive credit for IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES and EXAMS. These activities and exams cannot be made-up except in particular circumstances when you have informed me in advance of your absence (i.e., you are ill or some emergency has detained you) if at all possible. According to the University’s Registrar’s guidelines, if you are absent from class to participate in officially sanctioned University activities (e.g. band, debate, student government, intercollegiate athletics), religious obligations, or with instructor’s approval, you will be permitted to make up both assignments and examinations. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out from other students what was covered in your absence. More information on this policy is available at <http://www.acs.utah.edu/sched/handbook/attend.htm>.

REQUESTS for SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS by STUDENTS with DISABILITIES. Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations and assignments of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor as soon in the term as possible. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services <http://www.sa.utah.edu/ds>, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in the course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the CDS. More information is available at: <http://www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/>.
ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY. It is very likely that some of our reading materials, lectures, discussions, films, or other presentations in this course will include content that may be at odds with your personal set of values, beliefs, or point of view. This is virtually unavoidable in a class that is designed to help you study and understand the central concerns, issues and perspectives that are relevant to our course of study. We deliberately work at trying to understand multiple viewpoints and what they are based on that are diverse and often in opposition to one another. Only as we do this are we able to more fully and accurately understand the problems, issues, and concerns that are relevant to our class so we can consider possible responses and resolutions. Please carefully review the syllabus, assignments, and readings to determine if you are willing to participate in and contribute to our class as a learning environment and experience. Consequently, accommodations in content or assignments are not offered in our class. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about these or related matters at your earliest convenience. More information on the University of Utah’s Accommodations Policy is available at: <www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf>.

INCOMPLETE POLICY. According to University policy, students must have completed 80% of the course requirements and be in good standing (i.e., have earned at least a C on all completed work) and receive permission from the instructor to be eligible for an “Incomplete” grade. The Family and Consumer Studies Department Policy is that students who do not complete the remaining course work within one year from the time the incomplete is given will automatically receive a failing grade for the course. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

UNIVERSITY DROP and WITHDRAWAL POLICY. You may drop this course without penalty or permission of the instructor until September 2nd. You may withdraw from this course without permission of the instructor from September 3rd until October 23rd, but a “W” will be recorded on your academic record, and applicable tuition and fees will be assessed. If you remain in this course after October 23rd, you cannot withdraw for academic reasons at any other time during the term. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Office of Admissions and Registrar at (801) 581-5808. More information about these policies can be found at: <http://www.sa.utah.edu/regist/handbook/withdrawal.htm>.

PRIVACY of STUDENT INFORMATION and MATERIALS. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1974, among other things, prohibits the public posting of grades or exam scores using personally identifiable information (e.g., name, student or social security number) and the distribution of graded exams and assignments from a public area. A couple of times during the term (usually following exams), I will calculate grades for everyone at those points in time, and send out a spreadsheet by email with the grade information. Before doing so, I will ask each class member to provide me with an individualized code that I will use for identification purposes or use some other form of designation such as an exam ID number. I usually keep all class related materials for one year after the term is over.

APPROPRIATE CONDUCT. To ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, and/or submitting the same work for more than one course without the permission of both instructors. Any of these actions will not be tolerated. If you include information from outside the class or quotes in your written assignments (with the exception of exams), you must provide citations and a reference list. Avoid the urge to over-rely on quotes; a written assignment that is substantially made up of quoted material will not be considered to be your own work, even if you have used correct citations. If it is discovered that you have engaged in academic misconduct of any type in this course, the Family and Consumer Studies Department Policy states that you will be given a failing grade in the course and be reported to the Dean and the VP for Academic Affairs, who will keep your name on record. Should you be reported more than once, you may face expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be aware of and adhere to the guidelines for appropriate conduct as articulated in the CODE OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. A current copy of the “STUDENT CODE” is available at: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>.

RESPECTFUL CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT. Please help contribute to a respectful and civil learning environment by coming to class on time, turning off and refraining from the use of cell phones, beepers, ipods, palm pilots, etc. during our class meetings, and waiting until the instructor finishes class before packing up all of your things as a way of communicating that you are finished for the class. Use of laptop or notebook computers in class is allowed only after notifying and obtaining the instructor’s permission. Also avoid the use of non-course related materials, objects, or activities during class meetings such as homework for other classes, newspapers, personal correspondence, browsing the internet, etc.
INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES. The following responsibilities of faculty members are part of Family and Consumer Studies Department policy. The full list of faculty responsibilities at the University of Utah, is available at: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-12-4.html>. Accordingly, the instructor will do the following:

1. Be prepared for class and arrive on time or early for class and have all equipment set up.
2. Use a variety of teaching methods, including lecture, group work, discussion, demonstrations, films, etc. in an effort to create a stimulating learning environment and accommodate different learning styles.
3. Provide feedback on assignments in a timely manner.
4. Be available for individual consultation during office hours or by appointment.
5. Reply to email within 48 hours, not including weekends or holidays.
6. Comply with the final exam schedule. Final papers (in place of exams) should be due at the final exam time. Final projects or presentations should also follow this schedule.
7. Not cancel classes — if there is an emergency situation efforts should be made to inform students.
8. Follow all official University of Utah policies regarding conduct within the classroom, incompletes, and accommodations. Accommodations will be considered on an individual basis and only with the required documentation. No exceptions will be made to this policy.
9. Treat students equitably and with respect. This includes enforcing responsible classroom behavior on the part of students.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES. The full list of student rights and responsibilities at the University of Utah is available at: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>. Accordingly, students are expected to do the following:

1. Spend 2-3 hours per credit hour preparing for this class, including completing reading assignments, written assignments, and studying for exams. As this is a 3 credit hour course, you should plan to spend 6-9 hours per week in preparation for this course in addition to class time.
2. Complete required reading assignments in a timely manner.
3. Complete written assignments on time or make alternate arrangements for completing assigned work with the instructor in advance of assigned due dates.
4. Attend class and participate in class activities and discussions.
5. Arrive on time for class and stay the entire class period — arriving late and/or leaving early is disruptive to group work and class discussions.
6. Treat one another, the instructor, campus staff, and the classroom with respect.
7. Seek help from the instructor (and other resources such as the Center for Disability Services or the Writing Center) whenever necessary, and before minor problems become major barriers to learning.
8. Refer to the syllabus and the class or faculty webpage for important information pertaining to exams, written assignments, and class policies.