SUMMER 2006  FATHERHOOD
Family and Consumer Studies 3260
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:35 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. (May 15 thru June 21)

Don Herrin, Ph.D.
Department of Family and Consumer Studies  Office: 236 AEB
Office Phone: 581-3497   E-Mail: don.herrin@fcs.utah.edu
Web site: http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/herrin/

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-beats,” 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.

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 fatherhood due to divorce?
5. What are the varieties of fatherhood among different kinds of dads in our society today (e.g., 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, etc.?
8. What are the barriers in our culture that discourage fathers from becoming more competent and from being more involved as fathers?
9. How can public policy help create father-friendly environments in and out of the workplace?

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS


2. Some other course readings for the term will be placed on “Electronic Reserve” at the Marriott Library General Reserve. These readings will also be available in printed form at the General Reserve Desk in the Marriott Library.

3. Several required readings can be accessed directly from web pages on the internet.
Lecture notes for the different reading assignments in Pruett and from other sources 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 BOOKSTORE


5. Flouri, Eirini. (2005.) Fathering and child outcomes. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.


7. Parke, Ross, and Armin Brott. (1999.) Throwaway dads: The myths and barriers that keep men from being the fathers they want to be. Houghton Mifflin Co.


COURSE LEARNING DEMONSTRATIONS, ACTIVITIES, AND COURSE “ODDS and ENDS”

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 to 130 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 EXAMS ARE TYPICALLY GIVEN DURING THE SECOND CLASS MEETING OF THE SECOND, FOURTH, AND SIXTH WEEK OF THE TERM. 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.

CLASS MEETINGS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The following is a list of the topics and questions we will study along with the readings that will be assigned for those topics. The relevant dates for the different reading assignments will be forthcoming.

IS FATHER CARE REALLY AS ESSENTIAL AS MOTHER CARE? WHY? WHO SAYS? WHO CARES?
HOW IS FATHER CARE DIFFERENT FROM MOTHER CARE AND HOW AND WHY DOES IT MATTER SO MUCH TO CHILDREN?
   Pruett. “Fathers do not mother,” in Fatherneed (Chapter One, 17-34).

HOW ARE CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN RAISED WITH AN INVOLVED FATHER DIFFERENT FROM CHILDREN RAISED WITHOUT AN INVOLVED FATHER OR WITHOUT A FATHER?

IN-CLASS EXAM ONE

WHAT ARE FATHERS’ NEEDS FOR CHILDREN OVER THE LIFE SPAN AND WHAT ARE CHILDREN’S NEEDS FOR FATHERS?

WHAT ARE THE COSTS TO FATHERS, CHILDREN, AND FATHERNEED DUE TO DIVORCE?

WHAT ARE THE VARIETIES OF FATHERNEED AMONG DIFFERENT KINDS OF DADS — DADS OF COLOR, TEEN DADS, STEPDADS, GAY DADS, ADOPTIVE DADS, ETC.?
   Pruett. “Expressions of fatherneed,” in Fatherneed (Chapter Six, 120-144).

IN-CLASS EXAM TWO

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN FATHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE RAISING OF CHILDREN?
   Pruett. “Mothers and fatherneed,” in Fatherneed (Chapter Seven, 145-164).

WHAT ARE THE POSITIVE EFFECTS ON FATHERS OVER TIME OF BEING INVOLVED IN THE RAISING OF THEIR CHILDREN?

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS IN OUR CULTURE THAT DISCOURAGE FATHERS FROM BECOMING MORE COMPETENT AND FROM BEING MORE INVOLVED AS FATHERS?

WHAT IS NEW RESEARCH TELLING US ABOUT THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF NURTURING IN FATHERS?

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT FATHERING FROM SOME OTHER INTERESTING CULTURAL GROUPS?

IN-CLASS EXAM THREE