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, in 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.

We live in a culture that accentuates the bizarre, negative, and dysfunctional. In contrast, considerable research has documented the kinds of things that characterize strong and healthy relationships, marriages, and families, such as respectful, appreciative, and supportive relationships, processes, interactions, activities, communication, listening, problem solving, conflict resolution, and coping strategies. A major objective of the course is to study these characteristics with the intent of learning to recognize and create them in our own individual lives, marriages, families, and communities as antidotes to the negative images, messages, and emphases in our society. The course will emphasize the things we have learned through research that couples and families do to provide for individual, family, and community well-being amidst the many challenges facing them in our society. This requires that we acquire an understanding of the workings of relationships, partnerships, marriages, and family systems that are strong, healthy, and resilient which we know contribute to healthy, responsive, and responsible communities. Among other things already mentioned, we also will study things we know to be of importance to strong families and communities, such as shared histories, traditions, and rituals; kinship bonds; intimacy; ethical, spiritual, and religious orientations; coping strategies; parental supervision and monitoring; and ways of reducing delinquency; youth violence, drug abuse.

**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 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 items or so 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 EXAM IS SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 26th, AND THE SECOND EXAM FOR MONDAY, JUNE 14th. The third exam IS NOT comprehensive and is taken during the last 75 minutes of the last class period, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23rd.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (20% of grade). During every class meeting 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 - 93.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>94 - 100</td>
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<td>80 - 83.9</td>
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<td>84 - 86.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>74 - 76.9</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>77 - 79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>64 - 66.9</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>67 - 69.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>&lt; 60</td>
<td>E</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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 day’s class meeting. Before each reading, you will find one of several symbols. A ‘蒺’ means the reading can be found on the Web; an ‘🗂’ means the reading can be found on e-reserve; and a ‘ куд’ means the reading can be found in the required course textbook.

MEETING 1: MAY 17

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE
WHAT MAKES A FAMILY A FAMILY? WHAT ARE FAMILIES FOR?
FAMILIES ARE FOR CHILDREN OR JUST FOR ADULTS?

MEETING 2: MAY 19

CONTINUATION
CHARACTERISTICS OF STRONG AND HAPPY FAMILIES

MEETING 3: MAY 24

TO COHABIT OR TO MARRY OR FIRST ONE THEN THE OTHER?


MAY 26  !!!LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES!!!

MEETING 4: MAY 26

IN-CLASS EXAM ONE on materials through today; 75 minutes for exam
THE QUEST FOR THE PERFECT SOUL MATE — GOOD OR BAD?
http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200403/great-expectations-the-soul-mate-quest


PURPOSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE


MAY 31  !!!MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!!
JUNE 1  !!!TUITION PAYMENT DUE!!!
JUNE 1  !!!LAST DAY TO ADD COURSES!!!

MEETING 5: JUNE 2

CONTINUATION
PREPARATION FOR REMARRIAGE
http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200003/divorced

WHO CAN MARRY? WHO CAN PARENT? SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO MARRIAGE AND PARENTING:


JUNE 4  !!!LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM FIRST SESSION COURSES!!!

MEETING 6: JUNE 7

CONTINUATION
MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT SUCCESSFUL, HAPPY MARRIAGES

WHY MARRIAGES FALTER

MEETING 7: JUNE 9

CONTINUATION
BE INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER’S WORLD
Gottman. “Principle 1: Enhance Your Love Maps,” in The Seven… (Chapter Three, 47-60).
MEETING 8: JUNE 14
IN-CLASS EXAM TWO on materials from May 26 through today; 75 minutes for exam
HONOR AND RESPECT EACH OTHER TO BUILD A REWARDING, LONG-LASTING ROMANCE
Gottman. “Principle 2: Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration,” in The Seven... (Chapter Four, 61-77).
BE EMOTIONALLY ENGAGED IN BEING CONNECTED AND INDEPENDENT
Gottman. “Principle 3: Turn toward Each Other Instead of Away,” in The Seven... (Chapter Five, 79-97).
SHARE MARITAL POWER AND RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER’S VIEWPOINTS
Gottman. “Principle 4: Let Your Partner Influence You,” in The Seven... (Chapter Six, 99-127).

MEETING 9: JUNE 16
CONTINUATION
CORRECTLY UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF YOUR CONFLICTS
Gottman. “The Two Kinds of Marital Conflict,” in The Seven... (Chapter Seven, 129-155).
STEPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP
Gottman. “Principle 5: Solve Your Solvable Problems,” in The Seven... (Chapter Eight, 157-185).

MEETING 10: JUNE 21
CONTINUATION
COPING WITH AND SOLVING THE RESOLVABLE
Gottman. “Coping with Typical Solvable Problems,” in The Seven... (Chapter Nine, 187-216).

MEETING 11: JUNE 23
CONTINUATION
IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND, AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S IMPORTANT DREAMS
BUILD DEEPER, RICHER, MORE REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS
Gottman. “Principle 7: Create Shared Meaning,” in The Seven... (Chapter Eleven, 243-258).
MAINTAIN MOMENTUM IN KEEPING YOUR RELATIONSHIP ON COURSE
Gottman. “Afterword: What Now?” in The Seven... (259-266).

IN-CLASS EXAM THREE on materials from June 14 through today (during last 75 minutes of class)
JUNE 23
!!!END OF THE FIRST SUMMER TERM!!!
AUGUST 17
!!!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. Typically, if you want a faculty member to give you special consideration due to your absence(s), it is essential that you inform her or him of your circumstances as soon as it is reasonably possible — preferably before the absence when circumstances permit. Whatever you do, do not wait until weeks later or the end of the term to request the consideration. 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 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: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/pdf/accommodations-policy-background.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 May 26th. You may withdraw from this course without permission of the instructor beginning the eleventh calendar day and continuing through the midpoint, 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 June 4th, you cannot withdraw for academic reasons after that date. 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 on the web 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 on the web 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.