COURSE OBJECTIVES

The focus of this course is on building and preserving successful, strong, healthy, and resilient families and secure, stable, warm, and open home environments to house 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 marriages and families, such as respectful, appreciative, and supportive family 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 how to recognize and apply them in our own lives, marriages, and families as an antidote to the negative images, messages, and emphases in our cultural. The course will emphasize the things couples and families do to provide for individual and family well-being amidst the many challenges facing families in contemporary society. This requires that we acquire an awareness and understanding of the workings of marriages and family systems that are strong, healthy, and resilient. Among other things already mentioned, we will study the importance to strong families of family history, traditions, and rituals; kinship bonds; intimacy; ethical, spiritual, and religious orientations; family stress; parental supervision and monitoring; and ways of reducing delinquency, youth violence, drug abuse.

Two other major objectives of the course is to help you discover, understand, and appreciate the importance and meaning of the physical and material environments of your home and the processes through which personal and family meaning is made and shared. As you come to understand the importance of the home’s physical and material environments, you will be prepared to integrate into your understanding of them the things we will have studied about strong and healthy families. This course is also a study of “meaning” —
what “meaning” is and what experiences, relationships, things, places, people, and your home and family environment “mean” to you. Finally, in the background of our study of strong homes and families is a concern for the kinds of communities in which our homes and families are embedded and how we need to plan for them in the present so we can strengthen our homes and families in the future.

REQUIRED READINGS

1. Many of the course readings are on “Electronic Reserve” at the Marriott Library General Reserve. The required readings on reserve are all those that are not in Gottman’s book (listed below). These readings are also available in printed form at the General Reserve Desk in the Marriott Library. Instructions pertinent to using the internet and “E-Reserve” can be found (1) on a separate page of information handed out in class, (2) at the end of the internet edition of the course syllabus (address listed above), and (3) at the following location on the internet: http://www.lib.utah.edu/circ/reserve/student.html.


RECOMMENDED BOOKS


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 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 EXAMS ARE SCHEDULED ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23; THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30; AND TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9.
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 (August 29), that includes your email address so that I can send course-related materials to you by email as they become available. The sooner you send me your address, the sooner I can send you lecture notes.

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.

- 93-100 = A
- 90-92.9 = A-
- 87-89.9 = B+
- 83-86.9 = B
- 80-82.9 = B-
- 77-79.9 = C+
- 73-76.9 = C
- 70-72.9 = C-
- 67-69.9 = D+
- 63-66.9 = D
- < 60 = E

REQUESTS for SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS by STUDENTS with DISABILITIES. Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted during the first week of the term along with the request for special accommodations. To do so, contact the Center for Disabled Student Services, located at 160 Union Building (phone 581-5020).

COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY. Each of you may formally withdraw from the course for academic reasons up through Friday, October 17. If you remain in the course after this date you cannot withdraw for academic reasons at any other time during the term. The current Course Schedule includes the following “Notice” regarding this matter:

You may petition the deadline for withdrawal if you have a nonacademic emergency. Submit a petition form and supporting documentation to the office of the dean of your academic college. Undeclared, nonmatriculated and premajor apply to the University College. You must submit the petition to the appropriate dean’s office by the last day of regular course instruction preceding the final exam period.

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 test scores using personally identifiable information (such as name or social security number) and the distribution of graded exams and assignments from a public area. If there arises a need to post grades or scores during the term, I will assign each student a random number or name or use an exam booklet I.D. number which will then be used for identification purposes.

INCOMPLETE POLICY. According to University policy, students must have completed 80% of the course requirements to be eligible for an “Incomplete” grade.
APPROPRIATE ACADEMIC CONDUCT. Avoid all forms of “academic dishonesty” (cheating, plagiarism, collusion, etc.). “Plagiarism” is the appropriation of any other person’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own work offered for credit. “Collusion” is the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for credit (see Article XI, Proscribed Conduct of the University of Utah Student Code, enacted in 1971, page 8.)

CLASS MEETINGS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The following time schedule is flexible with respect to timing of topics. Depending on class interests, we may spend more or less time on a topic. Exam and due dates can be taken seriously. All exam dates are in bold below.

[NOTE: LISTED DATES ARE FROM AUTUMN 2003 SEMESTER. THEY APPROXIMATE THE PLANNED SCHEDULE FOR AUTUMN 2004 SEMESTER. SOME MINOR DETAILS ABOUT ASSIGNED READINGS AND SOME ASSIGNMENTS MAY CHANGE BETWEEN SEMESTERS.]

Class Meeting 1: August 21
INTRODUCTION TO COURSE — STRENGTHENING HOMES AND FAMILIES; IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND SENSE OF ROOTS IN PEOPLE AND PLACE

Meetings 2, 3: August 26, 28
STRENGTHENING HOMES: PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING OF HOUSE AND HOME


AUGUST 29
!!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES!!!

SEPTEMBER 1
😊 LABOR DAY — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! 😊

SEPTEMBER 2
!!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO ADD COURSES!!!

Meetings 4, 5: September 2, 4
SYMBOLIC MEANING OF HOUSE, HOME, AND SELF


SEPTEMBER 5
!!!REMINDER: TUITION PAYMENT DUE!!!

Meetings 6, 7: September 9, 11
PSYCHOLOGICAL, SYMBOLIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SELF AND MATERIAL OBJECTS

http://ereserve.lib.utah.edu/ereserve/trms/annual/FCS/3600/Herrin/object.pdf
Meetings 8, 9: September 16, 18  SIGNIFICANCE OF FAMILY PROCESSES AND CONTEXT: PATTERNS, TRADITIONS, AND RITUALS

Meeting 10: September 23  EXAM ONE on materials through September 18

Meeting 11: September 25  IMPROVING OUR HOME ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN
http://ereserve.lib.utah.edu/ereserve/trms/annual/FCS/3600/Herrin/impli.pdf

Meeting 12: September 30  INTENTIONALLY PLANNING FOR STRONG FAMILIES

OCTOBER 2, 3  ☺ SEMESTER BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! ☺

Meetings 13, 14: October 7, 9  CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL, STRONG, AND HAPPY FAMILIES

Meetings 15, 16: October 14, 16  MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT SUCCESSFUL, HAPPY MARRIAGES

OCTOBER 17  !!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM TERM COURSES!!!

Meeting 17: October 21  WHY MARRIAGES FALTER

Meeting 18: October 23  BE INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER’S WORLD and HONOR AND RESPECT EACH OTHER TO BUILD A REWARDING, LONG-LASTING ROMANCE
Gottman. “Principle 1: Enhance Your Love Maps,” in *The Seven…* (Chapter Three, 47-60).
Meeting 19: October 28  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).

Meeting 20: October 30  EXAM TWO on materials from September 25 through October 28

Meetings 21, 22: November 4, 6  SHARE MARITAL POWER AND RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER’S VIEWPOINTS

Meeting 23: November 11  UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF YOUR CONFLICTS

Meeting 24: November 13  RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP

Meetings 25, 26: November 18, 20  COPING WITH AND SOLVING THE RESOLVABLE

Meetings 27, 28: Nov 25, Dec 2  IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND, AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S IMPORTANT DREAMS

NOVEMBER 27, 28 ☺ THANKSGIVING BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN! ☺

Meeting 29: December 4  BUILD DEEPER, RICHER, MORE MEANINGFUL AND REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS
Gottman. “Principle 7: Create Shared Meaning,” in *The Seven…* (Chapter Eleven, 243-258).

TUESDAY, December 9  EXAM THREE on materials from November 4 through December 4, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.