

HDF 212: Families and Close Relationships
Department of Human Development and Family Studies
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
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Blackboard Web Page

A web page for the course can be accessed through Blackboard, <http://blackboard.uncg.edu>. (Firefox is the recommended browser for BB.) This page contains a variety of information, including a copy of the syllabus, a course schedule, student grades, a discussion board for student-student communication, and links to study aids provided by the textbook publisher. In addition, students will find the assigned readings and the slides shown during lectures in the **LECTURES** folder along with practice quizzes and useful links to study aids provided by the textbook publisher. I plan to have PowerPoint presentations available for viewing and printing on the web page the day before each class. Some students may find it useful to print out the copies of the slides and bring them to class for ease in note-taking. Students are not required to do this, but it is an available option. Blackboard is designed to be a resource for students taking the class. The information provided on this site is meant to serve as a supplement, rather than an alternative, to regular class attendance and participation.

Required Readings

All readings (book chapters from a variety of textbooks) can be found under the **LECTURES** folder in Blackboard. You do not need to purchase a textbook for this class.

Course Description

This course is designed to examine the factors, processes and mechanisms that affect the development and maintenance of marital and familial relationships across the life course. The content of the course, based on current research and theory, emphasizes three primary influences on the development of close relationships: contextual, intrapersonal, and interpersonal factors. Throughout the course, we will (1) critically evaluate popular perceptions about families, (2)

seek to understand the relationship between families and the larger society that shapes them, and (3) explore how individuals subjectively experience the family and actively participate in the creation of family life.

Course Objectives

1. To critically evaluate popular perceptions of marriage and family relationships;
2. To provide an overview of theoretical and empirical work on marriage and family relationships;
3. To encourage students to recognize the diversity in the nature and developmental pathways of these relationships; and
4. To provide a framework for assessing the connections between interpersonal and familial relationships and the larger social context (e.g., cultural background, socioeconomic class, parents' work conditions).

Credit Hours

This is a 3 credit course and you are expected to spend, on average, about 6 hours outside of class each week in order to prepare and show mastery of the material. This is approximate and will depend on your level of preparation upon entering the course (introductory sociology and psychology courses will increase preparation).

Class Organization

Because this is a large class, we will primarily use a lecture/presentation format. Lectures will contain material not covered in the text and class input; questions and discussion will be welcomed, desired and encouraged. We consider you and your fellow students essential contributors to the class content and discussion. As the instructors, we contribute most as guides and resource persons. We are not the sole guardians of what you will learn in this course. Instead, we assume that you share equally in the learning process. This assumption requires that you attend class, pay attention and participate in class discussion and activities, complete all class assignments and exams, and read the assigned chapters. Mastery of the material will require review and study.

There are some useful study aids on the Wadsworth website for the Knox and Schacht (2005 & 2008) assigned readings. These aids include practice quizzes, flash cards, and questions to structure your thinking about the material.

The website is for the 2005, 8th edition is:

http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&discipline_number=14&subject_code=&product_isbn_issn=0534625231

The website for the 2008, 9th edition is:

http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&flag=student&product_isbn_issn=9780495091851&discipline_number=10

These web pages offer you a myriad of useful study aids. Please avail yourself to these resources. (You will find a direct link to these websites on BB in the LECTURES folder.)

Communication

1. I've created a discussion board in Blackboard for you to communicate with one another and use to help one another prepare for the exam and address the questions on the study guide.
2. If you have a specific question regarding an item on a quiz or exam, I ask that you take the following steps. First, go back to the chapter or notes first. This first step clarifies confusion in 85% of cases. If, after re-reading your notes and the book chapter you are still confused about why a particular answer was scored as correct for the item, email Dr. Helms. Please include the following in your email: a) the exam/quiz item in question, b) your specific concern about the item, c) supporting evidence from the book (include page numbers) or notes (include lecture date and topic) suggesting the item was scored incorrectly.
3. I encourage you to visit us during office hours and/or scheduled appointments. I am happy to help with study skills, exam preparation, suggestions for note-taking, questions about the HDFS major or careers in HDFS, and any concerns that may arise during the semester. I encourage you to visit after exams have been graded to review your exam. Given the size of the class, I suggest that you email us to set up a specific meeting time during office hours (or another time if the office hours are not convenient for you) to ensure our availability.
4. Email is the most efficient way to contact us. *If you have a general question about the course, we ask that you first check the syllabus to see if the answer to your question can be found there.* If the syllabus does not provide the answer, you should expect a response to your email question within 24 hours. If you haven't heard from us in 48 hours please email again. (Please note that due to class size, we cannot take the time to respond to questions that are already addressed in the syllabus. Please read your syllabus carefully.)

Course Policies

1. *Academic Integrity* is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Violating academic integrity is considered a serious offense by the university and is treated accordingly. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on exams, having unauthorized possession of exams, fabricating information or citations, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others, and submitting the work of another person as your own (plagiarism). Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the particular assignment or exam, a failing grade for the entire course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. We have a good website that outlines the UNCG academic integrity philosophy and procedures: <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

2. *University Sanctioned Activities*: Students who miss class due to participation in university-sanctioned activities must identify themselves prior to missing class and make arrangements to complete missed work. In addition, students must provide Dr. Helms with a copy of their travel schedule.

3. *Disability Accommodations*: If you need disability accommodations, please see Dr. Helms as soon as possible. All information regarding disabilities is confidential. If you need information about disability services at UNCG, please visit their website: <http://ods.dept.uncg.edu/>

4. *Emergencies*: If you have any emergency that interferes with your ability to complete the work in this course, please let one of us know immediately. If you cannot come for a scheduled appointment, please contact us ahead of time. Our office phone numbers and email addresses are listed on the front page.

5. *UNCG Support Services*: All of us need formal support services from time-to-time. UNCG offers excellent academic and mental health support services. Please take a look at their offerings at your earliest convenience and contact a support person if you are struggling academically and personally. You also might want to consider accessing these services if now is a time in your life when you can expend time and energy at increasing your social and academic competence. <http://www.uncg.edu/shs/ctc/counseling/>

6. *Classroom environment*: It is easy to feel anonymous in a large class and to forget that your behavior impacts those around you. It is our expectation that you will treat your classmates with respect via: arriving to class on time, participating in class discussion, listening to others comments attentively, turning off cell phones, and remaining in the classroom for the entire class period. Behaviors that are considered disruptive include arriving to class late, engaging neighbors in conversation, leaving and reentering class, leaving class early, texting, taking calls, or talking on your cell phone, surfing the net on your laptop, and so on. These behaviors keep you from paying attention, distract others around you and the professor, and are considered inappropriate.

Course Requirements

1. *Exams*: You will take a total of three exams in this class, consisting of multiple-choice, true/false, matching and short answer items. You will be tested on information presented during lectures, class discussions, media presentations, on-line assignments, and on your assigned readings. Each exam will be worth a total of 100 points and is *not* cumulative. Examination dates are noted in the course schedule below. **No make-up exams will be given, no exceptions**, so be sure to note the dates in your calendar, schedule travel arrangements, around them, and do not oversleep. If you miss an exam, you earn a 0.

2. *Bonus Points*: **You may earn up to 10 bonus points that will be added onto the points you earn on your exams prior to calculating your final grade.** Options for earning bonus points include the following:

(a) Photo and brief bio (2 points)

As a means of assisting us in learning names and faces, you may earn bonus points by submitting a recent photograph and a short biography (via Blackboard in the Online Assignments folder) that includes your name, home town, major, reason for taking HDF212 and/or coming to UNCG, and something about yourself that will help us remember you. *You must submit your bio prior to the first exam to earn the two points of extra credit.*

(b) Class attendance (earn up to 3 bonus points)

Attendance in class is expected and will improve your overall grade. *To earn 2 attendance points, students must attend class more than 90% of the time which means you can only miss two class periods.* For the 90% attendance bonus points, I will accept excused absences that are related to UNCG sanctioned activities, childcare emergencies, illness and health emergencies documented by a doctor, or death in the immediate family that can be documented. *Students who have perfect attendance with no excused absences (except for UNCG sanctioned activities like athletics, theatre, or conferences) will earn 3 attendance points.* Attendance points will be added at the end of the semester onto each student's point total. Attendance is taken by signing a daily sheet and students are responsible for making sure they are signed in. Students who are chronically late or who leave class early will be counted as absent. Any students signing for another student (or asking someone to sign them in) will receive a zero for attendance and be turned in for an academic integrity violation.

(d) Spring Break on-line activity quiz (earn up to 2.5 points)

Students completing the on-line quiz component of the spring break assignment by the assigned due date have the opportunity to earn up to 2.5 bonus points based on their performance on the on-line quiz. The on-line quiz has ten items, and each item is worth

.25 bonus points.

(e) On-line Parenting in Economic Context activity (earn up to 2.5 points)

Students who complete this activity and upload the accompanying written assignment in BB by the due date have the opportunity to earn up to 2.5 bonus points. This assignment will be graded and only well done assignments will receive the full points. Partial credit is possible but poorly completed written work will not be awarded bonus points.

Grading Summary

3 exams @ 100 points each = 300 total points

Bonus points = 10 points possible to be added on to total exam points earned at the end of the semester

Evaluation Scale (Percentage based)

97-100	A+
93-96.99	A
90-92.99	A-
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
77-79.99	C+
73-76.99	C
70-72.99	C-
67-69.99	D+
63-66.99	D
60-62.99	D-
less than 60	F

As illustrated in the above scale, partial scores are not rounded. For example, 79.5% is a C+, not a B-.

Calculating Your Current Grade

Here is how you calculate your grade at any given point. Create a sum of the total points you have earned to date on your exam/s. Now, add any bonus points you have earned to this number. This is your numerator. Next, calculate the total points possible for the exam/s you have taken to date (e.g., 200 points for 2 exams taken). This is your denominator. Now, divide your total points earned (the numerator) by the total number of possible exam points (the denominator). This is your percent. Identify your current grade using the grading scale presented above.

Class Schedule

January	11	Overview and Introduction
	13	The Changing Nature of the American Family Reading assignment: Knox & Schacht , 2005 Chpt. 1 (pp. 1-18)
	18	Topic Continued
	20	Theoretical Approaches to Understanding Families Reading assignment: Knox & Schacht , 2005 Chpt. 1 (19-30)
	25	Topic Continued
	27	Beginning Relationships: Love and Intimacy Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2005 Chpt. 3
February	1	Topic Continued
	3	Gender Roles in Relationships Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2005 Chpt. 2
	8	Dating and Cohabitation
	10	Topic Continued Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2005 Chpt. 4
	15	EXAM ONE
	17	Sexuality and Relationships Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2008 Chpt. 5
	22	Topic Continued
	24	Partner Selection Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2005 Chpt. 7
March	1	Topic Continued
	3	Marriage Reading Assignment: Sheehan, 2003 Chpt.7 (pages 191-205)

SPRING BREAK (WEEK OF MARCH 8TH AND 10TH)
****Spring Break Bonus Point Homework Assignment****

- (Marriage Preparation ON-LINE ACTIVITY)
- 15 Marital Communication & Conflict
Reading Assignment: Sheehan, 2003 Chpt. 7 (pages 206 – 231)
- 17 Marital Communication Continued
- 22 Intimate Violence
Reading Assignment: Miller & Perlman, 2008 Chpt. 12 (pages 374 – 386 only)
- 24 Becoming a Parent
- 29 EXAM TWO**
- 31 Parenting
Reading Assignment: Sheehan, 2003 Chpt. 10
- April 5 Topic Continued
- 7 Diversity in Parenting
Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht, 2010, Chpt. 8 (pages 263-272 only)
- 12 Topic Continued
- 14 Parenting and Divorce
Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht 2005, Chpt. 15
- 19 Remarriage
Reading Assignment: Knox & Schacht 2005, Chpt. 16
- 21 Parenting in Economic Context*
Reading Assignment: Seccombe, 2008 Chpt. 11
***ON-LINE ACTIVITY (no class session)**
Due via BB upload no later than 4/26, 11am
- 26 **No class (university follows Friday schedule)**
- 28 EXAM THREE (Finals Week) 12 Noon, Stone 142**

Note: We reserve the right to change the syllabus as necessary. You are responsible for all changes to the syllabus and all information presented during class time, regardless of whether or not you attended class.