

**HDFS 212**  
**Families and Close Relationships**  
**Spring, 2006**

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**Credit Hours:** This is a 3 credit course and you are expected to spend, on average, about 9 hours outside of class each week in order to prepare and show mastery. This is approximate and will depend on your level of preparation upon entering the course (introductory sociology and psychology courses will increase preparation).

**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:00-1:00 and by appointment. I'm happy to spend as much time with you as you need.

**Catalog Description:** Intrapersonal and interpersonal processes in the development and maintenance of families and close relationships over time.

**Communication:** I've created four discussion boards in Blackboard – one for questions/comments regarding the readings, one for questions/comments regarding material presented and discussed in class, one for procedural questions regarding exams, quizzes, and extra credit assignments, and one for you to use to help one another with answers to the study guide (I don't provide responses to the study guides unless there has been a dialog on this discussion board related to the particular topic). Please use these for content questions and comments. The website is <http://blackboard.uncg.edu>. My goal is to have the power point slides for each lecture available to you a day before the lecture. You might find it useful to print these before class and use them to structure your note-taking. The website is designed to be a resource for you. It is a supplement to class attendance rather than an alternative.

**Important:** Please read this syllabus carefully and review it before you e-mail me with questions that can be answered with the material I've prepared in this document.

### **Course Purpose and Connection to Curriculum**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with key concepts and elementary principles of familial patterns and process across the life course. The material is selected from current research and theory in family studies. This is an introductory course and focuses primarily on knowledge, comprehension, and application levels of understanding salient aspects of family life in contemporary culture. This is an important prerequisite to the advanced courses in family studies. The instructors in these advanced courses expect that you begin their course with a good elementary understanding of central concepts and principles of family life.

### **Our University Context and Contribution**

**UNCG Vision 2008 (taken from The UNCG Plan 2003-2008)**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is a diverse, student-centered research university, linking the Triad and North Carolina to the world through learning, discovery, and service.

This course contributes to this vision via learning about family patterns and processes. Learning is embedded in an understanding of family within the context of community and society.

### **UNCG Core Values (taken from The UNCG Plan 2003-2008)**

Our core values are:

- A spirit of inquiry
- A record of excellence
- A diverse community
- Internationalization
- Accountability

We will honor these values as we work together in this course.

### **HES Vision**

The School of Human Environmental Sciences, as a nationally recognized teaching, research, and outreach institution, strives to improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities at large. The school website is <http://www.uncg.edu/hes/>.

One goal of the college is to “achieve a strong sense of intellectual community.” We will support this idea by learning how to think about family abstractly and then to use this perspective to inform our understanding of family patterns and processes within a diverse community context.

### **Teachers Academy Conceptual Framework Mission Statement**

The mission of professional education at UNCG is to prepare and support the professional development of caring, collaborative, and competent educators who work in diverse settings. This mission is carried out in an environment that nurtures the active engagement of all participants, values individual as well as cultural diversity and recognizes the importance of reflection and integration of theory and practice. UNCG's professional education programs are guided by shared commitments to: (a) equity and excellence in teaching, research, and service; (b) professional integrity and ethical deliberation in dealing with students and colleagues (university-based, school-based, and community-based); (c) the construction of a professional knowledge base through collaboration and collegiality; and (d) the dissemination of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions through the preparation and continuing professional development of teachers, principals and other school personnel.

The Department of Human Development and Family Studies has a lot to offer you. Please visit our website to find out about the majors we offer and the work faculty members are doing. The department website is <http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/>.

My major research area is the study of how family life affects the transition from childhood to adolescence. I also study family foster care. For more information about my research please see the following websites:

[http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/hdfs\\_faculty/cheryl\\_buehler/cbinfo.htm](http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/hdfs_faculty/cheryl_buehler/cbinfo.htm)

<http://web.utk.edu/~famlife/home.htm>

## Course Goals

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and define 90 central concepts that detail an understanding of family patterns and processes.
2. Describe the socioeconomic and cultural context of most of these identified concepts.
3. Identify and describe briefly 20 major findings from research on family life and close relationships.
4. Describe how knowledge about family life in our culture is created and sustained and how this knowledge is similar to and different from values about family life.

## Required Materials

### Required Reading

Schacht, C., & Knox, D. (2005). *Choices in relationships: An introduction to marriage and the family*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. Eighth edition. ISBN 0-534-61491-4. **There are other versions of this text available but you must have the eighth edition with the above ISBN.**

## Class Organization

This is a large class and so I will use primarily a lecture and presentation format. Please feel free to ask questions about the material (during class and using the discussion boards in blackboard). Also provide me with feedback about the course organization so that you can learn the material. I want to teach well and want to provide a good learning environment so that you can learn the material well. Please help me to do that. We are in this together and I am committed to your learning process.

Attendance and class preparation are expected. Preparation includes reading the textbook carefully. Mastery of the material will require review and study. There are some useful study aids on the Wadsworth website. These aids include practice quizzes, flash cards, and questions to structure your thinking about the material. The website is

[http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course\\_products\\_wp.pl?fid=M80&discipline\\_number=14&subject\\_code=SO19](http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M80&discipline_number=14&subject_code=SO19)

This url brings you to a page that lists several textbooks. Look for the first one listed. It's by David Knox and Caroline Schacht. Then, click on the part that is labeled "Student Book Companion Site." This webpage offers you with a myriad of useful study aids. Please avail yourself to these resources.

## Course Policies

### Academic Integrity

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. Please take a look at this at your earliest convenience:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/>

## 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, you must provide me with a copy of your travel schedule.

## Disability Accommodations

If you need disability accommodations, please see me 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/>

## Emergencies

If you have any emergency that interferes with your ability to complete the work in this course, please let me know immediately (and we can arrange for an "I" if you are in good academic standing). If you cannot come for a scheduled appointment, please contact me ahead of time. The office phone numbers and email addresses are listed on the front page.

## 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 in which you can expend time and energy at increasing your social and academic competence.

<http://success.uncg.edu/sss/links/>

## Course Requirements

### Exams

There will be 4 exams. Each exam that covers 3 chapters of material will be worth about 47 points, give or take 4 points. Each exam that covers 4 chapters of material will be worth 60 points, give or take 4 points. Most questions are multiple choice. You will be tested on information presented during lectures, class discussions, media presentations, and on material presented in the textbook. **No make-up exams will be given. No exceptions.** Your lowest exam score will be dropped. As such, if you miss an exam this score of "0" will be the one that is dropped. The total number of course points for the exams will be 170, give or take 10 points.

## Quizzes

There will be 10 unannounced quizzes, given at random during the term. In order to be fair to all students, I will not let you know whether we are having a quiz on any given day. Each will be worth 5 points and will focus on the assigned reading for that day. **No make-up quizzes will be given. No exceptions.** Your lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped (including any zeros for missed quizzes). The total number of course points for the quizzes is 40. At least two quiz questions are taken from the quiz tutorial from Wadsworth.com for each quiz. You will do **much** better if you review these carefully before class.

## Extra Credit

There will be two types of extra credit assignments. One is based on providing a 3-minute well-organized verbal summary of the key points of the previous class period. This will be worth a maximum of 5 points (5 “excellent” summary, 4 “good” summary, 3 “adequate” summary). Students will sign up for this opportunity during the second class period of the term. There is a limit of one sign-up per student.

The second type of opportunity involves reading an article and writing a 2 page (double spaced) essay. These opportunities will be described in class and the product will be due within a week. No late extra credit work will be accepted and it must be turned in during class. No e-mailed extra-credit work will be accepted. There will be three essay opportunities and each will be worth a maximum of 7 points.

## 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+.

## Calculating Your Current Grade

**The total score for your points and the total points for the course are NOT correct in Blackboard and so I will mask this information.** Here is how you calculate your grade at any given point. Create a sum of your total points in the course, including quiz scores you plan to count (e.g., 5 of 6 quizzes we have had), exam scores you plan to count (e.g., 2 of 3 exams we have had), and your

extra credit points. This is your numerator. Next, calculate the total points possible for the quizzes and exams you are including (e.g., 25 points for the 5 quizzes and the total number of exam points on the 2 exams you are including). This is your denominator. Now, divide your total points earned (the numerator) by the total number of possible points on those included evaluation mechanisms (the denominator). This is your percent. Use this percent to identify your current grade using the grading scale presented on the previous page.

At the end of the term, your grade is calculated using 3 exam scores, 8 quiz scores, and any points you've earned doing extra credit assignments.

### **Note**

The syllabus will be changed as needed. You are responsible for all changes to the syllabus and all information presented during class time, regardless of whether or not you attend class. Revised syllabi will be posted on Blackboard and these postings will be announced in class, as well as posted on Blackboard in the Announcement section.

## **Course Schedule**

### **January 10**

Introduction to course  
What is a family?  
Chapter 1 – Choices in Relationships: An Introduction

### **January 12**

Chapter 1 – Choices in Relationships: An Introduction

### **January 17**

Chapter 1 -- Choices in Relationships: An Introduction

### **January 19**

Chapter 2 – Gender in Relationships

### **January 24**

Chapter 2 – Gender in Relationships

### **January 26**

Chapter 3 – Love in Relationships

### **January 31**

Chapter 4 – Hanging Out, Pairing off, and Cohabitation

### **February 2**

Chapter 4 – Hanging Out, Pairing off, and Cohabitation

**February 7**

Exam #1 – Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

**February 9**

Chapter 5 – Sexuality in Relationships –

**February 14**

Chapter 6 – Singlehood and Same-sex Relationships (Lifestyle Diversity)

**February 16**

Chapter 6 – Singlehood and Same-sex Relationships (Lifestyle Diversity)

**February 21**

Chapter 7 – Mate Selection

**February 23**

Chapter 8 – Marriage Relationships

**February 28**

Chapter 8 – Marriage Relationships

**March 2**

Exam #2 - Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8

**March 4**

Chapter 9 – Communication in Relationships

**March 14**

Chapter 9 – Communication in Relationships

**March 16**

Chapter 11 – Parenting

**March 21**

Chapter 11 – Parenting

**March 23**

Chapter 12 – Balancing Work and Family Life

**March 28**

Special Topic 3 – Money and Debt Management in Marriage

**March 30**

Exam #3 – Chapters 9, 11, 12, special topic 3

**April 4**

Chapter 14 – Violence and Abuse in Relationships

**April 6**

Chapter 14 – Violence and Abuse in Relationships

**April 11**

Chapter 15 – Divorce

**April 13**

Chapter 15 – Divorce

**April 18**

Chapter 16 – Remarriage and Stepfamilies

**April 20**

Chapter 16 – Remarriage and Stepfamilies

**April 25**

Chapter 16 – Remarriage and Stepfamilies

**April 27**

Exam #4 Chapters 14, 15, 16