Course: Family Psychology, HCS 7311, 3 credits, Spring '14
Professor: Dr. Jackie Nelson
Meetings: GR 4.209, Mondays 1:00pm-3:45pm

Dr. Nelson’s Contact Information
Office Phone: 972-883-4478
Office Location: GR 4.822
Email Address: Jackie.Nelson@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: T/Th 12:15-1:15pm or by appointment

General Course Information
Course Description: This seminar course is designed to provide an interdisciplinary introduction to issues pertaining to family psychology. Weekly topics on central relationships and processes within the family will expose students to important theoretical frameworks, literature reviews, empirical research, and various methods employed to study families. Students will evaluate research findings through class discussion, leadership activities, and final papers.

Learning Objectives:
Students will demonstrate:
1. An understanding of family theory.
2. The ability to integrate across research studies, critically evaluate findings, and reflect on applied implications.
3. The skills to compile, critique, compare, contrast, and extend research on a specific topic of their choosing within family psychology.
4. The ability to present their work in a professional format.

Required Readings: There is no required textbook for this course. Readings in the form of articles and book chapters will be made available in PDF format on the course eLearning page. You will need all readings available to participate in class discussion; please print them or bring a laptop to view them.

Course Schedule
1/13 Course Introduction

1/20 NO CLASS FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Day

1/27 Family Theory

2/3 Forming Partnerships

2/10 Cohabitation

2/17
Families Outside of Marriage

2/24
Same-sex Families
(1st paper update due)

3/3
Marriage

3/10
NO CLASS FOR SPRING BREAK

3/17
Transition to Parenthood

3/24
Parenting


3/31

**Work and Family**


4/7

**Family Stress**


4/14

**Family Conflict and Violence**


4/21

**Divorce and Remarriage**


4/28 Presentations

TBA Presentations (UTD final exam period)

**Assignments**

Weekly reading assignments and class participation (25% of final grade)

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments prior to class and consistently contribute to discussions each week with questions and comments. Weekly contributions will be tracked by the instructors. Comments should focus on research, theory, and application, rather than personal anecdotes.

Leader contributions (15% of final grade combined)

Each student will sign up for one class period where (s)he is in charge of providing additional contributions to the discussion for the last 30 min of class. Leaders should 1) emphasize integration across the week’s assigned articles and “take home” points on the topic to wrap up our class discussion, and 2) present additional information on the topic that builds on the class discussion. Leaders may wish to present findings from another research article that adds to our understand, provides contradictory evidence, or answers a question posed by one of the week’s articles. Or leaders may wish to focus on the applied side of the topic by presenting information and initiating discussion about clinical relevance and family policy, or demonstrating how the topic’s message is translated, either accurately or inaccurately, to popular press with examples. Leaders must email Dr. Nelson with their plans by the Friday prior to their presentation at noon; approval notifications will be returned by 5pm.

Two paper updates (10% of final grade combined)

Students will turn in two updates to the instructor regarding their progress on their final paper. The 1st update will be due on **Mon, Feb 24**th. At this time, students will submit a description of their topic and their research question(s). The 2nd update will be due on **Mon, March 31**th, and will include an outline of the paper and preliminary reference list with at least 5 relevant sources.

Final paper (40% of final grade)

The final paper will be an APA-style manuscript introduction with proposed research questions and hypotheses on a topic related to family psychology. Papers can range in length from 6 to 8 pages, excluding references. Students are expected to work independently and with academic integrity (i.e., no plagiarism), and turn in their paper through eLearning’s Turn-It-In function. Final papers are due on the last day of class, **Mon, April 28**th.

Project presentation (10% of final grade)

Each student will present his/her research proposal to the class on either **April 28**th or the designated final exam date (TBA). This should be a brief, conference-style presentation of the background literature and research questions. Presentations should be limited to no more than 8 minutes.

**Grading**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader Contributions</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Update #1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Project Update #2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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A: 93-100%, A-: 90-92%, B+: 87-89%, B: 83-86%, B-: 80-82%, C+: 77-79%, C: 73-76%, C-: 70-72%, D+: 67-69%, D: 63-66%, D-: 60-62%, F: 59% or less

**Late Work**

Late work will only be accepted up to 48 hours after the deadline (includes weekends and holidays). 10% will be deducted for each day the assignment is late.

**Class Attendance**
In order to learn the concepts and engage in class discussions, students must attend class. Missing 3 classes or more (>20% of the course) will result in an Incomplete (if documentation is available for all absences), or an F.

### University Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Conduct and Discipline</th>
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<tr>
<td>The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, A to Z Guide, which is provided to all registered students each academic year. The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, and to TTV, Rules on Student Services, and Activities of the university’s Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <a href="http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html">http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html</a>. A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents’ Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.</td>
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<td>The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers from other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university’s policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.</td>
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<td>The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student’s U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their UTD email forwarded to other accounts.</td>
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<td>This section of this catalog has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of &quot;F&quot; in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.</td>
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<td>Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university’s Handbook of Operating Procedures. In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called “the respondent”). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent’s School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean’s decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the deal will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.</td>
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<td>As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester’s end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.</td>
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<td>The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities equal educational opportunities. Disability Services provides students with a documented letter to present to the faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. It is the student’s responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for accommodation. If accommodations are granted for testing accommodations, the student should inform the instructor five days before the exam of any testing accommodations that will be needed. Disability Services is located in Room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You may reach Disability Services at (972) 883-2098. Guidelines for documentation are located on the Disability Services website at <a href="http://www.utdallas.edu/disability/disability/documentation/index.html">http://www.utdallas.edu/disability/disability/documentation/index.html</a>.</td>
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<td>The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated. The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment. If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.</td>
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*These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*