



Course Marriage and Family Psychology, CLDP/PSY 4347.001, 3 credits, Fall 2016
Professor Dr. Jackie Nelson
Meetings GR 4.301, Mon & Wed 2:30pm-3:45pm
Undergraduate TA Taryn Colgrove (tbc150130@utdallas.edu)

Dr. Nelson’s Contact Information

Office Phone 972-883-4478 **Email Address** Jackie.Nelson@utdallas.edu
Office Location GR 4.822 **Office Hours** M/W 12:45pm-1:45pm or by appointment

General Course Information

Course Description The purpose of this course is to give students a broad overview of theories and research relevant to close relationships. We will examine key concepts, themes, strengths, and challenges faced by individuals throughout the life-course beginning with relationship formation and ending with family relationships in later life. Information presented and discussed will be grounded in peer-reviewed scientific research findings. Diversity in relationships will be a persistent focus of the course, along with the micro- and macro-level contextual influences on families.

Students will demonstrate:

- Learning Objectives**
1. *Knowledge of major theoretical perspectives of families and close relationships.*
 2. Knowledge of the history, trends, and controversial issues in the field of family psychology.
 3. *The ability to recognize and think critically about the methods involved in scientific research.*
 4. An understanding of the diverse contexts individuals experience and how various aspects of diversity influence family processes and development.
 5. *Use of critical thinking to evaluate popular media and family psychology research.*
 6. The ability to apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings to everyday life.
 7. Recognition that families shape and are shaped by many environments.
 8. Understanding of the multiple roles and characteristics of individuals that affect family dynamics
 9. Appreciation of attitudes that focus on strengths of families rather than emphasize weaknesses.
 10. *Knowledge of how psychology informs federal and state legislation affecting families.*
- (Program-level objectives italicized)*

Required Text Seccombe, K. (2014). *Exploring Marriages & Families*, 2nd edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (available at the UTD bookstore, Off-Campus Books, Stanza Textbooks, and online)

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
Aug 22	What is a family?	Ch 1
Aug 24	Theory and research on families	Ch 1
Aug 29	Social status and families	Ch 2
Aug 31	Social status continued	Ch 2
No Class on 9/5 for Labor Day		
Sept 7	Friendship and dating	Ch 3
Sept 12	Cohabitation and love	Ch 3-4
Sept 14	Love continued	Ch 4
Sept 19	Exam 1	
Sept 21	Sexuality	Ch 5
Sept 26	Communication in relationships	Ch 6
Sept 28	Conflict and power	Ch 6
Oct 3	Marriage	Ch 7
Oct 5	Marriage continued	Ch 7
Oct 10	Fertility	Ch 8
Oct 12	Paths and transitions to parenthood	Ch 8
Oct 17	Exam 2	
Oct 19	Parenting	Ch 9
Oct 24	Parenting continued	Ch 9
Oct 26	Work and families	Ch 10

Oct 31	Work continued	Ch 10
Nov 2	Family stress	Ch 11
Nov 7	Violence and abuse	Ch 11
Nov 9	Exam 3	
Nov 14	Divorce	Ch 12
Nov 16	Remarriage	Ch 13
No Class 11/21 and 11/23 for Fall Break		
Nov 28	Families in middle & later life	Ch 14
Nov 30	Families and public policies	Ch 15
Dec 5	Public policies continued	Ch 15
Dec 7	Exam 4	

Assignments	<p><u>Exams</u>: Exams will consist of multiple choice questions (bring scantron 229630 on test day). They are not cumulative. Exams will draw from lectures, content covered in the text, and additional readings and class activities. There will be 4 exams given, 3 of which will count toward the final grade. The student's lowest grade from the 4 exams will be dropped. Exams are each worth 50 pts, for a combined 67% of your final grade.</p> <p><u>Writing reflections</u>: Take-home and pop in-class writing assignments will ask students to write about an issue from class. Each reflection is worth 10 pts. Students will be graded on their ability to thoughtfully integrate and apply ideas from class. The grading rubric and an example are on eLearning. The lowest grade will be dropped; all others will count toward the final grade worth a combined 50 pts.</p> <p><u>In-class activities</u>: Pop in-class activities will be graded for participation. Students will only receive credit if they are present at the start of the activity. Activities are worth 5 pts each. The lowest grade will be dropped; all others will count toward the final grade worth a combined 25 pts.</p>												
Grading Criteria	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">A: 93-100%, A-: 90-92%,</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Exam 1.....50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B+: 87-89%, B: 83-86%, B-: 80-82%,</td> <td>Exam 2.....50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C+: 77-79%, C: 73-76%, C-: 70-72%,</td> <td>Exam 3.....50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D+: 67-69%, D: 63-66%, D-: 60-62%,</td> <td>Writing reflections.....50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F: 59% or less</td> <td>In-class activities 25</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Total.....225</td> </tr> </table>	A: 93-100%, A-: 90-92%,	Exam 1.....50	B+: 87-89%, B: 83-86%, B-: 80-82%,	Exam 2.....50	C+: 77-79%, C: 73-76%, C-: 70-72%,	Exam 3.....50	D+: 67-69%, D: 63-66%, D-: 60-62%,	Writing reflections.....50	F: 59% or less	In-class activities 25		Total.....225
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Instructor Expectations	In order to ensure a safe and productive learning environment, students are expected to come to class prepared. This involves doing the assigned reading, avoiding chit-chat during lectures or films, being respectful to other students, arriving on time with cell phones turned off, engaging in appropriate laptop behavior (class PowerPoints, note-taking, and eLearning only), and being alert and attentive. Students will likely have strong opinions about many of the issues covered in the course. While all should feel comfortable sharing their perspectives, statements that could be interpreted as offensive or discriminatory have no place in this classroom and will not be tolerated.												
Student Support	You can email Dr. Nelson or Ms. Colgrove with questions about the course, or visit Dr. Nelson during office hours. Questions regarding grades should only be addressed to Dr. Nelson. Ms. Colgrove will hold a review session prior to each exam and will respond to posts on the eLearning discussion board.												
Make-up Assignments	Make-up exams, reflections, and activities will not be offered. Unexcused and excused absences (including school-sponsored events) are treated the same. In all cases, students will use their drops. In extremely rare circumstances, a makeup may be given at the instructor's discretion if absences exceed the number of drops and verified documentation is provided for all absences. The time limit on make-ups is 3 weeks.												
Late Work	Take-home writing assignments will be deducted 10% (one letter grade) for each 24hr period after the deadline that they are late, including weekends and holidays.												
Class Attendance	In order to learn the concepts and engage in class activities, students must attend class. Attendance will be graded through pop in-class assignments. Attendance will also affect your performance on exams and other assignments given much of the material that is covered in lecture goes beyond what is included in assigned readings. Lecture notes will not be provided by the instructor under any circumstance.												
Academic Integrity	The U.T. Dallas 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												

	<p>student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. 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 for 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).</p>
Comet Creed	<p>This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: <i>"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."</i></p>
AccessAbility Services	<p>It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with your professor and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 3.200. They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.</p>
UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures	<p>The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for these policies.</p>

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.