

Psychology 473/573: Marriage and Family Therapy

Winter 2010

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Note that I am not available by phone or email after hours or on weekends.

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Course Description and Goals

Welcome to Marriage and Family Therapy! This course provides undergraduates with an upper division introduction to the academic and scientific study of couples, families, and intimate relationships. The course material draws heavily from both social and clinical psychology (as well as sociology, communication, and family studies), and provides an important foundation in relationship science for those interested in pursuing advanced training in couple and family therapy and/or couples research.

Course Pre-Requisite

Successful completion of Psychology 303 (Research Methods) is a pre-requisite for this course. Much of the content of the course comes from empirical research on couples and families, thus a basic understanding of research methodology is important for understanding the material and completing required assignments. Students who have not successfully completed Psychology 303 should not be registered for the course.

Required Textbook

Miller & Perlman (2009). Intimate Relationships, 5th edition, McGraw-Hill.

Course Components and Requirements

Class meetings: Class meetings will include traditional lectures, videos, and brief writing or discussion activities. Material covered in class may include a review of some material from the assigned reading, as well as elaborations on topics covered in the reading. Lectures may also include additional topics not included in the assigned readings. Therefore, it is important that students attend class, take careful notes, and study the assigned readings. Lecture slides for each topic will be available prior to the lecture on the course Blackboard site. You should bring the slides with you to class in whatever form you find easiest for taking notes, and fill them in with additional details and examples from the lecture. In-class activities will be worth 1 point each and students must be present for the entire class and participate in the entire activity to be eligible to earn these points. They cannot be made-up for any reason. Students are expected to

arrive for class on time, stay for the entire allotted time, and to behave in a manner that does not disrupt the learning of others.

Exams: Mastery of the course content presented in the readings and class meetings will be assessed with 3 multiple choice exams. You should not expect that one reading of the assigned material will adequately prepare you for exams. You should create your own study materials from the reading in whatever format is most useful to you (e.g., chapter outlines, notes, flashcards of concepts, etc.), and allow sufficient time to carefully review and study those materials along with your lecture notes before the exams. The first two exams will be spaced evenly throughout the term, and the third exam is a non-comprehensive exam scheduled by the university during finals week. Only 2 of the 3 exam scores will count toward your course grade. Your lowest of the 3 exam scores will be dropped. If you miss an exam for any reason (illness, university sponsored activities or athletics, family emergencies, work conflicts, early departure during finals week, etc.), that will be counted as your dropped exam score. **Thus, make-up exams will not be scheduled.** It would be best to plan to take all 3 exams (as you never know when something unexpected might result in a missed exam), and use your lowest score as your dropped score.

Discussion Boards: Students will become familiar with current empirical literature on the study of couples and relationships by reading selected journal articles and participating in discussion board activities (on Blackboard) with other students in the class. There will be a discussion board activity in the first half of the term (Jan. 29- Feb. 5), and a second during the latter half of the term (Mar. 5- Mar. 12). For each discussion board, you will select a topic from those provided on the Blackboard website for the course, read the associated articles (also available on Blackboard) and contribute a post during the open time-frame for that discussion board. A successful post to the discussion is clear, thoughtful, conveys an understanding of the associated material presented in the articles, and raises a new issue or question that prompts further discussion. When formulating your posts, you should use the content in the readings to think critically and synthesize the information. Posts should be based on the readings, and extend beyond the points made by the author of the assigned work. You must review the posts made by peers prior to your contribution. These posts should inform your own discussion points, and thus cannot solely be a different way of wording a similar point made by someone else. Grading for participation in the discussion boards is 'all or none'. If you have posted at least one day in advance of the deadline for a discussion board and your post does not meet the grading criteria for a successful post, you may post again before the deadline to earn participation credit. However, a 'second try' post (assuming it is successful the second time) will earn fewer points than a successful first posting. More details regarding criteria for successful posts to the discussion board, as well as examples of successful posts will be available on Blackboard. A completed posting meeting the above criteria is worth 5 points (or 3 points if it is a second-try). Thus, across the two discussion board activities you can earn a total of 10 points. Scores for completed posts will be available on Blackboard.

Term Paper (Psy 573 Students Only): Students registered for Psy 573 must complete all requirements listed above, as well as a term paper reviewing recent theory and empirical research on a topic related to couples and/or families. Topics must be approved by the instructor before Jan. 19. Papers should be 10-15 pages of double-spaced text, with APA style references and

formatting. The paper will be graded out of a total of 50 points. Grades will be based on content, writing quality, and formatting. **The paper is due on or before the last class meeting (March 11). Late papers will be penalized 10% per calendar day past due.**

Grading

Exams: Best 2 of 3 scores	35 points each (70 points total)
Journal Article Discussion Boards:	5 points each (10 points total)
Class Activities:	1 point each
Term Paper (Psy 573 ONLY):	50 points

Course Grades

Your grade for the course will be based on the percentage of points earned from the maximum points possible.

A+ 100%	B- 80-81%	D 62-68%
A 92-99%	C+ 79%	D- 60-61%
A- 90-91%	C 72-78%	F < 59
B+ 89%	C- 70-71%	
B 82-88%	D+ 69%	

Learning Accommodations

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of this course that create disability related barriers to your participation. If you have a documented disability, please provide your notification letter and meet with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations. Students without a documented disability who are experiencing learning difficulties are encouraged to consult Disability Services (<http://ds.uoregon.edu/>) in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu. In addition, tutoring services and study skills training are available through the University Teaching and Learning Center (68 PLC; 346-3226; <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/>).

Academic Honesty

Members of the university community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. To falsify the results of one's research, to present the words, ideas, data, or work of another as one's own, or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. It is the official policy of the University of Oregon that all acts of alleged academic dishonesty by students be reported to the Director of Student Judicial Affairs in the Office of Students Life.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading & Other Assignments	
1/5	Introduction to Course	Syllabus	
1/7	Marriage and Family Through the Lens of History	Ch. 1	
1/12	Men and Women in Heterosexual Relationships	Ch. 1	
1/14	Gay and Lesbian Couples and Families	Ch. 8	
1/19	Common Developmental Changes in Relationships:	Ch. 8	
1/21	Interdependency	Ch. 6	
1/26	Interdependency	Ch. 6	
1/28	Exam 1 (Ch. 1, 8, 6 & Lecture)		
2/2	Sexual Dysfunctions	Ch. 9	Discussion Board #1 (1/29-2/5)
2/4	Infidelity	Ch. 9	
2/9	Conflict and Communication Skills	Ch. 5 & 11	
2/11	No Class		
2/16	Love & Marriage: Real Journeys	Ch. 5 & 11	
2/18	Love & Marriage: Real Journeys	Ch. 5 & 11	
2/23	Exam 2 (Ch. 9, 5, 11 & Lecture)		
2/25	Relationship Violence	Ch. 12	
3/2	Behavioral and Cognitive Behavioral Couple Therapy	Ch. 14	
3/4	Behavioral and Cognitive Behavioral Couple Therapy	Ch. 14	
3/9	Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy	Ch. 14	Discussion Board #2 (3/5-3/12)
3/11	Divorce	Ch. 13	
3/18 (Thursday)	Exam 3 (Ch. 12, 14, 13 & Lecture) 8:00 am		