

Family Psychology
FSOS 4104W.001
Fall 2014

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Class Meetings: Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:45-10am, McNeal Hall, Room 10

Prerequisites: At least a junior or instructor consent; meets Lib Ed requirement of Writing Intensive

Required Readings: Walsh (2012). *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity*. (4th ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

This text is available at the University bookstore. Additional required readings will be posted on Moodle. Required readings for each class are listed on the course schedule. Students **MUST** complete the readings **BEFORE** class. Doing so will facilitate your understanding of the lecture and contribute to class discussion.

Required technology: Students must have internet access for the course Moodle site as well as for a variety of course assignments and activities.

Description/Objectives:

- To describe how the field of family psychology differs from individual psychology
- To develop skills in reading and critiquing research articles in academic journals
- To write critically about family systems and other relational dynamics
- Synthesize theory and scholarly evidence to defend a thesis
- Recognize and appreciate the ways diversity affects family psychology research and clinical practice

Writing Intensive:

This is a writing intensive course. Family psychology takes place in the landscape of written language. Family clinicians use their knowledge of family theory and research when documenting care with clients. Family educators synthesize and translate research for practical use by parents, teachers, and policy makers. Family social scientists produce research reports to move the field forward, informing practice and family life. In each situation, writing is tailored to an intended audience with a specific purpose. This course has a variety of formal and informal writing assignments. Writing is a process that requires feedback and revision.

It is expected that all written assignments will be typed and proofread before they are turned in for evaluation. All work must be done using APA (6th ed.) style. We will discuss elements of APA style in class, but you must have access to the most recent style manual for this course. This website is also a resource: <http://www.apastyle.org>

The skill of writing will be discussed throughout the course, but you are strongly encouraged to visit the U of MN Center for Writing – Student Writing Support program at <http://writing.umn.edu/sws/> or call 612-625-1893. The Center has excellent face-to-face writing consultation services as well as extensive writing resources, including a writing guide, planning tool, grammar tips, and more. Consulting is available by appointment online and in Nicholson Hall, and on a walk-in basis in Appleby Hall.

For students for whom English is a second language, I strongly urge you to make arrangements early in the semester to have regular meetings with personnel in the writing center to ensure you have the help you need to be successful with this course.

Course Expectations

1. Attend class. You are responsible for information a. presented in class, b. contained in the syllabus and class schedule and c. posted on Moodle. If you must miss class, contact the appropriate person—another student, TA or instructor—to get the information you missed. Brief writing workshops will be held during class sessions. Absence from class is not a legitimate reason for lack of knowledge about class issues or expectations.
2. Check Moodle *frequently* for postings, including course resources, required readings, discussion, questions, assignment updates, submission portals, and more. Assignments may change to enhance student learning so watch for updates!
3. **Be prepared to discuss required readings in class on the due dates.** Most of what you'll get out of this class will be related to our in-class discussions. It is important to attend as much as possible.
4. Show respect for others. Help create an atmosphere of trust and support. Sharing opinions that differ from those of other students or the instructor contributes to learning, but please be respectful when you disagree.
5. Work submitted for this course must be for this course alone—not for other courses.

Workload Outside of Class

Expect to spend at least 9 hours per week on average on course-related learning and assignments to receive a satisfactory (C) grade. Expect to spend more than 9 hours to receive a grade of B or better.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Note: Assignments are expected to be submitted on time. It will be left up to the discretion of the professor as to whether or not late assignments will be accepted, and what grade will be possible for that assignment.

Free Writing (30 points total): In 20 of the regularly scheduled classes, I will ask you to do 5-minute free writing at the beginning of class. This will include: (a) brief response to a specific “short-answer question,” demonstrating your comprehension of the reading assignment; (b) a short essay, asking you to extrapolate what you learned in the reading. These will also be my way of assessing attendance.

Grading: These will be scored based on the following criteria:

- 3 (check plus): Excellent: Correct answer to short-answer question; short essay demonstrates both understanding of class reading and ability to extrapolate from reading
- 2 (check): Good: Correct answer to short-answer question; short essay demonstrates both understanding of class reading
- 1 (check minus): OK: EITHER correct answer to short-answer question or short essay demonstrates both understanding of class reading
- 0: Poor: Wrong response to short-answer question and inability to demonstrate mastery of reading assignment

There will be NO make-up for these daily free writing activities. The total possible points for these is 60; I will half this sum to create the total possible points for this item (30 possible points) – I will round up ☺

Film Analysis (20 points; due Sept 29): Contemporary films provide numerous, somewhat diverse images of families in our culture. The purpose of this assignment is to provide students an opportunity to apply Family Systems concepts to a fictional family from the film of their choice. Students will break into small groups during the first day or two of class and choose a film to analyze. Then, each group will prepare a presentation to give to the class. Each 15-20 minute presentation will include a short film clip which captures the essence of the film family, a genogram of the family, a description of family rituals and the purposes they serve, an analysis of the family’s place in the family life cycle, a discussion of the family’s level of cohesion and adaptability (using the Circumplex model), family roles and rules, cultural issues that impact the family, and any treatment goals that may be important to consider should the family seek treatment. Each group member will turn in a detailed outline of their portion of the presentation. It is expected that students use some sort of visual presentation tool to provide their information to the class.

Grading:

- Two written components (genogram, 5 points & outline, 3 points) will be graded based on comprehensiveness, clarity, accuracy, and presentation.
- The application to psychology (7 points) will involve demonstration of your mastery of key concepts and the accuracy of application of concepts to the fictional film family.
- The oral presentation component (5 points) will reflect your ability to deliver the speech effectively, including making eye contact, appropriate rate of speech, clarity of voice, posture (etc.).

Quizzes (40 points each – 120 points total): There will be four quizzes given during the semester. They will cover all assigned readings and materials discussed in class. They will include primarily objective items (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, and identification) and short answer questions. Students will have an opportunity to keep the three highest scores on these quizzes, and “throw out” the lowest score. Make-up tests are almost never given and will occur in extremely rare situations (e.g., significant illness requiring treatment by a physician). If a quiz is to be missed due to a medical illness, be prepared to submit a written statement from your doctor stating you were too ill to attend class. Also, make sure these arrangements are made with me PRIOR to the date of the quiz. Absolutely no alternative arrangements will be made if I am not contacted prior to the quiz date.

Family research article summary (15 points; due Sept 17)

One of the goals of this class is to strengthen skills in reading the scientific literature. I will provide several options of journal articles from which you may select one. You will read the article and write a brief review. The format of your review will be discussed in class.

Grading:

- Summary of findings (5 points): Will be graded based on accuracy of summary and inclusion of relevant information
- Evaluation of article (5 points): Will be based on accuracy of evaluation
- Writing (5 points): Will be based on writing elements (grammar, style), appropriate use of APA, clarity and organization

Research Paper (120 points total)

Select a specific topic related to an aspect of family psychology. Write an 8-10 page paper (excluding references & title page), using scholarly literature to explore a thesis on your topic of choice. Follow conventions in the APA 6th ed. style manual which will be discussed in class. In order to encourage the highest quality paper possible, this project will proceed in four stages.

Stage One: Topic / Thesis Statement (5 points; due Sept 10): Provide a topic and thesis statement that summarizes your proposed paper.

Grading: Will be based on conciseness, focus, descriptiveness, and appropriateness of thesis statement for this assignment

Stage Two: Outline and 10 references (15 points; due Oct 15): Provide an outline of your paper, providing documentation of how you plan to support your thesis through the use of source materials. This part of the project will be evaluated on the degree to which sources are integrated into a whole, persuasiveness of importance of topic, and completeness of outline.

Provide a list of at least 10 sources dealing with your topic drawn from scholarly journals or books.

While full-text indexes can be one way to gather these articles, you must use other methods as well, since these indexes are limited. Although you may add to the list or choose to not use some of the sources for the paper, this list should form the foundation for your paper. The list should

be presented in correct APA format as it will appear at the end of your completed paper. These articles should not have been used for other courses or class projects.

Grading:

- Outline (8 points): Evaluated on organization, thoroughness, clarity of presentation, logical flow of text, use of standard outlining techniques
- References (7 points): Based on having 10 references that are in APA style, appropriate for the assignment (e.g., at least 8 sources are from peer-reviewed journals), and are supportive of your thesis

Stage Three: Initial draft for feedback: (25 point; due Nov 3) Complete a thorough draft of the paper including introduction, body, and conclusion. This draft will be evaluated by one other class member, as well as by the instructor or TA. It is expected that this will be a complete draft, since feedback on a “rough draft” would be of limited value. This portion of the project will be evaluated in terms of content (focus, evidence, quality of research), quality of writing, and organization.

Grading:

- Content (10 points): Will be graded based on focus, use of appropriate evidence, quality of research, ability to integrate key points into over-arching themes
- Quality of writing (10 points): Based upon both use of APA style and grammar as well as writing conciseness and professionalism
- Organization (5 points): Based on the flow of the paper, how sections logically flow from one to the next (including transitions, preview sentences, summary sentences, etc.)

Peer review (10 points) of another student’s draft paper will occur during this stage. Details of this process will be explained in class.

Stage Four: Final Version: (75 points; due Dec 8) Provide a final submission that reflects comments from the initial draft.

Grading:

- Content of the paper (30 points) – Will be graded based on focus, use of appropriate evidence, quality of research, ability to integrate key points into over-arching themes
- Degree to which feedback has been incorporated into the paper (15 points)
- Quality of writing (30 points) Includes excellence in grammar, academic style, and organization and structure

Oral Presentation on Paper Topic: (15 points; on Dec 8 and 10)

Each student will give a 10-minute presentation describing their research. Specific guidelines for those presentations, along with more detailed instructions, will be discussed in class.

Grading:

- Content of presentation (10 points) – Based upon appropriate summary of paper’s content in allotted amount of time; Ability to highlight and emphasize key points for listeners
- Oral presentation (5 points) - Reflect your ability to deliver the speech effectively, including making eye contact, appropriate rate of speech, clarity of voice, posture (etc.).

OPTIONAL: Extra Credit: Appreciation letter (up to 10 points; Due October 1) – 500 words
This is an optional activity – you can earn up to 10 points of extra credit for completing it. The letter would be to your parent(s), guardians(s) or even to a mentor who has helped you in your personal journey. This is a class activity, and you will be given feedback on both the content and appearance of the letter. You are under NO obligation to send the letter, but I encourage you to consider doing so. Sending the letter is NOT considered in the grading.

This letter thanks the recipient for the role he/she has played in your life...getting you to where you are now. It should comprise your sharing the many things or the one big thing he/she did to help you along your path. You should describe experiences to illustrate your point, and provide details on how you experienced the events (including how they made you feel about yourself). This letter is supposed to be upbeat, heartfelt and sincere. You should give the reader a sense of how you used these experiences in your successes, how this person made an impact on you, and how you changed in response. You may wish to project a bit into the future about how you hope to influence the lives of others (perhaps in your future family) based on how the recipient has influenced you. Give examples, use depth and detail, and share emotions/feelings as part of the letter.

Grading Structure

Assignment / Activity	Total Possible Points	Weight
20 - 5-minute free writing [60 points / 2]	30	9%
Film analysis	20	6%
4 quizzes (40 points each) – drop lowest grade	120	36%
Family research article summary	15	5%
Paper Topic	5	2%
Paper Outline & references	15	5%
Paper 1 st draft	25	8%
Paper final version	75	23%
Oral presentation on paper topic	15	5%
Peer review of paper	10	3%

Total

330

A	304-330
A-	297-303
B+	290-296
B	270-289
B-	264-269
C+	257-263
C	238-256
C-	231-237
D+	224-230
D	198-223
F	197 and below

Date	Topic	Read Before Class	Assignment Due
September 3	Overview of Course Introductions – Tell us about yourself Choose films & small groups		
8	What is family psychology?	Walsh Chapter 1	
10	Professional Development: How to evaluate a research article (lecture & in-class practice)	Sherman's Suggestions for PRTWs	Thesis statement/topic of paper due
15	Genograms; Circumplex Model	Olson, 2000	
17	Family Life Cycle & rituals; family systems theory Review for Quiz 1	Walsh Chapter 2, 16, 20	Journal article review due
22	Writing workshop (Scott Marsalis)		
24	Quiz #1		
29	Family Film Presentation		
October 1	Family Film Presentation		OPTIONAL extra credit letter due
6	Divorce and remarriage	Walsh Chapter 5 and 7	
8	Military/veteran families	Martin & Sherman (2012)	
13	Spirituality & family life; Writing Lab – APA style	Walsh chapter 15; Basics of APA Style online tutorial *	
15	Research on couple interactions (Gottman) Review for Quiz 2	Walsh Chapter 3	Outline & 10 references of paper due
20	Quiz #2		
Assessment & Treatment			
22	Couple/Family assessment	Walsh Chapter 21	
27	Couples therapy: IBCT	Gurman Chapter 3	

Date	Topic	Read Before Class	Assignment Due
29	Couples therapy: EFT	Gurman Chapter 4	
Nov 3	Family violence; Professional Development: How to give feedback (lecture & in-class practice)	Gelles (2010); Sherman handout on giving feedback	First draft of paper due
5	Peer Feedback session on writing Review for Quiz 3		Completed peer reviews
10	Quiz #3		
Distinct Populations			
12	Mental health: Psychopathology & resilience in families	Schock-Giordano & Gavazzi 2010; Sherman et al 2005	
17	Adoption & Infertility		
19	Adoption DVD		
24	Family psychoeducation	Lucksted et al 2012	
26	Working on papers – peer & professor feedback times		
Dec 1	LGBT families Research presentations Review for Quiz 4	Walsh Chapter 8	
3	Quiz #4		
8	Research presentations		Final paper due
10	Research presentations		

* <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>

Scholastic Dishonesty:

Do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. *If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an “F” or an “N” for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University.* Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. The instructor and TA may use Internet resources to help determine whether plagiarism has occurred in any of the assignments for this course. Be prepared to submit electronic versions of your paper if requested. There is a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty at:

<http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>

Student Conduct Code:

You are expected to adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. Please see:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:

Please use your computer solely for course purposes while you are in the classroom. Please do not take phone calls or conversations (talking or texting) in/during class. Turn off your cell phone while in class. Please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html>

Grading and Transcripts:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity to its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Please see:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html

Disability Accommodations:

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing all students equal access to learning opportunities. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental health, attention, learning, vision, hearing, physical or systemic), are invited to contact DS to arrange a confidential discussion at 612-626-1333 (V/TTY) or ds@umn.edu. Students registered with DS, who have a letter requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester to discuss accommodations outlined in their letter. Additional information is available at the DS website

<http://ds.umn.edu>.

Mental Health Services:

As a student in this class you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Sexual Harassment:

“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. Please see: <http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html>.

Course Material and Class Business:

We are happy to meet with students, by appointment, to discuss and answer questions. Our first priority is for you to learn the information and skill presented in this course. If you do not understand the material or are confused for any reason, please let us know. Ultimately, **you are responsible for your education**, and we want to help you as much as possible.

Class business (i.e., illness or emergencies, absences from exams or classes, setting up make-up exams for excused absences, checking on grades, course information, having a hard time accessing course material) should be handled **AFTER** class or via email. We will only respond to emails during regular “business” hours.

Respect:

A classroom environment that promotes learning is built on mutual respect between instructors, students, and peers. Texting, cell phone use, reading newspapers, checking email, surfing the Internet, sleeping, and related behaviors are disrespectful and distracting to the instructors and your fellow classmates. Please do not engage in these behaviors in class.

Late Work Policy:

The equivalent of one letter grade will be deducted for each day (including weekends) an assignment is late, unless a student has made prior arrangements.