

PSYCH 441- Psychology of the Family

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Office Hours: By appointment (scheduled through email and held via Zoom)

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will support students through an exploration of the family as a psychological group, parental relationships, and the impact of the family on personality and mental health.

Required Textbook: [Olson, D. H., DeFrain, J., & Skogrand, L. \(2021\). Marriages and families: Intimacy, diversity, and strengths \(10th ed.\). McGraw Hill.](#)

Feel free to purchase/rent the printed or e-book, and to purchase earlier editions (although page numbers/content might slightly differ). Additional readings will be assigned (and provided) on the course page.

Prerequisites:

Students must satisfy the following to take this course:

- Restricted to upper-division Psychology majors and Conflict Resolution Certificate students.
- Have taken and passed Psychology 200 or its equivalent, no concurrent enrollment.
- Have taken and passed PSY 371 or its equivalent, no concurrent enrollment.

If a student is unsure if they meet all requirements to be enrolled in this course, please contact this instructor immediately.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Have a broad understanding of the impact of family dynamics on the development of the individual within the family, and how the family interacts with the external world.
- Have a broad understanding of how cultural factors play a role in family relationships.
- Identify and have an understanding of factors that can impact the family system and individual development of its members, such as adolescence, transitions to adulthood, partner selection, marriage, conflict, parenthood and divorce and remarriage.
- Understand the diverse ways in which families are formed (e.g., adoption, foster care, blended families, donor, surrogate) and the role family formation plays on individuals and families..
- Understand how the family's functioning impacts an individual's personal development and mental health.

Given the description and goals for this course, we will likely discuss sensitive issues. Respect for the instructor and all students in the class is essential. If anything discussed or read in this course (or any other) creates substantial discomfort for you, psychological services are available on campus. Please see the instructor if you have questions or concerns.

Course Format:

This is an asynchronous course, where video lectures, resources and submissions will be completed through the CANVAS course webpage. The class page on CANVAS will be updated at the beginning of every week. Every assignment for this course (except for the final submission) will be due Sundays at 11:59pm PT.

Class Expectations:

Students are expected to fully engage in every assignment for this course. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings in a timely manner as well as any assignments.

Students are expected to be proactive in reaching out for the assistance of this instructor, whenever a student is unclear and/or confused about any assignment instructions. If a student receives a score of less than 70% in any assignment, it is strongly encouraged that this student meets with this instructor to discuss how to improve their performance in the future.

Late-work Policy:

Because I will be dropping the lowest score of all exams, there will be no rescheduling or make-up of any of the exams. If you anticipate being unavailable to complete any of the exams, please plan accordingly. Also, there is no medical, traffic, work commitment and/or personal commitment that will change this policy. If you miss one exam, it will not harm you.

For the writing assignments (reflection entries, family in the news and website/blog critique), you can submit those up to 7 days after they are due with a -10% of your total grade penalty.

Late-work without any penalties will only be accepted under emergency situations. For these instances, students must reach out in a timely manner and provide documentation of the emergency situation.

Information for Multilingual Students: It is important that multilingual students get to make the best possible use of the course and the class materials and assignments. If you are a non-native English speaker, and think this will affect your reading pace or assignments, you are invited to communicate with me about options and support. Information on the SFSU Composition for Multilingual Students Program, including ESL resources and courses, is available on the web at: <http://www.sfsu.edu/~cmls/>.

Access: Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email dprc@sfsu.edu.

Academic Integrity: As a faculty member at this University, I take the issue of academic integrity very seriously. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and this can result in expulsion from the university. In this course and all college courses we examine and discuss the ideas, theories and research of many persons. As a result it is important to credit these sources. To be specific use references if you cite or discuss:

- Any theory, writings related to theoretical models or ideas.
- Any specific information that involves statistics or data that are not common knowledge.
- Direct quotes or paraphrasing from a person.

The above material was derived from SFSU website and Indiana University's website.

Students found cheating during an examination will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs and will also be given a zero/F for the exam. This includes evidence of completing online exams with one or more students which is NOT permitted. All work should be the sole work of the student. Test taking is not to be collaborative.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Reading:

Weekly readings from the required textbook and/or from an outside source that will be made available on Canvas.

2. Syllabus Quiz:

A 9-question quiz covering the content of this syllabus; two attempts will be allowed.

3. Reflection Entries:

Two 150-200 word reflection posts answering a prompt related to the week's reading assignment.

4. Exit Card Quizzes

Four 1-2 question low stake quizzes, asking for your input and/or reactions related to the course structure/content

5. Families in the News:

Find newspaper or magazine articles (or cartoons) that relate to an aspect of the psychology of the family that we have discussed in class. Write a 1-page paper (double-spaced) summarizing the article/cartoon and providing a critique. More instructions will be provided.

6. Website/Blog Critique:

Find a family, parenting, or couples website/blog, and write a 1-page paper (double-spaced) summarizing the article/cartoon and providing a critique. More instructions will be provided.

7. Exams:

There will be four exams throughout the course. The lowest score out of all four exams will be dropped at the end of the semester. Each exam will be worth 60 points.

8. Extra Credit:

Through a discussion post, students can recommend a self-report book or a movie that directly relates to any of the content in the course. More instructions will be provided.

Grading:

- ☐ Syllabus Quiz: 10 points
- ☐ 2 Reflection Entries: 40 points *(each 20 points)*
- ☐ 4 Exit Card Quizzes: 20 points *(each 5 points)*
- ☐ Families in the News: 40 points
- ☐ Website/blog Critique: 40 points
- ☐ 4 Exams: 180 points *(60 points each and lowest grade dropped)*

- ☐ Extra Credit: 15 possible points

= 330 points (345 possible)

A: 297 - 330

B: 264 - 296

C: 231 - 264

D: 198- 230

Not passing: 197 ↓

Instructor's Note About Grades: I reserve the right to **only assign Incomplete grades for students who fulfill all requirements of the [SFSU Incomplete Policy](#)**: (1) have a justifiable and compelling reason for having stopped to engage with course material, (2) communicate with the instructor in a timely manner (not only at the end of the semester), and (3) have a passing grade at the time the request is made. If you are worried about your grade in the course, please schedule a meeting with the instructor ASAP!

Instructor's Note: I reserve the right to make changes to anything in the calendar at any point in the semester, including requirements, due dates, assignments, etc. All changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of any such changes and to adjust accordingly. **Please check CANVAS and your email regularly.**

Calendar:

Topics of the Week	Reading Assignments	Assignments Due
Week 1: 8/26 - 9/1 Perspectives on Intimate Relationships	<i>Chapter 1</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Syllabus Quiz
Week 2: 9/2 - 9/8 Cultural Diversity and Diversity in Family Structure: Family Strengths and Challenges	<i>Chapter 2</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Families in the News Assignment
Week 3: 9/9 - 9/15 Marriage	<i>Chapter 3</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exit Card Quiz 1
Week 4: 9/16 - 9/22 Marriage	<i>Chapter 11</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exam 1
Week 5: 9/23 - 9/29 Intimacy	<i>Chapter 4</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	
Week 6: 9/30 - 10/6 Intimacy	<i>Chapter 6</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Discussion Post
Week 7: 10/7 - 10/13 Conflict Resolution	<i>Chapter 5</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exit Card Quiz 2
Week 8: 10/14 - 10/20 Effects of Parenting on Problem Solving Strategies	<i>Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exam 2
Week 9: 10/21 - 10/27 Dating, Mate Selection, and Living Together	<i>Chapter 10</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	
Week 10: 10/28 - 11/3 Parenthood	<i>Chapter 12</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Blog critique due

Week 11: 11/4 - 11/10 Parenting Styles Theory	<i>Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	
Week 12: 11/11 - 11/17 Single-Parent Families	<i>Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exam 3
Week 13: 11/18 - 11/24 Stress, Abuse and Family Problems	<i>Chapter 14</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exit Card Quiz 3
Week 14: 11/25 - 12/1 THANKSGIVING BREAK	n/a	n/a
Week 15: 5/6 - 5/12 Divorce, Single-Parent Families and Step Families	<i>Chapter 15</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Discussion Post II
Week 16: 5/13 - 5/19 Strengthening Marriages and Families Worldwide	<i>Chapter 16</i> <i>Other Readings TBA on CANVAS</i>	Exit Card Quiz 4
Week 17: 5/20 - 5/24 FINALS WEEK	-	Exam 4

Statement on Religious Holidays: The faculty of San Francisco State University shall accommodate students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class activities. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays during the first two weeks of the class each semester. If such holidays occur during the first two weeks of the semester, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up for the work missed.

Fall 2024 Dates & Deadlines

Monday, August 26, 2024

- Fall '24 First Day of Instruction

Monday, September 2, 2024

- Fall '24 Labor Day; No Classes; Office Closed

Monday, September 16, 2024

- Fall '24 Last Day to Drop/Withdraw Classes without a W grade

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

- Fall '24 Withdrawal from Classes or University For Serious and Compelling Reasons Begins

Monday, November 11, 2024

- Fall '24 Veterans Day; No Classes; Office Closed
- Fall '24 Withdrawal from Classes or University For Serious and Compelling Reasons Ends

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

- Fall '24 Withdrawal from Classes or University By Exception for Documented Serious and Compelling Reasons Begins

Monday, November 25-30, 2024

- Fall '24 Recess; No Classes; Campus Open

Friday, December 6, 2024

- Fall '24 Grading Option Deadline (This includes Cr/No CR or Letter Grade)

Friday, December 13, 2024

- Fall '24 Last Day of Classes

Monday, December 16-20, 2024

- Fall '24 Final Exams