

Psychology of Marriage & the Family
PSYC 464
Course Syllabus
Spring 2018

Section 52558R (Lecture)

Updated: 21 December 2017

Lecture Meeting Time:	Tu & Th 10:00 - 11:50
Room:	Kaprielian Hall (KAP), Room 148
Instructor:	Christopher R. Beam, Ph.D.
Office:	Seeley G. Mudd (SGM), Room 522
Office Hours:	T & Th 12:00 - 1:00 (or by appointment)
Office Hours Location:	SGM 501
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1 Course Description

The focus of this course is on the psychological science of marital and familial relationships across the life-span. Interpersonal relationships are central to the human condition, both serving as a cause and consequence of positive (e.g., life satisfaction, social connection) and negative (e.g., alcoholism, longevity) outcomes. Romantic and familial relationships serve as people's primary relationships across the life-span, hence, the importance relationship science. The course is broadly split into 3 components: 1) intimate relationships, family dynamics, and culture as a context for families. The overarching theme of the course is the reciprocal association between individual development and family development.

There are 3 major goals: 1) provide students with in-depth exposure to psychological theories and social scientific research on marriage and family; 2) broaden knowledge of research methods used to perform scientific investigations of marital and familial research; and 3) deepen students ability to evaluate psychological benefits and costs of marital and familial relationships.

1.1 Attendance & Participation

1.1.1 Lecture

Students are expected to attend each lecture and are responsible for knowing all material covered. Read the assigned reading prior to each class in order to participate actively in discussion. Please be on-time - arriving late is not only rude and disruptive to other students, but makes a negative impression toward others.

Participation is expected. All students will be called on at some point in class.

1.2 Blackboard

Announcements and emails will be made via Blackboard. **Routinely check the course site for updates, as all students are responsible for keeping track of all updates in this course.** All grades will be posted on Blackboard. Grade discrepancies and corrections need to be made prior to the final exam. No grade changes will be made via Blackboard after the final exam.

1.3 Electronic Devices Policy

Electronic devices (including but not limited to laptops, smartphones, tablets, electronic notetaking devices) of all kinds are prohibited in this course. They are not to be used, seen, or heard during lecture. **For every infraction, students will incur a 2% reduction from their final grade.** NO EXCEPTIONS. Research supports that notetaking by writing, rather than by typing, improves conceptual learning (see article by Mueller & Oppenheimer (2014) on Blackboard).

2 Student Evaluation

Course grades are merit-based and will be assigned based on the following assignments:

Assignment	Percentage Contribution
In-class presentation	40%
Research proposal paper	50%
Scientific poster	10%
Total Grade Basis	100%

The in-class presentation is worth 150 points; the research proposal is worth 150 points; and the scientific poster is worth 50 points. Grading rubrics will be provided for graded

assignments. Letter grades will be assigned based on the percentage of points earned (traditional rounding rules to 2 decimal places apply):

A: $\geq 93\%$	A-: 90-92.99	
B+: 87-89.99	B: 83-86.99	B-: 80-82.99
C+: 77-79.99	C: 73-76.99	C-: 70-72.99
D+: 67-69.99	D: 63-66.99	D-: 60-62.99
F: $\leq 59.99\%$		

Address all grade concerns early in the semester rather than later in the semester. Dr. Beam will not consider grade changes after 10:00AM on Tuesday, 8 May.

Late assignments will not be accepted apart from illness, emergency, or university-sponsored athletic events with acceptable documentation and approval from Dr. Beam. No exceptions. Late assignments that meet one of the above criteria must be turned in by a date and time approved by Dr. Beam.

2.1 In-Class Presentation

Students are required to prepare and present a 35-minute presentation that extends knowledge and discussion of a research area in marriage and family. Students will lead the class once during the semester. Students will be responsible for selecting and assigning 2-4 scientific readings on marriage and family. Use Web of Science, EBSCOhost, Elsevier, and PsycINFO, for example, to locate articles. Students may run the class however they would like and are encouraged to use other sources in developing their presentations, including stories, literature, a popular media article, AV/multimedia, class exercises, panel discussions, etc. Power point lectures can be given (though this is not required), do role plays (or a play) in class, offer case studies, present the class with dilemmas (ethical or not), etc. Students are encouraged to be creative while grounding their presentations in the scientific literature.

Topics may include (but are not limited to): *Affairs, alternative families, asexual relationships, attraction, breaking up, cheating, children, co-parenting, communes, couple's interaction, couple therapy, cultural differences in sexual relationships, culture, custody rights, dating, divorce, divorce mediation, effects of children on marital quality, family therapy, fidelity, gender, grief, history of parenting, hooking up, latchkey children, law, living together, marriage and family in LGBTQ populations, marital quality, marriage and parenting parenting styles, money, morality/virtues, on-line dating, polyamory, polygamy, religiosity, religious influence on dating, same-sex marriage laws, same-sex relationships, separation, sexual assault, sexual dysfunction, transition to parenthood, widowhood.*

2.2 Research Proposal Paper

Write a final paper that extends one of the topics from the course. The paper can be the same or a different topic as your class presentation. The final paper is a formal

presentation that should resemble a research proposal (see the Introduction and Methods of an empirical paper); a review of the empirical literature (see a Psychological Bulletin for examples); or a conceptual analysis of the literature (see reviews of empirical studies like those published in Perspectives on Psychological Science). A two page proposal (including a paragraph or two on the concept and a rough outline) is due Thursday, 15 February at the beginning of class. Failure to submit a proposal by the due date will result in a 10-point reduction from the final paper score. The final paper should be no shorter than 15 pages and no longer than 20 pages, double spaced in 12pt font in Helvetica or Times New Roman with 0.5"-1.0" margins (including references, tables, figures). Follow APA 6th edition style. The final paper is due on Tuesday, 1 May 2018. A **HARD COPY** must be turned into my mailbox in SGM 501 AND an **ELECTRONIC COPY** via Blackboard.

2.3 Scientific Poster

Students must prepare a scientific poster that presents findings of their final paper. Research findings are often presented at scientific meetings in poster format to receive feedback on work prior to submitting a manuscript for peer-review. Posters, therefore, are lower pressure and lower stakes. Dr. Beam will provide a Powerpoint template for students to use (although students may create their own or use a template found online). Posters will be due 3 weeks before the final paper on Tuesday, 10 April 2018. Feedback on posters is designed to improve the final paper.

3 Academic Accommodations

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

4 Academic Integrity

All students are expected to complete their own work. Violations of academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism, resource sharing) are serious and not taken lightly. For more information on Academic Integrity consult the Trojan Integrity Guide at <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tio.pdf>. Students caught cheating (regardless of level of involvement) will automatically fail the course and a report will be filed with USC's Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.

5 Course Schedule

A schedule of dates, topics and readings are shown below.

Date	Topic	Reading
Tu (1/09)	Introduction & overview of course; marital relationships and family	(Gottman, 1998)
Th (1/11)	Theoretical foundations of marriage	(Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Becker, 1974)
Tu (1/16)	Evolutionary perspective & social ecological models	(Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Bronfenbrenner, 1986)
Th (1/18)	Attachment theory	(Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Tornello et al., 2013)
Tu (1/23)	Adolescent romantic relationships	(Collins, Welsh, & Furman, 2009; Joyner & Udry, 2000)
Th (1/25)	Sexual identity	(Tolman & McClelland, 2011; Lodge & Umberson, 2012)
Tu (1/30)	Methods for studying marriage & family	(Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006; Gottman & Notarius, 2000)
Th (2/1)	Problems measuring family	(Ickes, Weber, & Harvey, 1994)
Tu (2/6)	Marriage across the lifespan	(Whisman & Uebelacker, 2009; Umberson, Williams, Powers, Chen, & Campbell, 2005)
Th (2/8)	Marital quality	(Glenn, 1990; Jackson, Miller, Oka, & Henry, 2014)
Tu (2/13)	Marriage, Health & Wealth	(Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Wilmoth & Koso, 2002)
Th (2/15)	Gender differences in marriage (Proposals DUE)	(Heavey, Layne, & Christensen, 1993; Umberson & Williams, 2005)
Tu (2/20)	Same-sex marital relationships	(Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Kurdek, 2004)
Th (2/22)	Benefits of marriage	(Cherlin, 2004; Dinescu et al., 2016)
Tu (2/27)	Marital Dissolution & Widowhood	(Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Lucas, 2005; McGue & Lykken, 1992)
Th (3/1)	Fertility & Family planning	(Hutteman, Bleidorn, Penke, & Denissen, 2013; Berg, Rotkirch, Väisänen, & Jokela, 2013)
Tu (3/6)	Transition to parenthood	(Belsky & Rovine, 1990; Saxbe, 2017; Farr & Tornello, 2016)
Th (3/8)	Family as a system	(Hare, Miga, & Allen, 2009; Huey et al., 2004)
Tu (3/13)	Spring Break	

Th (3/15)	Spring Break	
Tu (3/20)	Parenting young children	(Christensen, Margolin, & Sullaway, 1992; Patterson, 2017) (Oudekerk, Allen, Hessel, & Mollo, 2015);
Th (3/22)	Parenting adolescents	
Tu (3/27)	Grand-parenting	(Hayslip Jr, Blumenthal, & Garner, 2014; Burn & Szoeki, 2015) (Katz & Gottman, 1995; Delsol & Margolin, 2004)
Th (3/29)	Family violence	
Tu (4/3)	Childhood exposure to domestic violence	(Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003; Maughan & Cicchetti, 2002) (Halpern, Oslak, Young, Martin, & Kupper, 2001; Andrews, Foster, Capaldi, & Hops, 2000)
Th (4/5)	Partner violence & sexual assault	
Tu (4/10)	Psychopathology (Posters DUE)	(Miklowitz, 2004; D'Onofrio et al., 2005; Fincham, Beach, Harold, & Osborne, 1997) (Doss, Thum, Sevier, Atkins, & Christensen, 2005; Rogge, Cobb, Lawrence, Johnson, & Bradbury, 2013)
Th (4/12)	Couples & Family Therapy	
Tu (4/17)	Caretaking	(Khodyakov & Carr, 2009; Papatavrou, Kalokerinou, Papacostas, Tsangari, & Sourtzi, 2007; Pinquart & Sørensen, 2011) TBD
Th (4/19)	TBD	
Tu (4/24)	Research Proposal Presentation	Papers DUE 5/1/2018
Th (4/26)	Research Proposal Presentation	

References

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