CHFD 3920: ISSUES IN FAMILY RELATIONS
Department of Child and Family Development
University of Georgia
Spring 2003

Instructor: Scott Miller

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Class time/location: MWF 12:20-1:10/Dawson Hall Room 101

Textbooks: Anderson, S. A., & Sabatelli, R. M. (2003). *Family Interaction*
Bel-Jean packet

Course description: An advanced study of family issues over the lifespan with an emphasis on research, theory, family transitions, human development, and diversity in families. Ways in which important social issues affect the family will also be considered.

Course objectives:

1) To examine major theoretical approaches used in studying families.
2) To explore the impact of various social issues on American families.
3) To examine how families and individual members adapt to major life transitions.
4) To consider the diversity in families as influenced by gender, ethnicity, and structure.
5) To gain an understanding of inter-generational family dynamics.

Course requirements: Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss assigned readings, and also prepared to share their own ideas and views on class topics. Lively discussion, diversity of opinions, and critical thinking are encouraged and welcomed. Therefore, it is expected that you complete all readings by the assigned date and attend class regularly. All other assignments must also be completed by the assigned date. LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE DROPPED ONE FULL GRADE FOR EACH DAY THEY ARE LATE. Late assignments will be accepted for full credit only in the case of a DOCUMENTED emergency. Cheating and plagiarism will not be permitted, and will be reported to appropriate university authorities if necessary. You may read the university's policy on academic honesty at http://www.uga.edu/vpaa/polproc/ahpol/main.html. Violation of these regulations is grounds for filing a report.

GRADING

Research article critique (written)	35 points
Research article presentation	35 points
Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Exam 4	100 points
Class participation/attendance	15 points
Current events	15 points
TOTAL POSSIBLE	**500 POINTS**

450-500 = A 375-449 = B 300-374 = C 200-299 = D below 200 = F

Exams (400 points)
Four exams will be given during the semester. Exams will cover lectures, readings, and any videos that may be shown. Students are responsible for all material in the readings, even if it is not covered in the lecture. Students must take all exams at the scheduled date and time. Each exam will be given in class. No make-up exam will be given without a valid medical excuse. In the event of a legitimate excuse, students may make arrangements with me for a make-up exam.

Research article critique (35 points)
Each student will write a 4-6 page summary/critique of a research article that is related to a topic covered in the course. Each student will select a topic from the syllabus. You will then locate an empirical journal article that is related to that topic. More than one student may choose the same topic. By **Wednesday January 22** students must choose a topic. Instructions on how to write an article critique is in the handout **Guidelines for Critiquing a Research Article**.

Research article presentation (35 points)
Each student will give a 4-6 minute presention of the article they have chosen to critique. You may refer to the syllabus to find on which day you present. Presentions will usually be on the same day we discuss the article topic in class. To ensure that presentations cover most of the class topics, no more than 4 students may present on any one topic. Therefore, only the first four students to claim a topic may present an article on that topic … so decide quickly! You may choose from the following journals, or you may approve an article from a different journal by checking with me first. *Child Development, Journal of Marriage and the Family, Family Relations, Family Process, Journal of Research on Adolescence.* Presentations will begin February 5. Readings from the Schaffer book in the Bel-Jean packet summarize several studies that may be of interest. Guidelines for the presentation will be given on the deadline date for choosing topics (January 22).

Current events (15 points)
To connect the course with real-world events, a few minutes each day will be devoted to discussing current events that have an impact on families. These events may be from newspapers, magazines, television, internet, or other media. I will ask for a couple of volunteers each day to give a 1-2 minute description of the event. You must volunteer and report at least once to get the full 15 points.

Class participation and attendance (15 points)
You will be allowed 2 absences from class without a valid medical excuse. Any absences beyond these will result in a loss of points. Furthermore, participation is more than simply attending class. Actively engaging in discussions and showing evidence of having read the material is also expected.

Cell phones: Please turn cell phones off during class.

Note: If there is any student who has special needs because of learning disabilities or other kinds of disabilities, please feel free to come and discuss this with me.

COURSE OUTLINE

DAY	DATE	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
F	1/10	Course introduction	
M	1/13	Defining family	Text, Ch. 1
W	1/15	Family strategies	Text, Ch. 2
F	1/17	Structural models of family functioning	Text, Ch. 3
M	1/20	MLK BIRTHDAY – NO CLASS	
W	1/22	Intergenerational model – genograms **ARTICLE CRITIQUE/PRESENTATION TOPICS DUE**	Text, Ch. 4
F	1/24	Contextual models **Bel-Jean packets should be ready by this date**	Text, Ch. 5
M	1/27	Family life course perspective	
W	1/29	Adolescence and transition to adulthood	Text, Ch. 6
F	1/31	Article presentations/test review activity	
M	2/3	**EXAM 1**	**Text, Ch. 1-6 + notes**

W	2/5	Mate selection and cohabitation	Text, Ch. 7
F	2/7	Genogram assignment – NO CLASS	
M	2/10	Transition to marriage	Text, Ch. 8
W	2/12	Communication and intimacy	Text, Ch. 9
F	2/14	Transition to parenthood	Text, Ch. 11
M	2/17	Is there a blood bond? (Adoption studies)	Schaffer, pp. 51-63
W	2/19	Parent-child relations	Text, Ch. 12
F	2/21	Parent-child relations across the life course	Peterson et al, pp. 187-203
M	2/24	Parent-adolescent relations	
W	2/26	article presentations and test review	
F	2/28	**EXAM 2**	
M	3/3	Launching the children	Text, Ch. 13
W	3/5	Post-retirement parenting/caregiving	Text, Ch. 14
F	3/7	Intergenerational caregiving in African American families	Burton, pp. 199-208
M	3/10	Death, loss, and bereavement	Text, Ch. 15
W	3/12	On death and dying	Kubler-Ross, pp. 370-377
F	3/14	**EXAM 3**	

MONDAY 3/17 – FRIDAY 3/21 SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

M	3/24	Family stressors	McCubbin & Patterson, pp. 293-302
W	3/26	Conflict in Marriage	Text, Ch. 10
F	3/28	Life course approach to family violence	Gelles, pp. 105-116
M	3/31	Divorce	Text, Ch. 16

W	4/2	Are children harmed by divorce?	Schaffer, pp. 133-145
F	4/4	Single-parent households	Text, Ch. 17
M	4/7	Do children need a parent of each sex?	Schaffer, pp. 79-90
W	4/9	Remarriage and Stepparenting	Text, Ch. 18
F	4/11	Can children form love relationships with new parent figures?	Schaffer, pp. 156-168
M	4/14	Family relationships of lesbians and gay men	Patterson, pp. 1052-1069
W	4/16	Religion and families	Miller, pp. 173-186
F	4/18	Community context of families	Bowen et al., pp. 117-128
M	4/21	Economic issues: African American Mothers and Grandmothers in poverty	Jarrett, pp. 387-396
W	4/23	Article presentations/test review	
F	4/25	NO CLASS	
M	4/28	**EXAM 4**	
W	4/30	Course evaluations	
TH	5/1	Remaining article presentations	
F	5/9	Final exam time – 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.	

We will not have a comprehensive final exam, so May 9 will be used as a time for make-up exams. HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!