

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition

FRHD 1020*01: Couple and Family Relationships

Instructor: Shayna Sparling (sskakoon@uoguelph.ca) - please write "FRHD 1020" in subject

Office: MINS 133E

Office Hours: Wednesdays 5pm, by appointment.

Class Time: Wednesday 7 – 9:50pm

Classroom: ROZH 104

Teaching Assistants: (please include "FRHD 1020" in the subject line of all emails)

Kevin McLaughlin - kmclau03@uoguelph.ca

Nikoo Sedaghat - nsedagha@uoguelph.ca

Your TAs will not be holding regular office hours, however they will meet with you for scheduled appointments.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of couple, marital and family relationships from a broad, interdisciplinary and inclusive perspective. The dynamics of couple and family relationships throughout the life course will be explored. The various theories regarding couple and family relationships will be reviewed, examined and analyzed. This course provides the opportunity for students to increase their appreciation for diversity, and to increase their understanding of some of the various issues that emerge in families. This course also provides the opportunity for reflection on ones' beliefs, attitudes and values regarding couple and family relationships. Classes will be comprised of lectures and class discussions in order to orient ourselves to the language(s) of various psychological, sociological, anthropological and cultural theories of marriage, couples and families, and to facilitate the meta-critical thinking that is required for reading and critiquing research literature.

Required Reading

The textbook can be purchased at the Bookstore and copies are available on reserve at the library.

McDaniel, & Tepperman. (2015). *Close Relations: An Introduction to the Sociology of Families*. Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Canada.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Create a dynamic, exploratory, respectful and inclusive environment for students and instructor;
2. Develop a *global understanding* of issues impacting couples and families, comprehending the variety of political, religious, cultural, biological, social and historical forces that influence family life;

3. Develop an appropriate *depth and breadth of understanding* of couple and family relations and dynamics, recognizing the implications of course content and putting it into a broader context;
4. Develop an *acceptance and understanding* related to family issues; specifically, to aspects of couple and family dynamics which can be considered and evaluated in many ways. It is hoped that students will become more open, aware and accepting of the diverse family structures, lifestyles and value systems of others, especially those which are divergent from their own;
5. Develop an *independence of thought*, and the ability to challenge accepted truths about the family and think critically about the family as it appears in research and the media;
6. *Understand* the various *forms of inquiry* used in couple and family research, and be able to assess the strengths and limitations as well as the cultural and historical impact of these forms;
7. Develop a *love of learning*, or intellectual curiosity, regarding couple and family relations and dynamics, by getting personally involved with course content and reflecting on the personal experiences that have contributed to your family's development and the values you hold related to couple and family relationships;
8. Have the opportunity to become aware and examine their own experiences, values and biases in relation to the various dimensions of family and couple relationships;
9. Understand the *personal and practical implications* of the course content; becoming informed about issues related to family life that will enable you to better understand the dynamics of your own family, and enhance your family life experience;
10. Create a learning environment for skill development in personal reflections and critical thinking;
11. Explore the multidimensional experience and diversity of families, couples and marriages in the Canadian contexts within a global village.

Method of Delivery

- Interactive lectures and discussion
- Examples of application in hands-on environment
- Course text book reading assignments and exercises
- Audio visual presentations
- Small and large group discussions

Evaluation and Due Dates

The course is comprised of one 2 hour and 50 minute weekly lecture that will include content from the textbook, highlights from current research on couples and families, as well as incorporate elements of couple and family dynamics from the media (e.g. movies/audio visual clips). Lectures and discussions will be interactive and create an opportunity for you to explore your attitudes about couple and families and also learn about the perspectives of your peers in the class.

Students will be evaluated in this course through:

Research Article Summary & Peer Grading	10%
Relationship Advice Paper	25%
Midterm Test	30%
Final Exam	35%
<i>*Monday April 9th (11:30am – 1:30pm)</i>	
<i>*Double check the location on web advisor as the date approaches!</i>	

Total **100%**

****Assignment instructions, guidelines, and marking schemes can be found on the course website. ****

Your Responsibilities in the course

1. I expect you to be an active learner in this class. You are responsible for reading and understanding the course outline.
2. Use the discussion boards on the Courselink site to ask questions or communicate with your fellow students and the instructor. Check the Courselink site regularly for important announcements and to obtain class materials.
3. Prepare yourself for each class by doing all the required readings and come to class on time and stay until the end of the class period.
4. Within two weeks of grade postings, check Courselink and email the instructor or TA to question any grades, clarify any feedback, and/or correct any potential errors (otherwise the posted grade will stand).
5. Complete course requirements with integrity.

My Responsibilities

1. Be prepared for every class.
2. Create a course curriculum that exposes students to current, topical issues in couple and family relationships.
3. Be available to communicate with students about course content and assignments.
4. Respond to email messages within 48 hours between Monday and Friday.

When you cannot meet course requirements

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Course Schedule *please note this schedule is subject to change *

Date	Topics Covered	Readings	Important Notices
Week 1 January 10th	Introduction to the Course / Defining the Family	Chapter 1	
Week 2 January 17	Family Theories and Historical Perspectives	Chapter 2	
Week 3 January 24	Theories about Love	<i>Readings to be Assigned</i>	
Week 4 January 31	Dating and Mate Selection	Chapter 3	
Week 5 February 7	Cohabitation and Marriage	Chapters 4 & 5	Articles Summary Due Feb 9
Week 6 February 14 th	<i>Midterm Exam</i>		Midterm on Weeks 1-6 (Chapters 1-5 + Love readings)
Feb 19 – 23rd	Reading Week!		Peer Grading Due Feb 23
Week 7 February 28	Institutions	Chapter 7	<i>Guest Lecture TBA</i>
Week 8 March 7	Fertility and Having a Child / Parent-Child Relationships	Chapter 6	
Week 9 March 14	Gender and Sexuality	<i>Readings to be Assigned</i>	
Week 10 March 21	Aging Families	Chapter 10	Relationship Advice Paper Due March 23
Week 11 March 28	Stress, Conflict, and Abuse	Chapter 8	
Week 12 April 4 th	Divorce and Re-partnering	Chapter 9	

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday March 9th, 2018. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or see the website: <http://www.csd.uoguelph.ca/csd/>

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/index.cfm?index>

Research Participation

Throughout this course there may or may not be opportunities to participate in various research studies. Should these opportunities arise, students will be given the opportunity to receive extra credit for their choice of two options:

- 1) Complete the study and submit it as a participant
- 2) Review the study and submit a brief written report on the study without participating in it (directions to be distributed via Courselink)

Participation, or lack thereof, in any study opportunities is completely optional and will not impact the academic standing of the student in any way beyond the choice whether or not to pursue extra credit through either of these means.

A Note on The Grading of This Course:

Grades and other evaluations reflect your performance in a course. In other words, your mark is something that you earn based on your effort as well as the quality of your work; it is not something assigned to you at random by the instructor or your TAs. Sometimes you can work really hard on an assignment or test and still receive a grade lower than what you hoped for. Similarly, I could try really hard to knit a sweater and the result may still not fit the wearer how I hoped it would, no matter the amount of time or effort I felt I had expended.

Your TAs and I take time to carefully evaluate all of our students' performance throughout the course. Still, there are a handful of students every semester who insist on contacting us to argue their grades, without being able to present strong evidence for a grading error. Many instructors find these types of attempts to negotiate for a higher grade a sign of disrespect. Additionally, it can be interpreted as a sign that the student thinks that their instructor doesn't carefully evaluate grading and performance. I understand that this may not be your intention, but nonetheless be mindful when sending emails to your TAs and myself.

If you are unclear about the value of an assignment (or extra credit), please take time to clarify with your instructor and/or your TAs *well before* the end of the semester or the due date of an assignment.