



**PVAMU COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**Contemporary Family HDFM 2533 P04**

**College of Agriculture and Human Sciences**  
**Department of Agriculture, Nutrition and Human Ecology**

**Instructor Information**

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**Office Hours:** M 1-2, T 12-2, W 2-5, R 1-3, Fri. by appointment

**Virtual Office Hours:** Contact via email

**Course Location:** Ag/Busi 217

**Class Meeting Days & Times:** TR 11:00-11:50a

**Course** HDFM 2533 P04

**TEXT**

Schwartz, M. A., and Scott, B.M. (2010). Marriages & Families.(8<sup>th</sup> edition).  
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Other required readings will be posted on the class website or put on reserve at J.B. Coleman Library.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to increase your knowledge about the important topic of couple and family relationships. The focus of this course is on the development of individuals and families across the life cycle, the relationships of individuals within families, and the influence of external factors. This course will provide information on a variety of theories used to study families, on current research on couples and families, and on the influence of families on individuals in contemporary society.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students completing this course will:

- Learn about the family life cycle and critical life transitions (dating, courtship, marriage, parenthood, child rearing, work and retirement).
- Be able to explain important factors that currently influence American families, such as the economy, work / family conflict, laws & regulations, and social policy.
- Learn about various theories used to study families and the differences and similarities among these theoretical perspectives regarding familial influences on individual behavioral and social-emotional development.
- Learn about differences and similarities among various ethnic minority families as well as the differences and similarities within the dominant U.S. culture. This information will be discussed in the context of sociological perspectives on the study of families.
- Develop an understanding of how social change affects the adaptation and resilience of individuals, couples, and families.

## REQUIREMENTS:

- Attend class and participate in class discussion.
- Contribute to a respectful class environment, which includes no talking with classmates during lecture, turning off cell phones, pagers, iPods, and similar devices, and staying until the end of lecture.
- Read assigned readings. Students are encouraged to review assigned readings both before and after class to fully understand the materials. Please note that students are responsible for all reading assignments and that not all topics will be covered in depth in class.
- Students will be responsible for everything covered prior to each exam.
- Complete four exams the final and in-class/out-of-class writing assignments.

## FORMAT:

There will be two guest speakers during the summer term. Students are expected to read the assigned readings and attend lectures. Materials covered in this class will include information from the text and other assigned readings, from current research, and from current events. Students are encouraged to think about (rather than simply memorize) the concepts and materials presented in lectures, the readings, and the text. It is **extremely important** that you read the assigned readings as the lectures will not cover all the topics presented in the assigned reading material. In addition, the in-class writing assignments will be based on the lectures and readings. The readings are designed to supplement the information you receive in class as well as provide opportunities to process what you have learned. Six to eight hours of reading and study each week will be needed to be prepared for class and to keep up with the assigned reading.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:

There will be a total of four exams and a final. There will be a total of ten E-journal assignments at 10 pts a piece. Two in-class assignments; you will receive points for each in-class assignment completed. Some of the in-class assignments will be announced (in the syllabus) and some will not be. You must be in class and complete the assignment at that time to receive credit; no make-up assignments will be accepted. The exams will be based on assigned readings, class discussions, and lecture content.

- All exams will be multiple choice, true/false, matching.
- The final will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and matching – no essay questions. All exams will be placed online and will be up from Thursday to Sunday at midnight. Exams will not be extended past that point.
- No make-up exams will be scheduled or accepted without a certified medical or documented family emergency excuse.
- Each exam and assignment has been assigned a set number of points and a student's grade in the course will be awarded based on the total number of points accumulated during the summer term

## POINTS EARNED

Exams: 400 = (4)100 per exam  
In class assignments: 50 (5 assignments @ 10 points each)  
Video Analysis: 100  
Research Paper: 100  
Final: 100  
Total = 750 points

The letter grade will be based on the total points obtained for the three exams and the in-class assignments. The grades will be given according to the following criteria:

A 750 – 640  
B 639 – 550  
C 549 – 450  
D 449 -- 300  
F 299 and below

It is expected that all students will abide the PVAMU Code of Academic Conduct, i.e., the policies and procedures regarding academic honesty and integrity.

## COURSE OUTLINE

**Week 1 Introduction:** *Getting to know each other. Review syllabi for Spring 2017 Semester.* A study of marriage and family's diversity and change. An overview of marriages and families as the oldest human social institutions; and the family has existed in some form in all societies.

**Marriage and Families Over Time-** A contemporary definition of marriage and families, a historical perspective of families, the types of marriages, types of families, the family functions social, regulation of sexual behavior within the family. What is a family? Myth about marriages and families

**Week 1 Ways of Studying and Explaining Marriages and Families-** Sociology of Marriages and Families, Studying marriages and families: The link between research and theory, Methodological techniques in the study of marriages and families. Critical look at traditional research on marriages and families, theoretical perspectives, and men studies relative to marriages and families.

**Assignment:** Family Research Paper (Due \_\_\_\_\_ ) **Research Paper-**(Academic Journal will be provided by professor). The paper must be APA, font is 12, and Times New Roman on all work, doubled spaced, cover page, reference pages and four (4) pages in the body. This means 1-cover page, 4-body pages and 1-reference page. Due date April 24<sup>th</sup> 2017 submit in dropbox on ECourse by midnight. **No exceptions!**

**Week 2 Understanding Gender: It's Influence in Intimate Relationships-** Distinguishing sex and gender roles, the traditional meanings of femininity and masculinity, gender roles in transition, theories of gender-role socialization, agents of socialization, and consequences of gender stereotyping.

Quiz 1 (chapters 1-3)

**Week 3 The Many Faces of Love:** What is this thing called love, how do people express love, love versus friendship, infatuation, and liking, Theories of love, love across gender and race, romantic love today and obstacles to love and loving relationships.

**Week 4 Dating, Coupling, and Mate Selection-** A historical perspective on mate selection in cross-culture, the intersections of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation, Theories of mate selection, mate selection: finding and meeting partners, the future of dating, violence in dating and intimate relationships, meeting partners: where and how. (**Family Intimacy presentation due today-Tuesday**)

**Week 5 Sexuality and Intimate Relationships-** A look at human sexuality: past and present, sexuality as social learning, sexual orientations, the physiology of sexuality, the human sexual expression, sexuality across the life cycle, sexual dysfunctions and sexual responsibility: protecting you from AIDS and other STD's.

Quiz 2 (chapters 4-6)

**Week 6 Non-marital Lifestyles-** from a historical perspectives-singlehood in early America, nineteenth and early twentieth century's, and current demographic trends, demystifying singlehood, single lifestyles heterosexual cohabitation, lesbian and gay relationships

**Week 7 The Marriage Experience-** Why do people marry? The meaning of marriage, marriage as a commitment, marriage as a legal contract, the changes and continuity in the meaning of marriage, marriage and gender, the transition and adjustments to marriages, heterogamous marriages, and marital satisfaction, communication, and conflict resolution in marriages

**Mid-Semester Exam**

**(Mid-Semester Exam over chapters 1-6)**

**Week 8 Reproduction and Parenting-** a historical overview: fertility trends in the United States, controlling fertility, abortion, infertility, reproduction without sex: the new technologies –artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, embryo transplant and surrogacy, conception, the choice to parent, pregnancy, prenatal development and care, prenatal problems and defects, expectant fathers, the parental adjustments, adaptations and patterns of child rearing

Quiz 3 (chapters 7-9)

## **Week 9**

**Week 9 Evolving Work and Family Structures-** The transformation of work and family roles, reason women work, work and family structure, traditional nuclear families, two-person career, the impact of work on family relationships, integrating work and family life: resolving role conflict, inequities in the workplace: consequences for families, the economic well-being of families-who are the poor? Uncertain future: the widening income gap, homelessness, and the welfare debate HDFM 2533, Contemporary Family in Cross-Cultural Perspective 5

**Week 10 Violence and Abuse-** The roots of family violence: A historical Context, family violence and United States culture, myths about violence and abuse, physical assault the case of battered women-explore what is battering, how prevalent is women battering? Why do women remain in abusive relationships? The sexual assault of women, the criminal justice response to women assault, the effects of physical and sexual assault on women, a comparative look at battered men, child assault and abuse and elder abuse in the United States

**Week 11 The Process of Uncoupled: Divorce in the United States-** A historical perspective on divorce in early America, who gets divorced and why? The process of divorce, the causes of divorce, the impact of divorce on spouses and children

**TODAY! Research paper due \_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of your class period.**

Quiz 4 (chapters 10-12)

**Week 12 Remarriage and Remarried families-** Cultural images of stepfamilies, a historical perspective, the process of remarriage-dating and courtship patterns, the decision to remarry, patterns of remarriage, and stages in the development of remarried families, The strengths and benefits of remarried families, and the quality of the remarital relationship

**Week 13 Marriage and Families in later Life-** study the characteristics of later-life families, sandwich generation, diversity in the family life cycle, demographics of aging: defining "Old" –age categories of the elderly, gender and marital status, race, ethnicity, and class and poverty among the elderly. Review living arrangements, marriage in later life and intergenerational relationships, the child-free elderly, sibling relationships, health and illness, family care giving and experience of widowhood.

**Week 14 Marriage and Families in the Twenty-First Century: U.S. and World Trends-** the challenges of a world economy, inequities in income and wealth, health and health care, the trends in drug use and associated health programs, alcohol, addiction and the family, meeting the needs of children: Foster care and adoption, explore the challenge of racism and ethnic discrimination in family life, and safety and security: Gangs & street violence and violence in America' schools. The terrorism and war and the fears that haunt Americans, and families coping with loss: Dying and death.

***HAVE A GREAT WINTER BREAK***