

**Sam Houston State University**  
**College of Health Sciences, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences**  
**FCS 3369: Family Relationships**

**Instructor:** Natalie D. Knesek, MS, CFCS

**Contact Information/Office Hours:** As an adjunct instructor online, I do not have an office and I do not keep regular hours on campus. **The best way to reach me is through the group discussion board and course email within blackboard.** I will try to respond within 48 hours during weekdays to messages sent in this manner. If for some reason you are unable to access the blackboard course email, you may send a message to [ndk003@shsu.edu](mailto:ndk003@shsu.edu). My personal cell phone is 830-857-6164. **I often reply to voice messages with email.** If you call me, leave a voice mail. Text messages are fine too. Please be courteous of the time of day. I am happy to meet via video chat should you need a face to face conversation. Once inside the course, please make sure you read the tips and tricks posted under the *Start Here* tab.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course focuses on analysis of the changing and supportive role of the members in the contemporary stages of the family life cycle. Study is made of family heritage and family interaction patterns with an emphasis on individual development. Requirement: Junior Standing

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Explain various theories related to intimate relationships
2. Reveal an understanding of marriage and family dynamics
3. Explain perspectives on communication and how communication helps develop, maintain and increase intimacy
4. Discuss conflict and conflict resolution techniques
5. Discuss issues related to sexual intimacy
6. Compare relationships between gender roles and power in the family
7. Identify issues related to managing economic resources
8. Summarize how one develops intimate relationships through friendship, intimacy, and singlehood situations
9. Describe the characteristic and unique qualities of dating, mate selection and cohabitation
10. Describe how marriage can build a strong foundation for families and society
11. State choices and challenges of parenthood
12. Compare family life in midlife and older couples
13. Summarize stress, abuse, and other family problematic issues often encountered by American families
14. Evaluate the impact of divorce, single-parent families and stepfamilies on individuals and society
15. Analyze methods for strengthening marriages and families

**Required text:** Olson, D. H., DeFrain, J. & Skogrand, L. (2014). *Marriages and families: Intimacy, diversity and strengths*. (8<sup>th</sup> ed). New York: McGraw-Hill. It is not necessary to purchase the packaged or bundled version, but it is important that you have the current edition.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

**Taking a course online takes a tremendous amount of self-discipline. Expect to spend the same amount of time on coursework as you would in the classroom, plus additional study time. To avoid becoming overwhelmed by the tasks, readings, and assignments set aside a minimum of three hours each week for this class.**

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

### **ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS (AP 900823)**

*Recommended for inclusion on syllabi.* Academic grievances include disputes over course grades, unauthorized class absences/tardiness, suspension for academic deficiency, instructor's alleged unprofessional conduct related to academic matters, graduate comprehensive and oral exams, theses and dissertations, and withdrawal or suspension of privileges related to degree-required clinical rotation, internships, or other clinical service delivery in professional degree programs.

If the dispute is determined to be based upon professional judgment, the aggrieved student is entitled to have, as appropriate and in turn, the department/school chair, College Academic Review Panel, academic dean, Dean of Graduate Studies (for graduate student issues), and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs form an opinion about the dispute and so advise the individual(s) involved.

<http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/0bb1346f-b8d6-4486-9290-dba24123d0d8.pdf>

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Director of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, Lee Drain North Annex, or by calling 936.294.3512, TDD 936.294.3786. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). See the link at <https://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

### **STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS:**

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

### **GRAMMAR, AND THE USE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:**

At this point in your college career, it should be unnecessary for an instructor to correct any misuse of the English language. Speaking and writing in a professional manner should now be second nature for you. It IS important and points WILL be deducted for improper use of the language. Always double check your work. In addition, as a student in a junior-level course, it is expected that ALL of your submissions will show evidence of critical thinking skills and a reasonable grasp of the content area. Lack of depth will also result in a loss of points.

### **USE OF TELEPHONE AND TEXT MESSENGERS IN ACADEMIC CLASSROOMS**

While this class does not meet in person, it is a requirement that the telephone and text messengers policy be included on the syllabus. To view the complete policy on telephones and text messengers follow this link:

[Use of Telephones and Text Messengers in Academic Classrooms and Facilities AP 100728](#)

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING SCALE:**

This course is set up in four modules that correspond with the text. Each module is worth 175 points and contains a discussion board worth 25 points, a module activity or activities worth 50 points, and a module quiz worth 100 points. Refer to the course calendar on this syllabus for due dates. In addition, there is a 200 point final exam. **Late work is unacceptable. All work submitted after the due date and time will incur a 15 point penalty per 24 hours late.**

<b>Discussions</b>	4 @ 25 points	100 points possible
<b>module activity or activities</b>	each module will total to 50 points	200 points possible
<b>module quizzes</b>	4 @ 100 points	400 points possible
<b>Heritage Project</b>	100 points	100 points possible
<b>final exam</b>	200 points	200 points possible
<b>Total</b>		<b>1000 points possible</b>
<b>900-1000</b>	A	
<b>800-899</b>	B	
<b>700-799</b>	C	
<b>600-699</b>	D	
<b>or below</b>	F	

This syllabus is a work in progress. Should changes be made, a new version will be distributed through blackboard.

**Discussion Boards** – Participation in discussions is one of the most important aspects of online coursework. This is your opportunity to demonstrate comprehension and critical thinking skills. **All postings should be well thought out and free of grammatical errors. Particularly with your original posts, take time to write the post first in a word document and then copy and paste it into the discussion board. Original discussion posts should always be at least 200 words.** Due dates will be posted on the discussion assignment. There is one original post in each module that will be worth 15 points. In addition, each discussion will require you to respond substantively to at least two classmates. The two response posts are worth 5 points each.

**Module Activity/Activities** – Each module will contain at least one activity. **Activities will typically be due on the day before the module quiz opens, but always double check the assignment for the due date.** Also, take time to double check your submitted module activities for point value to make sure that they total to 50 points. This will help you verify that you did not miss anything. **Module content disappears when the module quiz opens.**

**Quizzes** – Each module will conclude with a quiz worth 100 points that is comprehensive of all content presented in the module. Questions may be objective and/or subjective in nature and will vary in point value. Quizzes are designed to serve as a self-assessment tool and preparation for the final exam. You may take each quiz twice prior to 11:59 on the last day of the module. Quizzes taken after the availability period will not receive credit unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. All course content will be removed during the availability period.

**Heritage Project** – Instructions for this project will be included as a separate tab on the course blackboard. The assignment will be due no later than 11:59 on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Final Exam** – Your final exam will become available on Monday, May 7 at 8:00 a.m. and remain visible until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8. You will only be allowed one attempt at the final exam. **If you encounter technical difficulties during this time period and need to have your exam reset you may contact me via cell phone during the availability period to request clearing your attempt. This is not a guarantee that this request will be granted. Plan ahead, take your exam from a hardwired computer –do not rely on wifi.**

#### **Course Calendar:**

Dates	Module and Key Concepts	Corresponding Text
1/17 to 2/11	Module I – Introduction and The Social Context of Intimate Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage as a theme</li> <li>• Critical Influences</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Current Trends</li> <li>• Theories</li> </ul>	Chapter 1-3 Module One Quiz available from 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 8th until 11:59 on Sunday, February 11th.

<b>2/12 to 2/25</b>	Module II - Dynamics of Intimate Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Conflict Resolution</li> <li>• Sexuality</li> <li>• Gender and Power</li> <li>• Household Management</li> </ul>	Chapters 4-8 Module II quiz will be available from 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 22nd until 11:59 on Sunday, February 25th.
<b>2/26 to 4/8</b>	Module III – Stages of Intimate Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining relationships</li> <li>• Dating and Mate Selection</li> <li>• Marriage and Families over the Lifespan</li> </ul>	Chapters 9-13 Module III quiz will be available from 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 5 until 11:59 p.m. on April 8th.
<b>4/9 to 4/29</b>	Module IV – Challenges and Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress</li> <li>• Abuse</li> </ul>	Chapters 14-16 <b>Heritage Project Due Sunday, April 22nd 11:59 p.m.</b> Module IV quiz will be available from 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 26th until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, April 29 <sup>th</sup> .
<b>4/30 to 5/8</b>	Final Exam: You will only be allowed one attempt. Plan ahead. Use a hard wired computer, not wifi. If you have technical difficulties, you may request a reset if it is before 5:00 p.m. May 8th. Reset requests are not guaranteed resets.	<b>Available from 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 7th until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8th.</b>