

**Human Development and Family Studies 469**  
*Family and Community Influences on the Young Child*

**Fall 2009**

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**Class Meetings:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM, Room 6232 Social Sciences

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to broaden students' understanding of the roles and influences of family, community, and culture on children's development. Factors that influence how families function, and how schools, peer groups, neighborhoods, and the media affect children's ability to become competent members of our society will be examined. Attention will also be paid to how social class, ethnic, and gender differences impact childhood socialization and outcomes. Students will be introduced to exemplary community programs, services, and initiatives that foster positive socialization outcomes for children and families.

**Course Format:** A combination of lecture material, class discussion, group activities, presentations, and videotaped exemplars will constitute our class time.

**Required Readings:** The required reading for this course is a collection of research and theoretical articles from the following two sources:

- (1) Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization*. Roxbury or Oxford University Press.
- (2) HDFS 469 Course Reader

The course reader is available for purchase at Bob's Copy Shop, 1401 University Avenue (in the purple building next to Subway at the corner of University Avenue and Randall Street), 251-2936, [www.bobscopypshop.com](http://www.bobscopypshop.com). Cash, check, or WisCards are accepted forms of payment (no credit or debit cards).

## **Student Resources:**

Special Needs. Your success in completing this course is important. I wish to fully include persons with special needs in this course. Please let me know if you need any accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessment of this course to enable you to fully participate. I am very willing to assist you and I will try to maintain the confidentiality of the information you share with me.

The Writing Center. The Writing Center (located at 6171 Helen C. White Hall) offers free classes in writing essay exams and individual help is offered to assist students with written assignments. For information or a listing of services please contact the Writing Center at 263-1992 or [www.wisc.edu/writing](http://www.wisc.edu/writing). The website offers detailed information about the Writing Center, descriptions and schedules of classes, handouts on writing, and instruction via email.

Volunteer Opportunities. One way to learn more about family and community influences on children's development is to become a volunteer in a program that serves children, adults, and/or families. Although no course credit is given, direct experience with children, adults, and/or families will enhance your learning and may help you find a job after you graduate. If you are interested, information is available at the Volunteer Services Office – Morgridge Center for Public Service (located in Room 154 of the Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street). Please call 263-2432 for more information.

## **Course Requirements:**

**Class attendance and citizenship.** Much of what you learn or fail to learn in this course is dependent on the nature of the classroom community we are able to construct collectively. Therefore, as valued citizens of the course, students are expected to attend each class, to have read the assigned readings, to have formulated one or two written questions, and to be ready to participate in class discussions. Good citizenship means acquiring knowledge and sharing knowledge with one another in a respectful and exploratory manner. A student's attendance and good citizenship (i.e., active listening and *informed*, respectful participation) will be considered in assigning a final grade.

**Television sampling exercise and critique.** For this paper, you will sample approximately 4 hours of prime time television (i.e., defined as 6 – 9 PM for the purposes of this assignment) from the eyes of a child. The goal is to view the televised programming through the eyes of an 8-year-old child while keeping a corner of your brain working like a college student. Once you have collected your observational “data,” you will be asked to make sense of it in a cohesive, short paper (i.e., about 3 – 4 pages, double spaced) that summarizes and reflects on the implicit messages and social understanding that a child would be getting from the programs and advertisements that you watched (e.g., “people with long, blonde hair seem happy” or “if you drive a Ford truck, you must be tough”). More detailed information about collecting the data and preparing the paper will be given in a separate handout and discussed in class. Your written critique is due no later than Thursday, October 8, 2009.

**Community investigation with class presentation and summary sheet.** For this assignment, you will have the opportunity to work with 2-3 other students to explore one of the broad topics covered in the course. Once your group has been assigned to a topic, you will gather theoretical information and/or research-based information about why this is an important issue in relation to children and families. Second, your group will identify and investigate at least one program, community service, public policy or research initiative that attempts to address this issue at the level of the child, family, and/or community. Third, your group will contact a person who is involved in the application of this program or initiative and if appropriate, make a site visit. Finally, your group will present what you have learned to the class on the date that your topic is scheduled. More detailed information about conducting the investigation and preparing the class presentation (and summary sheet) will be given in a separate handout and discussed during class. Students sign up for their choice of topics during our class meeting on Thursday, September 17, 2009.

**Take-home exams (2).** You will be given two take-home exams that require you to integrate information that we will be reading and discussing in class. The exams will consist of essay questions that will enable you to demonstrate your ability to think productively about the course material. The exam questions are “thought questions” designed to make you think creatively about the material covered in the course. In most instances, these questions will ask you to apply course concepts and material to some practical situations involving children and their families. Your written responses to each exam are due two weeks after they are assigned. The first take-home exam is due Thursday, October 29, 2009. The second take-home exam is due Tuesday, December 15, 2009.

## **Evaluation Method and Grading Scale:**

Grades are based on the number of points earned. Points will be distributed as follows:

Attendance and citizenship	10 points
Television sampling critique	15 points
Community investigation presentation & summary sheet	25 points
Take-home exams (2 @ 25 points each)	<u>50 points</u>
Total points	100 points

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	=	94-100 points
AB	=	90-93 points
B	=	83-89 points
BC	=	79-82 points
C	=	70-78 points
D	=	60-69 points
F	=	0-59 points

### **Guidelines for assigned work (i.e., exams, presentations, papers):**

Students' written and presented work will be evaluated based on their understanding of course material and concepts, critical thinking skills, completeness, and ability to integrate and apply course material.

Written work is due on the designated dates. Extensions may be negotiated, but not guaranteed, if you contact me at least 24 hours in advance. No credit will be given if work is received late without this notice.

Electronic submission of written work is not an option unless approved in advance.

### **Guidelines for class attendance:**

Students who miss more than 6 class meetings are not eligible to receive a grade higher than a 'C' for the course.

Use of laptops and cell phones is prohibited during class meetings.

## **Course schedule, assigned readings, and due dates:**

**September 3**                      **Introduction to the course**  
Course description and requirements

### **Part I: Processes of Socialization**

**September 8 & 10**                **Foundations of socialization**  
The changing context of children's development: History and trends

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 1: Studying children. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 11 – 34). London: Oxford University Press.

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 2: Foundations of socialization. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 35 – 54). London: Oxford University Press.

**September 15 & 17**              **Socializing children**  
Aims, methods, and processes of socialization

*Students sign-up for community investigation topics during class on Thursday, September 17.*

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 4: Basic processes and outcomes of socialization. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 83 – 118). London: Oxford University Press.

### **Part II: Agencies of Socialization**

**September 22 & 24**              **Families**  
The social ecology of the family

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 5: Families. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 124 – 154). London: Oxford University Press.

Collins, W.A., Maccoby, E.E., Steinberg, L., Hetherington, M., & Bornstein, M.H. (February 2000). Contemporary research on parenting: The case for nature and nurture. *American Psychologist*, 218 – 232.

Galinsky, E. (August 29, 1999). Do working parents make the grade? *Newsweek*, 155 – 158. (Excerpted from Galinsky, E. (1999), *Ask the children*. William Morrow & Co.)

**September 29 & October 1**

**Community Investigation Planning & Site Visits**

No assigned readings.

**October 6 & 8**

**Schools**

Classroom environments

Teaching practices and philosophies

School and family linkages

***Due: Television sampling exercise and critique due no later than Thursday, October 8.***

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 6: Schools. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 159 – 181). London: Oxford University Press.

Hill, N.E. & Taylor, L.C. (2004). Parental school involvement and children's academic achievement. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 161 – 165.

Stigler, J.W. & Stevenson, H.W. (1992). How Asian teachers polish each lesson to perfection. In M. Gauvain & M. Cole (Eds.), *Readings on the development of children* (pp. 196 – 209). New York: Worth Publishers.

Traub, J. (Nov 10, 2002). Does it work? Three popular models for transforming the classroom. How do they measure up? *The New York Times/Education Life* (pp. 23 – 27).

**October 13 & 15**

**Peer groups**

Group dynamics and social hierarchies

Bullying and relational aggression

Peer collaboration

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 7: Peer groups. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 183 – 201). London: Oxford University Press.

Berndt, T.J. (February 2002). Friendship quality and social development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 7 – 10.

Talbot, M. (February 24, 2002). Girls just want to be mean. *The New York Times Magazine*.

Olweus, D. (March 2003). A profile of bullying at school. *Educational Leadership*, 12 – 17.

Pepler, D., Smith, P.K., & Rigby, K. (2004). Looking back and looking forward: Implications for making interventions work effectively. In P.K. Smith, D. Pepler, & K. Rigby (Eds.), *Bullying in schools* (pp. 307 – 324). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**October 20 & 22**

**Media of mass communication (Part 1 of 2)**

Screen media (television, movies)

Print media (books, magazines, comics)

Audio media (radio, popular music)

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 8: Media of mass communication. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* communication (pp. 205 – 229). London: Oxford University Press.

McGinn, D (Nov 11, 2002). Guilt free TV. *Newsweek*, 51 – 55.

Brody, J.E. (Aug 3, 2004). TV's toll on young minds and bodies. *The New York Times/Science Times*.

Jaffe, E. (December 2005). Watch and learn. *APS Observer*, 18(12), 22 – 25.

**October 27**

**Media of mass communication (Part 2 of 2)**

Film

Interactive and multimedia (computer, Internet, video games)

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 8: Media of mass communication. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 229 – 236). London: Oxford University Press.

Subrahmanyam, K., Kraut, R., Greenfield, P., & Gross, E. (2001). New forms of electronic media (pp. 73 – 99). In D.G. Singer & J.L. Singer (Eds.), *Handbook of children and the media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Goode, E (December 10, 2002). With video games, researchers link guns to stereotypes. *The New York Times/Science Times*.

Blakeslee, S. (2003). Video-game killing builds visual skills, researchers report. *The New York Times*.

**October 29**

**Take-home Exam 1 Due**

(No class meeting)

**November 3 & 5**

**Neighborhoods and communities**

The influence of neighborhoods and the community

Physical and population characteristics

Creating nurturing communities

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 10: Neighborhood and communities. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* communities (pp. 280 – 284). London: Oxford University Press.

Lee, B.A. (2001). Taking neighborhoods seriously. In A. Booth & A.C. Crouter (Eds.), *Does it take a village?* (pp. 31 – 40). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**Part III: Diversities and Outcomes of Socialization**

**November 10 & 12**

**Social class differences**

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 9: Social class. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 247 – 263). London: Oxford University Press.

Benocraitis, N.V. (2000). The impact of social class (arguments by Suan Mayer and Kathryn Edin & Laura Lein). In *Feuds about families: Conservative, centrist, liberal, and feminist perspectives* (pp. 286 – 299) Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Luthar, S.S. (2003). The culture of affluence: Psychological costs of material wealth. *Child Development*, 74(6), 1581 – 1593.

**November 17 & 19**

**Social and behavioral socialization outcomes**

Sex and gender roles

Moral development

Handel, G., Cahill, S.E., & Elkin, F. (2007). Chapter 10: Sex, gender, and socialization. In G. Handel, S.E. Cahill, & F. Elkin, *Children and society: The sociology of children and childhood socialization* (pp. 287 – 311). London: Oxford University Press.

Farr, D. (2006). Sissy boy, progressive parents. In J.F. Gubrium & J.A. Holstein, *Couples, kids, and family life* (pp. 124 – 141).

**November 24**

**TBA**

**November 26**

**Thanksgiving Recess (No class meeting)**

**December 1 & 3**

**Developing community-level assets and interventions**

Benson, P.L. (2006). Creating asset-building communities. In P.L. Benson, *All kids are out kids* (pp. 119 – 151). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Riley, D. (April 1997). Using local research to change 100 communities for children and families. *American Psychologist*, 52(4), 424-433.

**December 8 & 10**

**Course summary and wrap-up**

Community Investigation Presentations (as needed)

**December 15**

**Take-home Exam 2 Due**

(No class meeting)