

Human Development and Family Studies 516
Family Stress and Coping

Fall 2009

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Course Description: This course will examine family stress and coping across the life cycle. The first part of the course is devoted to the study of theories and paradigms related to stress and coping in families. The remainder of the course is devoted to an in-depth exploration of research relating to normative and non-normative family stress and strains. Topics include parenting, poverty, work and family, violence, disability, illness, caregiving, aging, and bereavement. Risk factors that threaten family functioning as well as protective and resiliency factors that facilitate recovery from hardship and adversity will be examined.

Course Prerequisites: In order to register for this course, students must have completed two courses from any of the following disciplines: sociology, psychology, and/or women's health.

Course Objectives: This course has the following four objectives:

- 1) To acquaint students with various theories, models and perspectives on family stress and coping across the lifespan.
- 2) To familiarize students with research and application of these models to specific contemporary topics, including ideas of risk and protective processes.
- 3) To encourage exploration and application of these perspectives to contemporary topics relevant to child and family functioning, and to foster critical thinking about stress, coping, emotion and the variety of experiences contextualized by race/ethnicity, class, and gender.
- 4) To foster students' ability to examine a contemporary component of family stress and coping, and to communicate those findings clearly and concisely in written and oral form.

Course Format: A combination of lecture material, class discussion, case studies, group activities, and videotaped exemplars of stress and coping will constitute our class time.

Required Readings:

The required reading for this course is a collection of research and theoretical articles.

A copy of these readings 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. The cost is \$63.50. Cash, check, or WisCards are accepted forms of payment (no credit or debit cards).

Student Resources and Special Needs:

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. 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 stress and coping 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.

Distributed exam questions. Over the course of the semester you will be given seven discussion questions that require you to reflect about and integrate information that we will be reading and discussing in class. Across the course, these questions can be conceived as a distributed exam, one that demonstrates your ability to think productively about the course material. The questions are "thought questions," not simple fact-finding questions; they are 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 families. You are responsible for responding to 5 of the 7 questions. Responses should not exceed four typewritten, double-spaced pages. Your written response to an exam question is due one week after it is assigned.

Instructional group activity. The ability to work cooperatively and to create interesting instructional activities are useful skills in most professions. Each group of students will create and implement a 25-30 minute activity that explores a day's topic and/or readings. This activity is not meant to be a summary of the topic and/or readings; rather, students will brainstorm ideas, questions, and/or exercises that focus on one or more aspects of the day's topic. Each group member will come to the group's first brainstorming meeting with at least two ideas or questions. The group will then use these ideas for designing an instructional activity for the rest of the class. These activities will be scheduled throughout the semester. Students sign up for group activity topics during class on Thursday, September 17, 2009.

Research paper/project. Because expressing one's knowledge in written form is crucial to success in nearly all professions, students will complete a paper on a contemporary, family-focused topic that uses and/or challenges the perspectives or models discussed in class. This 8 – 10 page exploratory paper (not including references) must include a relevant background literature review as a foundation; from there the exploration may take a variety of forms, from library research paper to community investigation, ethnographic interview, media critique, etc. The goal of this assignment is an engaged investigation of a family stress and coping issue which is grounded in course material and independent research and then expanded into new ideas and exploration. An introductory paragraph describing the topic, an initial outline, and at least 5 references are due no later than Tuesday, November 3, 2009. The final paper/project is due no later than 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
Distributed exam questions (5 @ 10 points each)	50 points
Instructional group activity	15 points
Research paper/project	<u>25 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 written work (i.e., exam questions, research paper/project):

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 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 Course Introduction

September 8 & 10 Stress, Coping and Diversity of Experience What is a family? What is stress? What causes stress today?

Olson, D., & DeFrain, J. (1997). Family stress and coping. In *Marriage and the family: Diversity and strengths* (2nd ed., pp. 444-473). New York: Mayfield.

Folkman, S., & Lazarus, R.S. (1991). Coping and emotion. In A. Monat & R.S. Lazarus (Eds.), *Stress and coping: An anthology* (3rd ed., pp. 207-227). New York: Columbia University Press.

Kaslow, F.W. (2001). Families and family psychology at the millennium. *American Psychologist*, 56(1), 37-46

September 15 & 17 Social Support and Its Relationship to Stress and Coping

Students sign-up for instructional group activity topics on Thursday, September 17, 2009.

Belle, D. (1982). Social ties and social support. In *Lives in stress: Women and depression* (pp. 135-144). CA: Sage Publications.

Pierce, G.R., Sarason, B.R., Sarason, I.G., Joseph, H.J., & Henderson, C.A. (1996). Conceptualizing and assessing social support in the context of the family. In G.R. Pierce, B.R. Sarason, & I.G. Sarason (Eds.), *Handbook of social support and the family* (pp. 3-23). NY: Plenum Press.

Banyard, V.L. (1995). "Taking another route": Daily survival narratives from mothers who are homeless. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(6), 871-891.

September 22 & 24

Resilience Processes in Individuals and Families

Distributed Exam Question 1 due on Thursday, September 24

Patterson, J.M. (2002). Understanding family resilience. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 58*(3), 233-246.

Masten, A.S. (2001). Ordinary magic. *American Psychologist, 56*(3), 227-238

Carver, C.S., & Scheier, M.F. (2005). Optimism. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (231-243). New York: Oxford University Press.

September 29

Instructional Group Activity Planning

No assigned readings.

October 1

Parenting and Human Development

Distributed Exam Question 2 due on Thursday, October 1

Cowan, C.P., Cowan, P.A., Heming, G., & Miller, N.B. (1991). Becoming a family: Marriage, parenting, and child development. In P.A. Cowan & E.M. Heterington (Eds.), *Family transitions* (pp. 79-109). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Shapiro, A.F., Gottman, J.M., & Carrere, S. (2000). The baby and the marriage: Identifying factors that buffer against decline in marital satisfaction after the first baby arrives. *Journal of Family Psychology, 14*(1), 59-70.

Crnic, K.A., Booth, & Booth, C.L. (1991). Mothers' and fathers' perceptions of daily hassles of parenting across early childhood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53*, 1042-1050.

Peterson, G.W., & Mathieson, K. (2000). Understanding parental stress. In P. McKenry & S. Price (Eds.), *Families and change: Coping with stressful events and transitions* (pp. 71-89).

October 6 & 8

Economic Stress

Distributed Exam Question 3 due on Thursday, October 8

Seccombe, K. (1999). Historic and persisting dilemmas: How do we explain poverty, and What should we do about it? In K. Seccombe, *So you think I drive a cadillac?* (pp. 26-47). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Fox, J.J., & Bartholomae, S. (2000). Economic stress and families. In P. McKenry & S. Price (Eds.), *Families and change: Coping with stressful events and transitions* (pp. 250-271).

Simons, R.L., Whitbeck, L.B., Melby, J.N., & Wu, C-I. (1994). Economic pressure and harsh parenting. In R.D. Conger & G.H. Elder, Jr. (Eds.), *Families in troubled times: Adapting to change in rural America* (pp. 207-222). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Graham, C.A., Easterbrooks, M.A. (2000). School-aged children's vulnerability to depressive symptomology: The role of attachment security, maternal depressive symptomology, and economic risk. *Development and Psychopathology*, 12, 201-213.

October 13 & 15

Physical and Mental Well-being

Distributed Exam Question 4 due on Thursday, October 15

Campbell, T.L. (2000). Physical illness: Challenges to families. In P. McKenry & S. Price (Eds.), *Families and change: Coping with stressful events and transitions* (pp. 154-177).

Gavazzi, S.M., & Schock, A.M. (2000). Mental illness and families. In P. McKenry & S. Price (Eds.), *Families and change: Coping with stressful events and transitions* (pp. 229-243).

Suinn, R.M. (2001). The terrible twos – anger and anxiety. *American Psychologist*, 56(1), 27-36.

Ryff, C.D., & Singer, B. (2005). From social structure to biology: Integrative science in pursuit of human health and well-being. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (541-555). New York: Oxford University Press.

October 20 & 22

Violence in Families and Communities

Boss, P. (2002). Family crisis: Overcoming trauma and victimization. In P. Boss, *Family stress management* (pp.159-174). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

McCullough, M.E., & vanOyen Witvliet, C. (2005). The psychology of forgiveness. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (446-458). New York: Oxford University Press.

Osofsky, J.D., & Roberson Jackson, B. (1994). Parenting in violent environments. In *Caring for infants and toddlers in violent environments: Hurt, healing and hope* (pp. 3-12).

October 27 & 29

Student Research Days – No Class Meetings

November 3 & 5

Disabilities

Introductory paragraph, initial outline, and 5 references for research paper/project due no later than Tuesday, November 3

Gottlieb, A. (1998). Single mothers of children with disabilities: The role of sense of coherence in managing multiple challenges. In H.I. McCubbin, E.A. Thompson, A.I. Thompson, & J.E. Fromer (Eds.), *Sense of coherence and resiliency: Stress, coping, and health* (pp. 189-204).

Seligman, M., & Darling, R.B. (1989). Becoming the parent of a disabled child: Reaction to first information. In M. Seligman & R.B. Darling (Eds.), *Ordinary families, special children: A systems approach to childhood disability* (pp. 36-56). New York: Guilford Press.

Elliott, T.R., Kurylo, M., & Rivera, P. (2005). Positive growth following acquire physical disability. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (687-699). New York: Oxford University Press.

Thomas, C. (1996). Every mother has a story: An ethnographic interview project. *Zero to Three*, 21-28

November 10 & 12

Infertility and Pregnancy Outcomes: Adoption and Surrogacy

Distributed Exam Question 5 due on Thursday, November 12

Phipps, S.A.A. (1995). African-American couples' lived experience of infertility. In H.I. McCubbin, A.E. Thompson, A.I. Thompson, & J.A. Futrell (Eds.), *Resiliency in ethnic minority families: African-American families*, (Vol. 2, pp. 245-258).

Mannis, V.S. (2000). The adopting single mother: Four portraits of American women adopting from China. *Adoption Quarterly*, 4(2), 29-55.

Kelly, A.L. (2002). Emotions and infertility. *SHAPE*, 70-74.

Dunkel-Schetter, C., Sagrestano, L.M., Feldman, P., & Killingsworth, C. (1996). Social support and pregnancy: A comprehensive review focusing on ethnicity and culture. In G.R. Pierce, B.R. Sarason, & I.G. Sarason (Eds.), *Handbook of social support and the family* (pp. 375-412). New York: Plenum Press.

November 17 & 19

Work and Family Issues: Managing Multiple Roles

Jacobs, J.A., & Gerson, K. (2004) How work spills over into life. In J.A. Jacobs & K. Gerson, *The time divide: Work, family, and gender inequality* (pp. 80-98). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bird, G.W. (2005). Professional identity and coping behaviors in dual-career couples. *Family Relations*, 54, 145-160.

Guendouzi, J. (2005). "The guilt thing": Balancing domestic and professional roles. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 68, 901-909.

Marks, S.R., & MacDermid, S.M. (1996). Multiple roles and the self: A theory of role balance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 417-432.

Marshall, N.L., Barnett, R.C., Baruch, G.K., & Pleck, J.H. (1990). Double jeopardy: The costs of caring at work and at home. In E.K. Abel & M.K. Nelson, *Circles of care: Work and identity in women's lives* (pp. 266-277).

Obama, B. (2006). Chapter 9: Family. In B. Obama, *The audacity of hope: Thoughts on reclaiming the American dream* (pp. 325 – 352). New York: Crown Publishers.

November 24

TBA

November 26

Thanksgiving Recess - No Class Meeting

December 1 & 3

Aging, Social Support, and Caregiving

Distributed Exam Question 6 due on Thursday, December 3

Abel, E.K. (1990). Family care of the frail elderly. In E.K. Abel & M.K. Nelson, *Circles of care: work and identity in women's lives* (pp. 65-91).

Pillemer, K., & Sutor, J. (1996). Family stress and social support among caregivers to persons with Alzheimer's Disease. In G.R. Pierce, B.R. Sarason, & I.G. Sarason (Eds.), *Handbook of social support and the family* (pp. 467-494). New York: Plenum Press.

Bowers, B. (1990). Family perceptions of care in a nursing home. In E.K. Abel & M.K. Nelson, *Circles of care: work and identity in women's lives* (pp. 278-289).

Williamson, G.M. (2005). Aging well: Outlook for the 21st century. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (676-686). New York: Oxford University Press.

December 8 & 10

End-of-life Issues and Bereavement

Distributed Exam Question 7 due on Thursday, December 10

Rice, F.P. (1996). The crisis of death and grief. In Intimate relationships, marriages, and families (pp. 477-486).

Baker, J.E., Sedney, M.A., & Gross, E. (1992). Psychological tasks for bereaved children. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 62, 105-116.

Nolen-Hoeksema, S. & Davis, C.G. (2005). Positive responses to loss. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (598-607). New York: Oxford University Press.

Fanos, J.H. (1996). Sibling loss. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum (pp. 57-79).

Wortman, C.B., & Silver, R.C. (1991). The myths of coping with loss. In A. Monat & R.S. Lazarus (Eds.), Stress and coping: An anthology (3rd ed., pp. 388-405).

December 15

Course summary

Research papers due no later than Tuesday, December 15, 2009