



FYC 4660 Family Policy and Law (22FD) Spring 2017 DRAFT VERSION

This is the first version of the syllabus and will be modified the first week of Spring 2017 semester. Note that throughout the semester, the instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus as needed (e.g., to correct unseen errors and adjust to speaker schedules).

Information about the Course

Course Description

This course covers major areas of social policy pertaining to families. Key legislation affecting families is highlighted. Emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for students to think critically and engage in discussions about trends and controversies in family policy.

Course Goal

Goal: The overall goal of this course is to help students develop the conceptual, analytic, and practical skills for understanding and influencing family policy. The primary aim of this course is to answer the question, **“How can family policy be used to strengthen all families?”** To answer this question, it will be important to understand contemporary families, what family policy is, and various ways to influence policy decisions.

Course Objectives

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Explain what family policy is**, based on accepted scholarly definitions and new thinking in the field.
2. **Discuss key family policies**, in light of changing US families.
3. **Engage in critical thinking** in discussions and presentations about key family policies in social and political context.
4. **Use skills for engaging in family policy**.

Structure of the Course

The course is divided into four sections organized around answering certain questions.

Course Information



Where and When

T 7th-8th (1:15-3:50) and
R 8th (3-3:50)
McCarty A 3194

Instructor

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This is a CFLE-track course.
See next page*



1. **What is family policy?** Who are we and what are the issues? How families are changing and what this means for social and family policies. Tensions over values about family. Practicing civil discourse.
2. **What is the “family lens”?** Understanding how to use the family lens as a framework for evaluating social policies, in light of family changes, needs, social justice and human rights. Examining a selected issue from this perspective.
3. **How is policy developed?** Policy processes at the federal, state, and local levels. The US Constitution. Sources of information about policy.
4. **How is your voice heard?** Examples from extraordinary and ordinary people and social movements. Strategies for communicating. Professional roles in family policy
5. **What’s going on?** Key developments in child and family policies.
6. **What do you know?** Putting it all together in a policy brief and communication strategy.

*Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)

The content of this course is approved by the National Council on Family Relations (ncfr.org) as part of the University of Florida's Certified Family Life Educator Program in the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences. This course meets professional requirements for one of the CFLE content areas, i.e., family policy and law. This course is more than one requirement for a “local” UF certificate program. It is required for a *national* certificate as a professional family life educator. See the instructor or your advisor if you are interested in becoming a CFLE.

Course Communication

1. When emailing, please use the Canvas website and use only your .ufl account. We will not respond to emails from g-mail or another server/provider. If you have not received a reply, please email again or see the instructor or the TA for assistance.
2. Check your ufl email and the Canvas announcements page every day for notices about class.
3. Come see us during office hours!

The instructor and graduate teaching assistant are both available to assist students with this class. If you need to speak with the instructor, do so after class or during office hours; or email sdsmith@ufl.edu. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please feel free to try again or catch Dr. Smith after class! For questions about grades and make up work, contact the graduate TA (GTA) during scheduled office hours and by email. Please remember that the GTA is also a student, and allow 24 hours for a reply. Please note: If you cannot meet during office hours, an appointment can be scheduled for another time.

This is important: If you have questions or problems with the course or something else, please see one of us as soon as you can. Do not wait until the end of the semester, especially if you are doing poorly in class. Late in the semester may be too late to resolve problems.



Required Course Materials

Required Text and readings:

There is not one required textbook. Students are required to:

- Order a copy of the pocket US Constitution; and read the Amendments and Bill of Rights <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html>
- Read the *Miami Herald* and the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*. NPR News, and/or PBS Nightly News are highly recommended.
- Subscribe to a Florida government news feed for the relevant Senate and House committees and follow committee activities.
- Subscribe to *The Children's Campaign Current* <http://iamforkids.org/> . You may also want to subscribe to *Safie Review* for more Florida legislative and political news.
- Conduct research on topics identified in class.

Other readings are listed on the course calendar and available through electronic course reserves, in the Marston library, or through the Internet. Treat these readings as you would a textbook—required reading that is necessary for understanding the material and performing well on quizzes and tests. Make sure you have read the assigned material BEFORE coming to class. ALSO, additional material may be assigned when something relevant and time sensitive comes up in the news or research publications.

Videos and Speakers:

Several videos will be viewed in class as an integral part of the course material. Typically, there will be a viewing guide to help you identify main concepts and analyze key parts of the video. Missed videos that are not available online can be made up during office hours when the student has an excused absence. Speakers who are experts on particular topics will be invited to class. They may or may not use PowerPoint slides. Students will be responsible for taking notes and readings additional material they provide.

Course Schedule (Changes will be made on this tentative schedule)

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Week 1 | <i>Unit 1: What is family policy?</i> | Overview of course, assignments, and expectations; self-assessment identifying Interests, family policy knowledge, skills |
| Week 2 | <i>What is the "family lens"?</i> | Changing families; defining family and social problems; using the family lens to examine impacts of policy on families; advocacy and education |
| Week 3 | | Approaches to family policy: risk and resilience; family strengths; competing world views (students); social justice and human rights (speaker) |

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| Week 4 | <i>Unit 2: How is policy developed?</i> | U.S. Constitution, Amendments, Bill of Rights Government structure and how an idea becomes law; our leaders and how to communicate with them |
| Week 5 | <i>How is your voice heard?</i> | Family law; Professional roles in family policy (students); the policy brief; research for your project |
| Week 6 | | Examples and assignments; Test 1 |
| Week 7 | Spring Break No Classes | Have fun, regenerate |
| Week 8 | | The policy brief; finding resources and research; your project "pitch" |
| Week 9 | | Student-led roundtables |
| Week 10 | <i>Unit 3: What's going on? Key child and family policies</i> | Mental Health Policy |
| Week 11 | | Child welfare policy |
| Week 12 | | Marriage Policy |
| Week 13 | | Work and Family Policy |
| Week 14 | | IPV Policy |
| Week 15 | <i>Unit 4: What do you know?</i> | Wrap up, self-assessment of knowledge and skills; reports on observations and policy maker; Test 2 |
| Week 16 | | <i>Roundtable policy briefs (your reports)</i> |

Required Assignments

Grades are based on the following. [Students must successfully complete all requirements to pass this course:](#)

| Assignment | Points |
|---|--------|
| Exams (2 @100) | 200 |
| Final Project | 150 |
| Student-led roundtable discussions of news article on family policy or family issue | 50 |
| Getting involved: meeting observation, policy maker report, phone calls, events | 100 |
| Quizzes, participation, and attendance | 100 |
| TOTAL | 600 |



Exams (2 @ 100 points=200)

There will be two in-class exams. Format includes multiple choice, definitions, true/false, short answer, and essays. Students are expected to be on time for exams and ready to begin. (This requirement meets all the course objectives.)

- **What happens if you miss an exam?** See policy on make-up exams under Course Policies below.
- **When is the final?** There is NO final exam. There is one project that which serves as a final by asking you to apply and demonstrate mastery of major course concepts.
- **Will there be a study guide for exams?** Students will be responsible for creating a study guide of their own. The instructor will not provide a study guide.

EXAM POLICIES

- ✓ Do not wear a hat or cap—this applies to men *and* women.
- ✓ Bring a #2 pencil; essays will be written in pencil.
- ✓ Bring your UF ID.
- ✓ Be on time (or a little early) and ready to begin.
- ✓ Sit every other seat as much as possible.
- ✓ SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONE. (Do not leave it on vibrate)
- ✓ Leave all coffee/tea and sports drinks and snacks at home. You may have a water bottle.
- ✓ Put all bags, cell phones, and any other materials under your desk and not visible.
- ✓ Use the restroom prior to the test because you will not be dismissed during the test.
- ✓ Sign the back of the bubble sheet when you take the test.
- ✓ Do your own work without assistance from others, and affirm that you have followed this honesty policy on the test with your signature.
- ✓ Come prepared to write!

You are encouraged to meet with the instructor or TA during office hours to review your exams to improve learning and performance on the next exam. Students may not have a cell phone on, take photos, or make notes about their exam. However, we ask that you review your exam within 2 weeks after your grade is posted. We cannot promise that we will be available the week of the next exam for you to see a previous test.

Submit your written projects and assignments to Canvas on time and bring a hard copy to class if requested.



Final Project: Policy Research and Briefing (150 points)

This assignment includes the following: (a) library research on an existing or proposed family policy/legislation/law, and reference list of readings you do about the policy; (b) short pitch presentation to your peers about what you think you will be doing; (c) presentation of a print “briefing” to a group of policy makers (the class), along with an attached reference list; and (d) peer evaluations of your work. Presentations will be scheduled for the last two or so weeks of class (depending on class size) and the order will be randomly assigned. Detailed written instructions will be provided.

To build up to this project, earlier in the semester we will learn how to use library resources to collect information about a policy issue, look at sample policy briefs from professional sources, *possibly* learn infographics, practice family impact analysis, and create a policy brief together.

Student-Led Roundtable Discussions (50 points).

On selected days the class will be divided into small groups (“roundtables”). EVERY STUDENT will be responsible for reporting on and leading a small group discussion of one noteworthy news article published since January 1, 2017. EVERY STUDENT will lead one or two small group discussions about their one article on their assigned day, summarizing and analyzing the issue and raising critical-thinking questions for the groups to discuss. Follow the template format, submit this paper to e-learning on time, come to class on time, and turn in a hard copy in class. Students are expected to be present for all of the discussion days, and attendance will be taken these days. Students who are not present and do not have an excused absence will not receive credit for this assignment. Students who are late might not be able to participate. At the end of the discussions, students will be asked to complete peer reviews of every discussion leader, and this will be part of both students' grades.

Getting involved (100 points)

This category includes the following: observation of a policy meeting (25); policy maker visit/interview and written summary (25); two phone calls to a policy maker where you provide input about your views and write a written summary (20); and attendance at two events to observe and learn—speakers in town and on-campus, community events, and rallies, among others—and written summary (15 each, 30 points). More details will be given on Canvas and discussed in class.

Quizzes, Participation, Attendance (100 points)

Students are expected to

- Be present and ready to work. Put aside distractions, come prepared, and do your best to contribute in a positive way to the class.
- Be active participants in learning—participate in discussions, complete assignments outside of the classroom to better understand policy, and ask questions of speakers.



There will be a variety of assessments in this category. Quizzes given at unannounced times and will assess the student's preparation for class and comprehension of key concepts. The quiz may be given any class day and it may be any time during class. Quizzes may also include questions on the news. Participation points will be earned through in-class worksheets, asking questions of speakers, and discussions. There will be no make ups for quizzes or worksheets unless the student has professional documentation for their absence, as per UF policy. Make up work must first be approved by the instructor and then arranged with a TA **within the work-week the student returns to class.**

Class attendance is expected. Excused absences are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Written, professional documentation (only for reasons approved by the University) is required before your absence or immediately upon return to class. Be sure to review this policy for illness policy, religious holidays, the 12-hour rule, and other policies.

In activities, discussion, and participation, practice your critical-thinking skills, which are especially important when it comes to policy and social change. This means to be aware of your own views, assumptions, and values; to challenge your thinking through group discussions, activities, and a final presentation; and to look at and bring to light the assumptions others make (in readings and news, especially, as well as in group discussions. (Critical thinking does not mean to criticize other people. In fact, we will be encouraging dialogue and discussion rather than debate.) Students may also be asked to attend campus and off-campus events related to policy and other issues we are discussing (e.g., at the Graham Center and public library).

Extra Credit

Getting to know you (may do ONLY ONCE – can add 5 points to your total grade). Please come to meet with me in my office for a 10-15-minute visit and go over your student information paper that you bring with you to the meeting (posted on e-learning). You need to bring this paper with you to our meeting. Sign up in class for appointments during the first few weeks of class. Let me know if you cannot make any of the available times and I will work with you to set up a time that fits your schedule. To get the extra credit, complete this assignment by February 28. *If you sign up to attend a session and do not come to the session or arrive late, you might not be allowed to reschedule, so make sure to show up! Please cancel the appointment if you are unable to attend.* **Note that this is the only opportunity available for extra credit this semester. Please do not ask for additional extra credit opportunities.**



Grading Scale

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Percentage or points earned | 93%-100% | 90%-92% | 87%-89% | 83%-86% | 80%-82% | 77%-79% | 73%-76% | 70%-72% | 67%-69% | 63%-66% | 60%-62% | Below 60% |
| Letter Grade equivalent | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | E |
| Number of points for this grade (out of 650) | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Other information on grading

When determining your final grade, I will ask, “Did this student demonstrate they clearly understand the issues, concepts and facts? Were they able to correctly apply knowledge and skills?” I will also ask, “Did this student consistently attend class and contribute in positive, productive ways to the classroom environment and other students’ learning?” **Class participation can raise borderline grades.**

Course Policies

First Classes Attendance Policy

The official UF Policy is as follows: *Students who do not attend at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and who have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, can be dropped from the course. Students **must not** assume that they will be dropped if they fail to attend the first few days of class. The department will notify students dropped from courses or laboratories by posting a notice in the department office. Students can request reinstatement on a space-available basis if documented evidence is presented.* This is a high demand course and seats are limited; you must secure your seat by attending one of the first two days of class.

Make-up Policy

Missed tests and presentations will result in a grade of zero, unless you provide written, professional documentation for your absence with a reason consistent with UF policy. You **MUST** provide written, verifiable proof of your need to miss the exam or presentation before



your absence or the day you return. Email or call the instructor no later than 8 a.m. the morning of the test or presentation to explain why you are going to be absent; and provide documentation the first day you return to class. This documentation should state in writing the date that you are cleared to return to class. Make-up exams will be given at the instructor's discretion, but if given, must be completed within the work week of the student's return to class. Make-up exams will not be given after this time frame. You will be expected to take the exam as soon as you return to school; this may be before the next time the class meets, but you must take the exam immediately upon your return; you are responsible for arranging a make-up exam with a graduate TA and/or instructor. You are allowed to make up exams ONLY as a result of an incapacitating illness (i.e., you are not physically able to come in to class for the exam or perform work) or other unanticipated circumstances warranting a written excuse (e.g., death in the family), consistent with UF policy. Written and verifiable documentation is required. Examinations missed for any other reason will receive a grade of ZERO. Missed roundtable discussions and presentations without documentation will result in a grade of ZERO.

Late Assignments Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is an excused absence approved by the instructor as per UF policy. You must provide written, professional, verifiable proof of your need to miss the assignment that is consistent with UF attendance policies, before you will be allowed to turn in a make-up assignment. You will have one week to turn in any make-up assignment, if circumstances allow it. You are responsible for arranging a make-up exam with the graduate TA and/or instructor within the week that you return to class. If you put off taking the make-up exam longer than a week, you might lose the opportunity. Also, note that E-learning times out and if you miss the deadline, your paper will not be accepted by the system and by the instructor. Do not turn in assignments to the instructor's office during or after the class period, and do not email your assignments.

Excused Absences Policy

You may **request** excused absences that meet University policies published in the Undergraduate Catalog and by providing **written, professional documentation before your absence or immediately upon return to class**. Requests for excused absences will **not be accepted later than 4 weekdays** after the absence. Students who do not make up missed work within the time frame will lose this opportunity. Please work with the graduate TA to get your work turned in. Medical/dental appointments or family vacations are not excused absences. Students who leave early or miss class for doctor's appointments, family vacations, or other reasons may not make up missed quizzes or exams or any in-class work. Acceptable reasons for excused absences include:

1. Sick days (documented by a medical practitioner)
2. Death of an immediate family member (funeral program or other acceptable documentation)
3. Professional conferences or authorized UF travel



4. 12-day rule (athletes)
5. Religious holidays and/or
6. UF approved holidays

Whether your absence is excused or not, it is your responsibility to get notes from classmates and make up missed work. Get to know someone you can call for notes, should you need to miss class.

For the University of Florida policy, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationattendance.html>

Classroom Demeanor

Students are expected to practice professionalism in their demeanor and communication. Above all, this means being respectful of each other and the instructor. Please be on time and ready to work; do not leave early. Both of these are disruptive and disrespectful to everyone. Put aside distractions and be ready to participate in class. Turn off your cell phone. Keep conversations with others at a minimum during class time. Keep the dialogue respectful of your peers *and* of the instructor. Be sure to be objective, nonjudgmental, and non-confrontational. NOTE: Poor classroom behavior has several possible results: a warning; a meeting with the instructor; the loss of participation points; referral to the Dean; or removal from class if necessary, per UF policy.

UF Policies

Academic Honesty

The University requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. Cheating, plagiarism, and other acts diminish the process of learning. When you enroll at UF you promise to be honest. Your instructor fully expects you to adhere to the academic honesty guidelines you signed when you were admitted to UF.

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: *"I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."* Furthermore, on work submitted for credit by UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

This includes plagiarism, defined in the University Honor Code. "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to: (1) Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution; (2) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a



document or assignment not authored by the student.
(<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>.)

This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course. Academic dishonesty of any sort will not be tolerated. Students are expected to do their own work, use their own words in papers, and to reference outside sources appropriately, following APA guidelines (APA Publication Manual, 6th ed.). Students who do not follow APA guidelines or violate the University's plagiarism policy will receive a zero for the assignment and will be referred the Dean of Students Office and the student judicial court.

If there are any questions about appropriate use of reference materials, please contact the instructor, **well before** the assignment is due, or the Dean of Students office. Students need to assume that all written work will be completed independently. All written work must be turned in to Turnitin, and a hard copy submitted in class.

Campus Helping Resources

Take advantage of the resources on campus that are here to support you and help you be successful. Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the University's counseling resources. U Matter We Care and The Counseling & Wellness Center provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students.

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- University Counseling and Wellness Center:
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575
- The University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
- Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu. Where are you headed after graduation?

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.
<http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Services for Students with Disabilities

Please see the instructor about accommodations ASAP so we can make arrangements. The Dean of Students Office coordinates the needed accommodations of registered students with



disabilities: *“Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.”*

This instructor follows the guidelines set by the DSO for responding to student accommodations and works with the individual student to meet these accommodations. Dean of Students Office is in 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261 (Voice)/392-3008 (TCC).

Student Complaint Process

Students wishing to file a complaint about the course should seek help from the appropriate resource located through the following link (for a residential course):

https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

Online Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no additional fees for this course.