

FYC 3112
Contemporary Family Problems and Interventions
Spring 2025
DRAFT

Course basics:

Times: M W | Period 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40PM)

F | Asynchronous

Location: Computer Sciences & Engineering Building, Room E222

Instructor

Jeneé Duncan, Ph.D., CFLE

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Office Hours:

Teaching Assistant

Ketia Blanc

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Course Information:*Course Description (UF Catalog):*

This course focuses on the major social and family problems contemporary families face, including poverty, violence, and care of dependent elders. An emphasis is placed on family strengths and resiliency as well as social programs that help families withstand and overcome difficulties. This course emphasizes the role that societal systems play in constructing family problems.

Course Goal: The primary aim of this course is to answer the question, “How can we help families?” In order to answer this question, it will be important to understand the contemporary family, some of the stressors they face, how they manage and cope with stressors, how people change, and what resources are available to help families.

Course Objectives:

When you successfully complete this course, you will:

1. Describe several of the most pressing challenges facing today’s families and, by extension, society.
2. Realize the importance of culture, context, and bias—including your own—for family problems, strengths, and resilience.
3. Apply theories of family stress, coping, and resilience to case examples and to your own life; and explain the key processes that enable families to cope with strains, stressors, and hardships.
4. Define and compare types of family interventions and apply family interventions appropriately to family examples.

5. Develop relevant professional skills: Manage assignments to meet set deadlines; follow ethical guidelines; continue to develop writing skills; build critical thinking skills; advance communication and interpersonal skills; apply resilience skills for your own self-care.

Required Textbook:

Price, C.A., Bush, K.R., & Price, S.J. (2021). *Families & change: Coping with stressful events and transitions, Sixth edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Other Readings:

Supplemental reading assignments will be provided by the instructor through the class's Canvas site.

Streaming:

Movie/show clips from streaming services (i.e., Netflix, Hulu) will be either shared in-class or will be part of online activities. If I assign a clip for an assignment and you are not able to attend class when I show a clip, or if the technology is spotty for streaming, you will be responsible for subscribing and watching the clips on your own. If a clip is part of an online activity and you do not have access to the provider, please contact Dr. Duncan in advance.

Technology Requirements:

For this class you will need access to a computer and sufficient wifi/data to stream. Please contact Dr. Duncan if you are having trouble meeting these requirements.

Certified Family Life Education (CFLE):

Please note that the content of this course is approved by the National Council on Family Relations as part of the University of Florida's Certified Family Life Education (CFLE) Program in the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences. This course is approved to meet professional requirements for training in specific content areas that prepare a student to meet standards for provisional certification as a family life educator. *See Dr. Duncan if you are interested in becoming a CFLE.*

Course Expectations:

1. **Attend lectures:** You are expected to attend lectures. During our in-person sessions we will engage in discussion and have opportunities for participation, in addition to lecture. Attending lecture ensures you receive course content and are able to contribute to and learn from the experiences and viewpoints of others.
2. **Working independently:** Please note that all written work should be completed by you personally. Assistance from others in completing assignments or exams is considered cheating, and any known instances of cheating will be referred to the Dean of Students office. ***A NOTE ON AI*** Using AI tools such as, but not limited to, ChatGPT to create or assist in your written work is also considered a violation of working independently. There may be opportunities to use and explore AI tools in class, however that will be the only allowed use. Any detection of using AI tools to complete assignments will also be referred on to the Dean of Students for academic dishonesty.
3. **Readings & Effort:** You will be assigned up to 30 or 40 pages of reading a week, which should be complete at the beginning of the week to get maximum benefit from the lectures. Quizzes will cover all readings assigned after the previous quiz. You should expect to spend two hours on this course outside of class time. Since we are in class 2 ½ hours per week, you should expect to spend about 7 hours a week reading, studying, and working on assignments.
4. **Exams:** 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 me (preferably email!) no later than 8 a.m. the morning of the test or presentation to explain why you are going to be absent. Provide documentation the first day you return to class that states in writing the date that you are cleared to return to class.

- a. Make-up exams will be given at my discretion, but if given, they 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 the 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.
5. **Late work:** Typically, late quizzes and in-class assignments will not be made up. However, the lowest two grade of quizzes and in-class assignments will be dropped. I understand that things happen and may prevent you from meeting a deadline, despite your best efforts. Therefore, there is a 24-hr grace period for assignments. As long as your assignment is submitted within the 24-hr grace period, there is no need to contact the TAs or me. After the 24-hr grace period, late assignments will not be accepted, except on a case-by-case basis and will receive 10% off per day for up to 5 days unless the absence is documented as excused per UF policy. Participation points are not able to be made up.
6. **Grades are important to students, so I will do my best to grade your work as soon as possible.** Assignments submitted will be returned to you with feedback online, usually within a week. Longer writing assignments may require additional time. I am happy to go over all assignments/exams with you in an individual meeting.
7. **Communicating with the Instructor:** Please communicate with both myself and our TAs through the Canvas messaging system. If you are submitting documentation for an excused absence, scheduling a make-up exam, or have questions about grades or assignments, send a message to both myself and our TAs. Please note that either myself or a TA will typically respond within 24 hours. Messages received after 5pm on weekdays will be responded to the following business day. Email sent Fridays after 4pm and during the weekend will be responded to on Monday.

Tentative Course Calendar:

Note: The instructor reserves the right to correct or adjust the syllabus and calendar as needed. There may be changes made over the course of the semester. You are responsible for keeping up with updates made on the Canvas site and with announcements.

Topics
Unit 1: Understanding Family Theories and Interventions
Week 1: Course Intro & Changes in Families
Week 2: Family Systems Theory and Family Coping
Week 3: Family Context & Inequalities
Week 4 : Family Interventions
Week 5 : Family Policy
Unit 2: Contemporary Issues of Poverty, Violence, Health Issues
Week 6: Economic Disparities & Trauma

Week 7: Adverse Childhood Experiences & Violence
Week 8: Families Coping with Health Issues & Disparities
Unit 3: Contemporary Issues of Immigrant and Refugee Families, Aging & Death, Coping with Stress
Week 9: Immigrant Experiences and Challenges
Week 10: International Crises and Refugees
Week 11: Coping with Aging
Week 12: Coping with Death
Week 13: Resilience
Week 14: Coping in Professions Serving Families
Week 15: Book Discussions
Final Exam: December 13

Assignments and Grading:

Breakdown of points:	
3 Exams (100 pts Exam 1; 100 points Exam 2; 100 points Final Exam)	300
3 Application Assignments (3 @35 each)	105
Online Activities, two lowest scores of 8 dropped (6 @10 each)	60
Quizzes, lowest score of 6 dropped (5 @10 each)	50
Participation points	35
Book Club Discussions (2 @50 each)	100
Final Book Analysis Project (book analysis paper, 75; discussion, 25)	100
Total	750

Exams: All exams will be online, open-book, timed exams. If you need extra time, please present me with an accommodation at the beginning of the semester so we can assign you extra time. The final exam will be a comprehensive online exam. Exams will cover any readings, videos, discussions of key concepts, speakers and notes, and all lecture notes. A study guide will be provided 1 week before exams.

Application assignment:

In two written assignments (2 pages each) and a PechaKucha, you will reflect on and apply what you are learning from readings and class material. These assignments require you to pick a family problem and analyze it from different angles. By the end of this project you should have a good understanding of the challenges and potential solutions for addressing this particular problem. Detailed instructions and rubrics will be on Canvas. Note that late application papers will not be accepted except on a case by case basis, when there is a UF documented excused absence.

1. Application Paper #1: Family Problem Analysis
2. Application Paper #2: Intervention Application
3. Application PechaKucha

Reading Quizzes:

Five quizzes (out of 6) will count toward your total points. The lowest score of the 6 will be dropped; therefore, no make-up quizzes will be given. All quizzes will be due online before class on specified Wednesdays. You MUST keep up with readings to do well on quizzes. The major goal of quizzes is to help you focus in on important content and retain this for exams.

In-Class Participation/Online activities:

Six online activities (out of 8) will count toward your total points. The two lowest will be dropped, therefore, no make-up work will be accepted. Over the course of the semester, you will have the

opportunity to earn up to 25 points for participation. You must be present in class to earn participation points. Online activity and participation formats include worksheets, small-group discussions and reports, and videos and viewing guides. The goals of in-class work are:

- Develop awareness of and empathy for family issues through discussion and reflection on case examples
- Develop stress and coping skills that you can apply in your own life and career
- Help you see how course concepts appear in family life
- Encourage discussion and exchange of ideas with peers
- Focus on key concepts or issues and prepare for exam questions

Book Club/Final Project Book Analysis:

Throughout the semester, you will read a non-fiction book (chosen from a short reading list) to analyze and apply course material. The following are DUE

1. BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS: You will meet with your book club members throughout the semester to discuss your chosen book and how it relates to course content. Book club discussions will be held in class, therefore you must be present to receive full credit (2 @ 50 pts).
2. BOOK ANALYSIS submitted on time to Canvas. (75 points)
3. IN-CLASS Discussion (25 points): Short written discussion outline of your book analysis and verbal presentation of your written report in small groups during class time. You must be present to get credit. Students arriving late will have points deducted.

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade
93	A
90-92.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
83-86.9	B
80-82.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
73-76.9	C
70-72.9	C-
67-69.9	D+
63-66.9	D
60-62.9	D-
<60	E

Other Information:

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students

may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Excused Absences and Make Up Work

Excused absences will include: sick days (documented by a medical practitioner), death of an immediate family member, conferences, or authorized UF travel. Submit excused absence requests to Dr. Duncan via Canvas—preferably, email, or in person) prior to or immediately after your absence.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

According to the UF undergraduate catalog: “If you do not attend at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which you are registered, and you have not contacted the department to indicate your intent, you can be dropped from the course. You must not assume that you will be dropped, however, if you fail to attend the first few days of class. By posting a notice in the department office, the department will notify you if you have been dropped from the course or laboratory. You can request reinstatement on a space—available basis if you present documented evidence.”

OTHER CLASSROOM POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

Respect

Treat the other students, the TA, and the instructor with respect and expect to be treated with respect. During lecture and classroom activities, side conversations, inappropriate remarks, and other rude activities will not be tolerated.

Academic Honesty

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction which may be up to or including failure of the course.

Undergraduate Honors and McNair Program

I encourage students who are interested and meet the basic requirements of 60 credit hours and a GPA of at least 3.75 to consider joining the Undergraduate Honors Program, especially if you are continuing onto graduate school. Participation in the honors program for this course requires a contract within the first three weeks of the semester. Check out: <https://fycs.ifas.ufl.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-honors/>. Students interested in graduate school from underrepresented backgrounds (e.g., low income/first generation) are encouraged to look into the McNair Scholars Program: <http://mcnair.aa.ufl.edu/>

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.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- *UMatter, We care* <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/>
- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352---392---1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/* Counseling Services, Groups and Workshops, Outreach and Consultation, Self-Help Library Training Programs, Community Provider Database
- *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392---1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/*

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the UF Disability

Resource Center (352.392.8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu>