



Human Development and Family Science Program  
A joint program of the College of Education and Human  
Development and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
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<http://hdfs.gmu.edu/>

**HDFS 200.001 Individual and Family Development (3:3:0)**  
**Summer Session A 2017**  
**Online**

**Professor:** Dr. Elizabeth Levine Brown

**Office Hours:** By appointment

\*Skype appointments can also be made (**Skype ID:** betsylevinebrownwork)

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**Course Description**

Examines how individuals and families function and develop over the lifespan. Uses a multidisciplinary approach to integrate theories of family science and human development emphasizing the role of contextual factors in contemporary families' lives. Explores the impact of gender, socioeconomics, race/ethnicity, culture, and immigrant status on human development and family relationships. Introduces a basic model of scientific inquiry and theorizing.

**Nature of Course Delivery**

This course utilizes a Blackboard online learning format requiring timely and active participation of all students throughout the semester. Activities to support student achievement of the learner outcomes include instructor presentations, videos, collaborative student work in small groups, assigned readings, and projects leading to written products. Students engage in timely critical reflection and accountable talk related to the learning activities.

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using Type in synchronous or asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password.

*Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - [Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>]

- [Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>]
- [Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)]

### *Expectations*

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Monday, and finish on Sunday. Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. At some points during the semester, you will have the opportunity to meet and conference with the instructor via Skype, Google Hangout, or another video form. These meetings will be scheduled via email and/or via a signup sheet on our Blackboard site.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, **budget their time accordingly**. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Calendar** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. The instructor can meet via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **Learner Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the diverse experiences of contemporary families across the

lifespan,

- Show understanding of how various micro- and macro-level systems shape individual and family development,
- Apply family theories to explain individuals' development across the lifespan within the context of their families,
- Understand some of the normative and non-normative challenges and opportunities faced by American families across the lifespan,
- Understand research methods used for examining the development, coping, and adaptation of individuals and families
- Engage in personal growth and development that will enhance students' academic and interpersonal experiences.

### **Professional Standards**

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: This course is aligned with the standards established by the National Council on Family Relations, focusing specifically on the “families and individuals in societal contexts” content area, to include “an understanding of families and their relationships to other institutions, such as educational, governmental, religious, and occupational institutions in society.”

### **Required Texts**

Karraker, M. W., & Grochowski, J. R. (2012). *Families with futures: Family studies into the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Reminder: This course uses Blackboard provided through the University. To access our Blackboard site, please use Mozilla Firefox (a free downloadable browser that is most compatible with the Blackboard software). Then go to [mymasonportal.gmu.edu](http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu) and log on using your GMU ID and password. For help logging onto Blackboard, contact Teaching and Learning with Technology [see <http://itusupport.gmu.edu> or call 703-993-8870]. **The instructor cannot assist you with log-on problems.**

### **Suggested Readings:**

Cherlin, A.J. (2010). *Public and private families: A reader* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

Ihinger-Tallman, M., & Cooney, T. M. (2005). *Families in context: An introduction*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

Lewis, T., Amini, F., & Lannon, R. (2001). *A general theory of love*. New York: Vintage.

Secombe, K. (2012). *Exploring marriages and families*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Skolnick, A. S., & Skolnick, J. H. (2014). *Family in transition* (17<sup>th</sup> edition). London: Pearson.

You can purchase the book(s) at the bookstore or online (i.e., Amazon). In addition to the textbook, supplementary readings are uploaded as PDF files on our Blackboard site. [Please note: You are expected to take responsibility for obtaining copies of all required reading in time to prepare for class each week.]

### **CONTENT MODULES – 5 MODULES TOTAL**

This course will utilize 5 content modules. Within these modules, all the relevant course material will be available in the format of course notes, power point presentations, and additional readings. This content will be incorporated into all online discussions, quizzes, and projects. It is critical for students to review all content on each module in a timely manner. Following a traditional classroom model, each module contains several “in class” lectures that are based on

your readings and also include information gleaned from other sources. It is imperative that you view each module to prepare for discussions, quizzes and the genogram project.

### **I. Participation and Attendance** (2 points/module = 10 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class and online learning experiences as is evidenced by (a) participating in all activities, (b) engaging in small and large group discussions, (c) using laptops and other electronic devices only to support discussion and learning and not for non-academic uses during class time, (d) completing written work related to the activities, and (e) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

**Note:** To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).

### **II. Dialogic Posts** (10 points/module = 50 points)

For each module, I will post a series of discussion questions. You are asked to participate in these “class discussions” by addressing the question and expanding upon a classmate’s posting.

**Requirements of Posts:** To earn full credit, you will need to answer each question posted by the instructor for each discussion session as well as post at least one additional response to a classmate’s post. This means that you must complete at least **multiple** posts (within the one-week period allotted for posts and responses.) **Each post** should include references to your readings and other sources to enrich the discussion. These are not opinion posts and should be based on what you are learning in this course material.

**Evaluation of Discussion Posts:** To build a rich learning community through group discussions, the following areas will be assessed for EACH post upload: **1) promptness and initiative, 2) quality of posting in terms of relevance and contribution to the learning community, and 3) quantity of posts.**

- Promptness and initiative: Student responds in a timely manner to the discussion questions posted, leaving adequate time for fellow students to reply and engage in a meaningful dialogue about the questions and responses. **Please be kind to your group-mates and do not wait until the last minute to participate in the discussions. (1 point)**
- Quality of posting: Responses to the instructors question should be **at least 3 paragraphs in length** (remember a **paragraph must be no less than 3 sentences long**) and must directly reference either module notes or readings in the formulation of your response. Skimpy responses or responses that do not cite course resources

will not receive full credit. I will give you feedback early on so you understand the depth and breadth or expected responses. (3 points)

- Quantity of postings: Students engaged in discussions will likely **post multiple times** throughout the open discussion as they dialogue with group-mates to delve deeply into course materials and explore relevant course constructs and research findings. Quantity of postings is considered in relation to quality of postings. In other words, all postings should be meaningful and thoughtful. (1 point)

Discussions are asynchronous, which means that you will have time to read and respond at any time during the 1-week window that the discussions are available. You do not have to respond at the same exact time as everyone else in class. **Discussion windows will close at the end of the 1-week period on Sunday evening at 11:59pm.** Refer to the course calendar for “due by” dates. You will NOT be able to make up any missed discussion post except under extraordinary circumstances (as previously defined in this syllabus).

### III. Quizzes (Each quiz worth 30 points; Total: 150 points)

There will be a total of 5 quizzes – one for each module. Quizzes may be accessed on Blackboard under Assessments. ALL quizzes will be open until we conclude the course, but you are required to complete the quiz at the conclusion of each module (see Course Calendar for due dates assigned). All quizzes will be timed, meaning that once you begin the quiz you will have a set amount of time (typically 60 minutes) in which to complete the quiz. Therefore, it is imperative that once you begin the quiz you have enough time to finish it in one sitting. You will not be able to re-enter the quiz once you have completed it. **If you run into difficulties while taking the quiz, contact me immediately.**

**Quiz Due Dates:** See Course Calendar

### IV. Final Paper: Genogram Project (30 points); Due: June 18th

You will be required to complete a genogram project (see genogram assignment description, example genograms, genogram symbols page, and genogram grading rubric on Blackboard to fully understand and correctly execute this requirement).

**Evaluation of Genogram:** There are two parts to this assignment: a paper and a family genogram, which is like a “family tree”. I will review, edit, and give feedback on draft genograms—just ask!

- Genogram: I recommend keeping this simple—using an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper, drawing out your genogram in pencil, including as much pertinent information as possible for each family member (ages, names, health status, education level, occupation for starters). It is also important to show graphically relationship quality indicators (marriage/divorce dates, length of cohabitation, highly conflictual/abusive relations, highly cohesive/supportive relations, etc.)—see this symbols page (<http://courses.wcupa.edu/treadwe/courses/02courses/standardsymbols.htm>) to help represent these relationships as clearly as possible! We will discuss this project often in class.

- **Paper:** Your genogram paper should be written in MS Word, double-spaced, using 12-point font with a page MAXIMUM of 5 pages (including references). **You should include 6 sections in your paper and use the following headers:**
  - INTRODUCTION, where you introduce the three themes that you will explore in your paper;
  - THEME 1: \_\_\_\_\_, which identifies the first theme to be examined. For each theme, be sure to draw linkages to course concepts and relate the theme to research findings in your text. Example themes might include a pattern of marital stability through the generations, a pattern of divorce and remarriage, parenting practices used across the generations, sibling relationships across the generations, single-parenting, health problems (e.g., diabetes, alcoholism, drug abuse, cancer, heart disease, mental health issues), commitment to education, etc. **You should include a discussion of both micro-level processes and macro-level forces throughout the themes;**
  - THEME 2: \_\_\_\_\_;
  - THEME 3: \_\_\_\_\_;
  - DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS
  - REFERENCES (typically students reference the course text and readings as well as any other resources utilized in applying your theme/pattern to your family system. For example, it is recommended that you find journal articles related to your themes or a helpful website—these should all be referenced to give credit where credit is due and to avoid plagiarism!)

**Final Project Due: June 18th**

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

### **Written Assignments**

All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979> Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
5. Type the paper with double spacing, indented paragraphs, 1-inch margins all around, and 12-point Times New Roman font

## Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

97-100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	60-69	D	Below 60	F
93-96	A	83-86	B	73-76	C				
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-				

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	10
Dialogic Posts on BB	Ongoing	50
Quizzes (5 @ 30 points each)	See Course Calendar	150
Genogram Project	June 18	30
TOTAL		240

## Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

### *Collaboration*

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

### *Ethical Leadership*

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

### ***Innovation***

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

### ***Research-Based Practice***

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

### ***Social Justice***

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

## **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

### ***Policies***

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### ***Campus Resources***

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (see <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling,



workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (see <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).

- The George Mason University Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

## Course Topics and Calendar

**NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed. If changes are made, you will be notified of the changes in class or by your university e-mail address.**

Week/Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments DUE
<b>MODULE 1</b>			
WEEK 1: May 22- May 28	<p>Introduction to the Course and Each Other; Syllabus Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please read over syllabus carefully and ask questions for clarity as needed</li> <li>• Test browser, discussion boards, email</li> <li>• Introduce yourself to class</li> </ul> <p><b>MODULE 1: Individual and Family Development</b>            Changing families in a changing world            Family Research Methods and Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review lecture notes and instructor posts.</li> <li>• Read/Explore...</li> <li>• Take Quiz 1</li> </ul>	<p>READ: Syllabus</p> <p>Genogram assignment requirements</p> <p>Karraker &amp; Grochowski, Ch. 1 and 2</p> <p><a href="#">Schwartz, 2014</a></p> <p>EXPLORE: US Census: Households and Families, 2010 (uploaded to Blackboard)</p>	<p><b>Email Dr. Brown Scavenger Hunt exercise</b></p> <p><b>Discussion Post 1 and Responses to Post 1 (May 28)</b></p> <p><b>Quiz 1 (May 28 by 11:59pm)</b></p>

## MODULE 2

WEEK 2: May 29- June 4	<b>MODULE 2: From Risk to Resilience</b> From Risk to Resilience Family Health Sexual Intimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review lecture notes and instructor posts.</li><li>• Read/Explore...</li><li>• Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum).</li><li>• Take Quiz 2</li></ul>	<b>READ:</b> Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 3-5  Walsh, 1996 (uploaded to Blackboard) <a href="#">APA: Building Resilience</a>  <b>EXPLORE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">RWJF: Social Determinants of Health</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Commission to Build a Healthier America</a></li></ul>	<b>Post 2 and Responses to Post 2 (June 4)</b>  <b>Quiz 2 (June 4 by 11:59pm)</b>  <b>Optional: Genogram Rough Draft Conferences via Skype (email to make an appointment)</b>
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## MODULE 3

WEEK 3: June 5 - June 11	<b>MODULE 3: Family Life Course: Intimate Relationships and Unions</b> Being Single, Choosing Mates Intimate Relationships: Marriage and Civil Unions Parenthood Kith and Kin: Creating families in communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review lecture notes and instructor posts.</li><li>• Read/Explore...</li><li>• Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum).</li><li>• Take Quiz 3</li></ul>	<b>READ:</b> Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 6-8 Bogle, 2007 (uploaded to Blackboard) Kefalas et al., 2012 (uploaded to Blackboard)  <b>EXPLORE:</b> A General Theory of Love  <a href="#">National Conference of State Legislatures: Civil Unions</a>	<b>Post 3 and Responses to Post 3 (June 11)</b>  <b>Quiz 3 (June 11 by 11:59pm)</b>  <b>Optional: Genogram Rough Draft Conferences via Skype (email to make an appointment)</b>
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[Council on Contemporary Families](#)

**MODULE 4**

WEEK 4: June 12- June 18

**MODULE 4: Family Life Course: Family Challenges and Opportunities**

Family Violence  
De-coupled Families  
Single-parent families  
Stepfamily systems

- Review lecture notes and instructor posts.
- Read/Explore...
- Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum).
- Take Quiz 4

READ:  
Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 9-10

Rutter, 2009 (uploaded to Blackboard)

[The Atlantic: Single Parenthood](#)

EXPLORE:  
[APA: Stepfamily Success](#)  
[First Comes Love Trailer](#)

**Post 4 and Responses to Post 4 (June 18)**

**Quiz 4 (June 18 by 11:59pm)**

**Genogram Project (June 18)**

**Optional: Genogram Rough Draft Conferences via Skype (email to make an appointment)**

**MODULE 5 & Course Wrap Up**

<p>WEEK 5: June 19- June 25</p>	<p><b>MODULE 5: Future of Families</b>  Money Matters: Economics and Family Living  Future of Families: From Family Values to Valuing Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review lecture notes and instructor posts.</li> <li>• Read/Explore...</li> <li>• Post and discuss questions posed on Blackboard (2 entry minimum).</li> <li>• Take Quiz 5</li> </ul>	<p>READ:  Karraker &amp; Grochowski, Ch. 11-12</p> <p>EXPLORE:  <a href="#">Policy Institute for Family Impact</a>  <a href="#">National Council on Family Relations</a></p>	<p><b>Course Evaluations (June 23)</b></p> <p><b>Post 5 and Response to Post 5 (June 25)</b></p> <p><b>Quiz 5 (June 25 by 11:59pm)</b></p>
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