

Sam Houston State University  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Family and Consumer Sciences Department

## Course Syllabus

FCS 369W: Family Relationships (3 units), online  
Summer, 2008

Class Meeting Times: Internet/Blackboard	Email: pjtripp@shsu.edu	SHSU Help Desk: 936.294.1950
Instructor: Paula J. Tripp, Ph.D.	Office: AB2, 226	Office Phone: 936.294.4129
Office Hours: TBA: contact me for an appointment		
Dept. Phone: 936.294.1242	Dept. Fax: 936.294.4204	

**Technical Assistance:** If you should experience technical issues with your computer during this course, call the SHSU Help Desk at the number listed above.

**Course Description:** Analysis of the changing and supportive role of the members in the contemporary stages of the family life cycle. Focus is on family heritage, family interaction patterns as well as an emphasis on the individual development and the network of family-based care, and socio-cultural variation forms.  
Prerequisite: Junior standing.

### Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. explain various theories related to intimate relationships
2. reveal an understanding of marriage and family dynamics
3. explain perspectives on communication and how communication helps develop, maintain and increase intimacy
4. discuss conflict and conflict resolution techniques
5. discuss issues related to sexual intimacy
6. compare relationships between gender roles and power in the family
7. identify issues related to managing economic resources
8. summarize how one develops intimate relationships through friendship, intimacy, and singlehood situations
9. describe the characteristics and unique qualities of dating, mate selection and cohabitation
10. describe how marriage can build a strong foundation for families and society
11. state choices and challenges of parenthood
12. compare family life in midlife and older couples
13. summarize stress, abuse, and other family problematic issues often encountered by American families
14. evaluate the impact of divorce, single-parent families and stepfamilies on individuals and society
15. analyze methods for strengthening marriages and families

**Textbook:** Olson, D. H. & J. DeFrain. (2006). *Marriages and families: Intimacy, diversity and strengths*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

The textbook may be purchased through the campus bookstore or internet sources. You do not need the "packaged" or "bundled" version, as we will not use the accompanying CD this semester.

A copy of the textbook is available for check-out in the SHSU Grisham Library Reserve Room.

**Attendance Policy:** Not applicable. However, students should determine a regular time each day to read the textbook information and chapter notes posted on Blackboard by the instructor in the "Course Documents" section, participate in online discussions, complete writing assignments, and take quizzes and exams as noted on the Course Calendar section of this syllabus.

**Student Participation on Religious Holy Days Policy:** Students are allowed to miss required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work, and any missed work must be made up in a reasonable amount of time. For more information refer to [www.shsu.edu/syllabus](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus).

**Students with Disabilities:** It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. For more information refer to [www.shsu.edu/syllabus](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus).

**Q-DROPS:** A Q-drop is a drop made after the last date for tuition refunds (12th class day for fall/spring; 4th class day for summer) but before the date for which a drop would result in the grade of 'F' as published in the Academic Calendar.

Students will be allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count toward the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop a class, a student will be required to remain in the class.

This limit took effect with the start of the fall 2004 semester. Any drops accumulated prior to the fall 2004 semester will not be included in the five Q-drop limit, nor will Q-drops from other universities.

**Course Policies and Rules of Conduct:** All students are expected to assist in maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. Students are to treat faculty and other students with respect. During discussions there could be varying perspectives presented. All students are expected to be respectful of others' opinions.

1. All work submitted must be the student's original work
2. Discussion comments must include good English usage and a substantial submission of at least several sentences. Submissions indicating simply an agreement or disagreement with another student's postings are not acceptable and will not count as a submission for grading purposes.

**Course Evaluation:** Student grades are based on written tests, a final examination, quizzes, issue analysis assignments, discussion postings, and a family heritage paper. Each quiz and exam could include multiple choice and true-false items. Since this is a writing-enhanced course, at least 50% of the final grade is derived from student's written submissions. Written assignments will be evaluated on the basis of specific criteria for each assignment, including content, consistency with the assignment guidelines, grammar, and organization. Specific criteria for the assignments will be provided in the Assignments section of Blackboard.

Written examinations, 2 @ 100 points each:	200 points	A = 90-100% = 540 - 600 points
Final examination, 1 @ 100 points:	100	B = 80-89% = 480 – 539 points
Quizzes, 4 @ 20 points	80	C = 70-79% = 420 – 479 points
Issue Analysis assignments, 2 @ 20 points each:	40	D = 60-69% = 360 – 419 points
Group Discussions, 4 @ 20 points each	80	F = 0-59% = below 360 points
Family Heritage paper, 1 @ 100 points	<u>100</u>	
Total	600 points	

1. Quizzes and Exams are given only on the days indicated, and make-ups will only be given for verified, extenuating circumstances. Refer to the Course Calendar below for specific dates.
2. Students exceeding the time allowed for quizzes will have 2 points deducted from the quiz grade. Students exceeding the time allowed for an exam will have 4 points deducted from the exam grade.
3. When possible, it is highly recommended that quizzes and exams be taken on campus computers, as there are fewer connection and transmission errors.
4. Assignments are due by the date and time assigned, and may be submitted early. Assignments submitted after the due date and time will receive a **5% reduction in points for each day late**, including weekends and holidays. It is recommended that assignments be submitted several hours before the deadline to avoid late points should there be transmission problems.
5. Late assignments will not be accepted after 07/31/08.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Further details are available at [www.shsu.edu/syllabus](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus).

If a student is involved in cheating on a quiz or exam, a grade of “0” will be given for that quiz or exam. If a student is involved in cheating on a second quiz or exam or the final exam, a grade of “F” for the course will be given.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying the work of another student, copying published work without appropriate citations, and allowing someone else to complete an assignment or work for the student. Further examples are available at [www.shsu.edu/syllabus](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus).

**Course Calendar (subject to change)**

<b>Dates:</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>
06/03-05	Course Overview Perspectives on Intimate Relationships	06/03-13: Syllabus Quiz for Bonus Points Chapter 1
06/06-09	Cultural Diversity: Family Strengths and Challenges	Chapter 2
06/10-12	Understanding Marriage and Family Dynamics	Chapter 3 06/12: Chapter 3 quiz
06/13-17	Communication and Intimacy	Chapter 4 06/17: Communication discussion due
06/18-20	Conflict and Conflict Resolution	Chapter 5 06/20: Conflict assignment due
06/23	Exam 1	Chapters 1 – 5
06/24-25	Sexual Intimacy	Chapter 6
06/26-30	Gender Roles and Power in the Family	Chapter 7 06/30: Gender Video assignment due
07/01-03	Managing Economic Resources	Chapter 8 07/03: Economic Resources discussion due
07/04	University Holiday, offices closed	
07/07-08	Friendship, Intimacy, and Singlehood	Chapter 9
07/09-11	Dating, Mate Selection, and Living Together	Chapter 10 07/11: Chapter discussion due
07/14-16	Marriage: Building A Strong Foundation	Chapter 11
07/17	Exam 2	Chapters 6 – 10
07/18-21	Parenthood: Choices and Challenges	Chapter 12 07/21: Family Heritage Paper due
07/22-23	Midlife and Older Couples	Chapter 13 07/23: Chapter quiz
07/24-29	Stress, Abuse, and Family Problems	Chapter 14 07/29: Chapter quiz
07/30-08/01	Divorce, Single-Parent Families, and Stepfamilies	08/01: Chapter quiz
08/04-06	Strengthening Marriages and Families	Chapter 16 08/05: Strengthening Marriages and Families discussion due
08/07	Final Examination	Chapters 12 – 16

Note: I strongly recommend that you write down the above due dates on a calendar you check often. Former students of this class have noted that writing due dates on a personal calendar has helped them manage the course much better and lessen the chances of forgetting to submit an assignment!