
Andrews University Doctor of Ministry Program
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Syllabus for RLED779 – Parent Education and Guidance

Instructor:	Calvin Thomsen, DMin, PhD	Session Dates:	July 12-17, 2009
Contact:	951-202-6820 cell	Class Time:	Sun 7:00-9:00 pm Mon-Fri 8:00 am-5:30 pm
Email:	cthomsen@llu.edu	Credits:	3 semester credits
Office Hours:	schedule with Bonnie Beres, ext. 3408	Classroom:	Seminary Hall S120

Course Description:

Examines child development, children in the family system, the changing roles and responsibilities of parents; child-rearing practices, including spiritual nurture of children; safety and protection for children; diverse parenting situations; and decision-making about parenthood. Develops skills in parenting education, integrating a Christocentric perspective.

Rationale for the Course:

The Family Life Education component of the Doctor of Ministry program, is designed to integrate biblical principles and social sciences to strengthen family relationships and nurture children and their faith. In addition to abiding by certification standards of the National Council on Family Relations {NCFR}, the Family Life Education emphasis seeks to prepare Christians to minister through education, mentorship, and nurturing families for the Kingdom. This parenting course will equip students to understand the holistic needs of children and the responsibilities of parenting throughout the life span. Further, the course will refine student competencies in offering parenting education.

Philosophy:

Andrews University approaches education from the holistic perspective of body (*corpus*), mind (*mens*), and spirit (*spiritus*). In a direct way, the Religious Education program of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary addresses the spiritual dimension of humankind and of education. Transmitting the Christian heritage, developing in individuals a transforming faith in Jesus Christ, and instilling in our students an understanding of vocation as a call to service are central goals of both the Religious Education program and Andrews University. Having been housed in the School of Education (SED) since this program began, the Family Life Education program is based on the philosophy of education as stated by the SED, which follows:

We believe that God is the ultimate reality and that He has chosen to reveal Himself through His created universe and through His Word. God created human beings in His image and for relationship with Him. When they rebelled against Him, they entered a state of brokenness that extends to every dimension of life. In His love and mercy God has provided through His Son Jesus Christ the means to redeem human beings from their brokenness, to restore in them His image, and to reestablish their relationship with Him.

As Christian educators supporting the world mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we conceptualize the task of education to be a partnership with God in His work of redemption and restoration. Our role in this partnership is to facilitate the spiritual, mental, and social development of our students, through modeling and exhortation.

Accordingly we hold that

- *God calls students to recognize Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and through His Spirit to use principles of Scripture as a guide in their relationship with others.*
- *God calls students to be worthy scholars in their chosen academic discipline and to contribute to that discipline as responsible practitioners and researchers.*
- *God calls students to live by principles of good health as stewards of His gift of life.*
- *God calls students to develop and maintain supportive personal and professional relationships and to use their talents in generous service to the church and society in a culturally diverse world.*

To these ends, we work for the glory of God

The Religious Education program wholeheartedly embraces this philosophy and, by extension, this course affirms that embrace.

Knowledge Bases:

A basic understanding of personal development, especially as experienced in childhood, is foundational for effective parenting practice. A focus of this course will be on comprehension of the parenting role as a discipling caregiver and meeting children's needs at various stages. Purposeful parenting principles will be introduced which span cultures and different family structures. The primary focus of this course is acquiring basic understanding and comprehension, and then integrating these bases into a parenting education competency.

Desired Student Outcomes:

Knowledge

Upon successful completion of this course, students will –

- understand parenting in the context of family systems as well as both individual and family developmental stages
- understand some basic foundations for a biblical understanding of the family
- understand implications of attachment theory and basic neuroscience for child development and parenting
- clarify their own parenting values and purposes
- understand parenting education as a professional facet of family life education
- understand the spiritual implications of parenting as a form of disciple-making
- understand changing roles and responsibilities of parents
- know various child-rearing practices, guidance, and parenting strategies
- understand standards of safety and protection for children
- know diverse parenting situations and their implications
- understand principles for decision-making about parenthood
- apply the power of prayer in the role of caregiver and parenting educator

Skills and Behaviors

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able –

- to develop and present parenting material in various formats, for specific audiences, in different settings
- to advise adult caregivers to use principles and purpose in determining parenting practices
- to write and commentate succinctly and knowledgeably on parenting issues

Attitudes, Values, and Commitments

Upon successful completion of this course, students will –

- value the parenting role as an opportunity to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment
- value the parenting educator as viable community resource and equipping expert for caregivers of children
- value the personal role of mentor and model for new generations as an expression of one's commitment to Jesus Christ

Required Textbooks and Other Materials:Required Reading

Barna, G. (2007). *Revolutionary parenting*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Gordon, T. (2000). *Parent effectiveness training*. New York: Random House.

Siegel, D., & Hartzel, M. (2004). *Parenting from the Inside Out*. New York: Penguin Books.

Thomas, Gary. (2005). *Sacred Parenting*. Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan.

Powell, L. H., & Cassidy, D. (2007). Parent education. In *Family life education: Working with families across the life span* (2nd ed., pp. 215-235). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Topics:

A variety of key concepts, endorsed by the NCFR, will be presented in course lectures/presentations. These concepts will include topics such as:

- Changing parental responsibilities as children become independent
- Changing parent-child relationships over the life span
- Preparation for birth and parenthood
- Demands and rewards of parenthood
- Child-rearing practices, guidance, and parenting strategies
- Importance of parental communication regarding child-rearing practices
- Parent-child communication
- Family conflict and conflict resolution
- Providing a safe environment for children
- Teaching life skills to children (self-sufficiency, decision-making)
- Problems of family violence, abuse, and neglect

- Varied parenting situations (single parenting, step-parenting, adoption)
- Sources of help for parents (family, neighborhood, community)
- Factors to consider in deciding if and when to become a parent
- Influences on parenting styles (ethnic, racial, social)

Readings:

The required readings are intended to provide the student with depth of knowledge upon which to build integrated competencies by course conclusion. Reading for comprehension is necessary, and it is expected that the student will process the content critically.

Assignment Descriptions:

It would be important to note –

- All assignments are expected to meet criteria for seminary written work {<http://www.andrews.edu/SEM/academics/criteria.htm>}.
- It is preferred that papers follow the publication/citation guidelines outlined in *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th edition)*.
- It is always wise to save all graded assignments until the course is completed. Also, on your word processor/computer, save a copy of all the work you turn in.
- All written assignments are to be submitted as hard copy, with no binder or sheave, at the beginning of the class on the assignment due date. Assignments turned in after the start of class on the due date will be considered late.
- Quantity does not equal quality. Succinct, clear, professional composition is expected.
- Bells and whistles do not equal quality. Technological, media, and visual aids are fine to help in audience comprehension, but will not be accepted as a surrogate for solid content exhibited in written form.

The following offer short descriptions of the assignments in this course:

Active Attendance

Punctual arrival, attentive engagement of the class presentations, full participation in class/team activities, respectful decorum with respect to the other students and the instructor are components to “Active Attendance.”

Reflection Essay

Refine and compose your thoughts about your own family of origin, and the ways in which the parenting style of your own parents impacted you. Include the various whole person dimensions [i.e. emotional, physical, mental, social, etc.]. Include your current ideas and values about parenting and what are the origins of these ideas and values. **Due at the end of the intensive course week.**

Book Review

For each of the required texts, compose a quality 1-2 page book review. **Due at the start of the intensive course week.**

Outline of Final Project or Paper

You must submit a description of your final project (about two pages) on the **final day of intensive course week**. This should include a brief description, rationale for the project, major theoretical model or models that will form the basis for it, the concepts you wish to develop, and the format you plan to use.

Final Project/Practicum

You have a choice between a research project on some aspect of parenting that is relevant to parent and education and ministry or the construction of a parenting education training event.

A research paper should be about 20 pages in length. *Detailed guidelines will be passed out on the first day of class.*

A parenting education event should be designed to present in church or other educational formats and teach specific concepts and/or skills about parenting based on a particular theory or model. It should be developed into a user-friendly training event that can be delivered by you or a trainer who peruses your training curriculum. You should make arrangements with a specific program or setting to conduct your training as a service to the community.

Grades:

Your grade will be based on the following work and weighted as indicated by the following percentages:

Active Attendance	-	50 points	10%
Reflective Essay	-	50 points	10%
In Class Assignments	-	50 points	10%
Book Reviews (4)	-	100 points	20%
Final Exam/Project	-	250 points	50%
TOTAL	-	500 points	100%

*Active Attendance in class and teams will be measured by attendance and involvement/engagement during class. A variety of written responses, small group “on-task” discussions/exercises, and in-class projects will serve as support indices for in-class involvement/engagement.

Grading Scale

The following scale is used in evaluating assignments and determining grades:

A	=	93 + %	C+	=	77-79%
A-	=	90-92%	C	=	73-76%
B+	=	87-89%	C-	=	70-72%
B	=	83-86%	D+	=	67-69%
B-	=	80-82%	D	=	60-66%
			F	=	less than 60%

Withdrawal

Withdrawal is recorded when a student withdraws within the date limitations indicated by the academic calendar.

Incomplete

An Incomplete indicates that the student's work is incomplete because of illness or unavoidable circumstances and not because of negligence or inferior performance. An Incomplete may be given when the instructor and the student agree to terms stated in an Incomplete Contract that is signed by both. Ordinarily, an Incomplete shall be removed during the following semester. For further information about an Incomplete, see the *Andrews University Bulletin*.

Attendance:

The *Andrews University Bulletin* contains the following statement on policies regarding class absences:

Whenever the number of absences exceeds 10% for graduate classes of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension, and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.

Defining Tardiness

Attendance will be taken by having you “sign in” on the attendance sheet on the table in front of the classroom. For full credit, prompt and full attendance is expected at all the classes you attend.

Each class offers 10 points for attendance and involvement/engagement (“active attendance”) in class. Tardiness deducts 3 points from your score for that class session.

Assignments are due at the start of the class on the due date. Assignments turned in after the due date will be deemed tardy and can result in a point deduction (15% or more) per each class period late.

Defining Active Attendance

Active Attendance denotes more than bodily presence in class, but full involvement/engagement during class. A variety of written responses, small group “on-task” discussions/exercises, and in-class projects will serve as support indices for in-class involvement/engagement. Non-involvement or disengagement from in-class participation can result in deductions from 1 to 5 points at the instructor's discretion.

Absence resulting in Failing Grade

Please note that excused absences is a determination of the Associate Dean's office. Unexcused absence may result in a failing grade, depending on the instructor's discretion.

Interpersonal Integrity:

In accordance with the *Andrews University Bulletin*, all conduct between students and between students and instructor/staff are to follow respectful classroom decorum, the highest ethical standards, and Christian etiquette. At the discretion of the instructor, disruptive or distracting behavior may result in point deductions from “Active Attendance,” or excusing the student from class. Children and guests are not to attend class except by advance permission granted by the instructor. Consuming food and beverages in class is discouraged.

Computers in the Classroom and Other Electronics:

Because of the value of active attendance, especially involvement and engagement of students in class, computers are probably more of a hindrance to participation than a help. Use of computers in class is a privilege. Because computers are often used inappropriately, they can also be distracting to other students. The instructor will determine the appropriateness of computer use. If a student’s use of computers becomes a hindrance to active, full participation or the participation of other students, the student will lose the privilege of in-class use of computers.

In respect of others in class, students are asked to turn off cell phones and pagers.

At the discretion of the instructor, inappropriate use of computer or other electronics may result in “Active Attendance” point deductions.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is treated seriously at Andrews University. From the *Andrews University Bulletin*:

In harmony with the mission statement, Andrews University expects that students will demonstrate the ability to think clearly for themselves and exhibit personal and moral integrity in every sphere of life. Thus, students are expected to display honesty in all academic matters (A list of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty follows the above statement.).

You should pay particular attention to the matter of plagiarism. The following definition may help you to understand the various forms that plagiarism can take:

Plagiarism means submitting work as your own that is someone else’s. For example, copying material from a book or other source without acknowledging that the words or ideas are someone else’s and not your own is plagiarism. If you copy an author’s words exactly, treat the passage as a direct quotation and supply the appropriate citation. If you use someone else’s ideas, even if you paraphrase the wording, appropriate credit should be given. You have committed plagiarism if you purchase a term paper or submit a paper as your own that you did not write.
(Barbara G. Davis, *Tools for Teaching*, Jossey-Bass, 1993, p. 300)

Students who have studied in countries where plagiarism is not defined as stated in the above paragraph should acquaint themselves with academic standards in the United States. If you so desire, the instructor will assist you on an individual basis in understanding what constitutes plagiarism.

All course work turned in to the instructor, written and otherwise, should be prepared by you alone, unless the instructor has given a specific group project requiring team/group work.

Student – Instructor Communication:

Class time never provides enough time for the instructor to interact with each student personally. Several options are available to provide student-instructor dialogue. Individualized appointments can be arranged through the instructor’s secretary. Email can be used, and it is the instructor’s intent to use the Class Roster List to communicate with the class. So, it is important to read the mail that comes to your Andrews email address.

Disability Accommodations:

If you qualify for accommodations under the American Disabilities Act, please see the instructor as soon as possible for referral and assistance in arranging such accommodations.

Changes in Syllabus:

If it is necessary to change items in the syllabus, the instructor will provide students with a written copy of the changes.

Acknowledgement:

This syllabus is based on templates developed by Drs. Allan Martin, Donna J. Habernicht, Kay Kuzma, and Jane Thayer.

Sample Cover Sheet Form:

Please note that, unlike the standard form for title pages, this one requires (1) date of the semester that you took the course, (2) the date you submit the paper, and (3) your mailing and email address.

Andrews University
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PARENTING
A GRADUATE COURSE FOR FAMILY LIFE EDUCATORS

by

John Doe

REFLECTION ESSAY

Submitted to Calvin Thomsen, PhD
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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