

RLED 755 Families In Society

Summer 2007

3 semester credits

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Family Life Office: Seminary Building, Room N210
Classroom: To Be Announced

Class dates: July 22- 27 **Doctor of Ministry Schedule**
Meeting times: Sunday: 7 PM – 9 PM, Mon --- Fri: 8 AM – 5:30 PM

Course Description: RLED755—Families In Society

Introduction:

In every civilized society, the family is regarded as a sacred and honorable institution and as such, individuals who are married are rewarded with encouragement, support, gifts etc. However, the nuclear family relationship does not exist in and of itself, there is a network of relationships that evolve as a result of that one union, this network is described as a “*System.*” We all belong to some family system. Family systems are composed of relationships. So in order to understand family systems we must understand the connections between the individual members of that family and the society at large.

Sociologically, a family is a social group, a social system, and a social institution. As a social group, it is a collection of persons who recognize one another as family members and interact in a sexually bonded, intimate, primary network. As a social system, it has many interdependent components with major differentiations by gender, race, class, age, size, and so forth. As a social institution, the family meets broad societal goals that center on intimate relationships and the reproduction and socialization of children. (Eshleman, 2003).

The social, economic, and political demands placed on families today can create considerable stress for individuals and children. Helping professionals have recognized that counseling an individual while considering, and frequently including, other family members makes it more likely that lasting change will be possible. Some of the emerging issues for many families, include, but are not limited to; the unique stress experienced by single parent families, coping with alcohol and drug abuse, increased suicide rate in the teenage population, caring for aging parents, and the implications for parenting in families with dual-career couples. These classic family-related concerns clearly demonstrate that many therapeutic situations will necessitate working with the family members and the identified client. In this course, students will be introduced to the concept of Families in Society: Theory and Practice, and they will explore and perhaps, integrate systems theories and techniques into their repertoire. They are encouraged to use them with the effective helping skills they have already developed.

Description

This course is an introduction to family life education, and specifies major content for life span family life education programs. It incorporates the mission and methods of family life ministry within a leadership perspective. An understanding of families and their connectedness to external systems, such as governmental, educational, religious, etc., is crucial to an understanding of families in society. It meets the requirements for Family Life Education Certificate Module: “*Families in Society*”.

Learning foundations

Andrews University faculty believe that knowledge of God is the center of the entire educational endeavor. While making use of various learning methodologies, it is our intention to underline the fact that God is the source of all knowledge and that an understanding of His will is the beginning of wisdom. This understanding guides both faculty and students in their learning, companionship and commitment to global Christian service (Garcia-Marenko, 2003). This course integrates the Biblical foundation of the family and presents a synthesis of its relevance to society.

Required textbook

Powell, Lane H. and Cassidy, Dawn. *Family Life Education: An Introduction*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield, 2001.

Smith, A. & Smith, J. *Why Good Relationships Turn Bad*. Columbus, Georgia: Brentwood, 2002.
(This book on Relationships can be ordered from *Adventsource.org*)

Recommended books

Smith, A. H. *Sermons that Strengthen Families*. Adventsource

Bucher, R. *Diversity Consciousness*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000.

Garland, Diana R. *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity, 1999.

Vargas, L. & Koss-Chioino. *Working with Culture* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to have met the following objectives:

- Acquire clinical knowledge and skills that will help them in working with individuals and family with family related problems.
- Foster and develop an awareness of the dynamics in family relationships.
- Explore the professional, ethical and research issues in family life education.
- Understand the challenges of treating families from diverse cultures with special needs.
- Master the knowledge base for Families in Society: Areas as listed by the National Council on Family Relations for the Family Life Educator Designation.
- Review and possible challenge personal positions on various issues in today's society, based on an understanding of theological, philosophical, psychological, sociological and practical implications as well as their impact on relationships and individuals.
- Demonstrate ability to plan and implement effective family life education programs.

Course Content:

To help students achieve the objectives for this course, the following content will serve as a basis for class discussion, activities and assignments.

I. Childhood

- Jobs, money, and the family
- Programs that support individuals and families
- Importance of families, neighborhood, and the community
- Families and schools working together
- Differing spiritual beliefs and practices

II. Adolescence

- Families and the workplace
- Reciprocal influences of the economy and families
- School as preparation for the future
- Education throughout the life span
- Functioning in the school system
- Individual and family responsibility in the community
- Influence of religion and spirituality on families
- Support for families with special needs and problems
- Reciprocal influences of technology and families
- Population issues and resource allocation
- Role of family in society
- Supportive networks—family, peers, religious institutions, community

III. Adulthood

- Family participation in education of children
- Utilizing the education system
- Influence of religion and spirituality on families
- Supportive networks -family, peers, religious institutions, community
- Understanding and obtaining community support services
- Lifelong learning
- Population issues and resource allocation
- Reciprocal influences of technology and families
- Economic fluctuations and their impact on families
- Interrelationship of families, work, and society
- Individual and family responsibility in the community
- Role of family in society

IV. Later Adulthood

- Influence of religion and spirituality on families ,,
- Supporting the educational system
- Supportive networks -family, peers, religious institutions, community
- Understanding and obtaining community support services
- Lifelong learning
- Population issues and resource allocation - health care, transportation, housing
- Reciprocal influences of technology and families
- Social issues - age discrimination, elder abuse, care giving
- Role of family in society
- Economic fluctuations and their impact on aging families

Families in Society

A. Marriage & The Family:

What do you perceive a marriage and/or family to be?

If couples live together, is it a marriage?

Are unwed partners members of “the family of origin?”

What are some factors people consider important in choosing a partner?

Does the family consist of one female legally married to one male?

Children that are born out of wedlock, what family system are they a part of?

B. Marriage, Family & Kinship Organization

Family as a social institution: Is marriage an institution in decay?

Families as groups and systems: What is the correlation between System Theory and family?

Boundaries of Kinship

C. Relations Between the Family and Other Systems

Mass Media and the family

Religion and the family

Politics and the family

Education and the family

Economy and the family

D. African American Families

Patterns of African American family life

E. Hispanic American, Asian American Families

Social status characteristics/ marital family patterns

F. Sexual Norms and Relationships

The social dimensions of sexuality

Premarital sexual intercourse

Sex and marriage, extramarital sex

G. The Marital System

Marriage trends and characteristics

Power in conjugal and intimate relationships

Marital quality

H. Family Violence

Social stresses on families

Violence in families and among intimates

I. Divorce & Remarriage

Divorce around the world

Divorce in the United States/ Remarriage and stepfamilies

J. Family Life Education: The developing profession

Defining the profession

Assessing your personal qualities as a Family Life Educator/ Attitudes and biases

The levels of family involvement model

Ethical guidelines

K. Relating Theory to Practice

Family systems theory/human ecology theory/social exchange theory/family developmental theory

Learning styles

L. Family Programs

Evaluation of family programs

Steps in conducting an evaluation/ cultural considerations in evaluation

M. Foundations of Sexuality Education

Timeline of Significant Events in the Sexual Revolution

The need for and contexts of sexuality education

Social learning theory/ Moral development theory

Academic integrity

Students are expected to act honestly in all matters related to their learning experience at Andrews University. All assignments are expected to reflect originality and recognition of sources cited or paraphrased. The *Andrews University Bulletin* lists specific examples of academic dishonesty and the types of disciplinary actions applied when serious offenses of this nature take place. Students are encouraged to read the section on Academic Integrity of the current *Bulletin*.

Important information about course requirements, deadlines and grades

Post-campus assignments are due soon after the intensive is completed. Your assignments should be mailed to the instructor by November 15, 2007, in order for the grade to be recorded in the fall semester grading period. Electronic submission of assignments is acceptable. If you would like your graded assignments to be returned to you, kindly submit in your assignment packet a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE).

If all assignments are not completed by April 15, 2008, a grade will be given you based upon the work that has been turned in thus far unless special arrangements with the teacher are made in writing. Andrews University does not send out grades by postal mail to students. You can view your grades on the Andrews University web site, by clicking on *Current Students* and *Access Your Account*. After entering your username and password, select *Student Services and Financial Aid*; then *Student Records*, and then *Final Grades*. Choose the appropriate term (in this case, *Summer Session 2007*), and click on *Display Grades*.

Course requirements: Students are expected to meet the following requirements:

Pre-Campus Assignments

1. Textbook Examination. Read the book *Family Life Education, Second Edition*, by Lane H. Powell and Dawn Cassidy, and do the following;

- a) How do the demands and stresses of family life today differ from those in the past? Consider particularly the dual-career family; the single-parent, low-income and the immigrant family. (see Cpt. 1)
- b) Read through the two ethical dilemmas described on pages 49-50. What should Carl do? What should Gretchen do?
- c) Using your own family constellation, how do you see it fitting with the developmental stage theory articulated by Evelyn Duvall and Brent Miller (table 3.1)?
- d) Tuckman (1965) developed a set of descriptors that define a four-stage process in support group. Describe each stage and write your own reflection at the end of each description. (See Cpt. 5)
- e) Looking at the 60 years of history of sexuality education and the “sexual revolution.” What have been the benefits and the detriments of this societal movement? Could education have had a greater positive impact? In what ways? (See Cpt. 8)
- f) Review the myths about marriage that discourage premarital and marriage education. Which do you think is the strongest and why? (See Cpt. 10)

Value: 30 points. (Assignments are due at first morning of class)

On-Campus Assignments

Class Attendance. Attendance to all class sessions and active participation in classroom experiences is expected. The *Andrews University Bulletin* states that when absences exceed 10% of the total course time, you may receive a failing grade. For this intensive class, being absent from more that one learning block will jeopardize your final grade.

1. Journal Review.

Read the article on “*Dual Relationships and Professional Integrity: An Ethical Dilemma Case of a Family Counselor as Clergy*,” and write your reaction to it. (The Family Journal, Vol. 9, No. 4, 438-443, 2001)

Value: 5 points

2. Develop a genogram of your family, identify at least three generations and visually represent family members. You may include names, ages, marital status, divorces, significant life events, and years of marriage and or death. ***Value: 5 points***

3. Group Project. The class will be divided into small groups, each group is responsible for researching and presenting the cultural traditions, norms, stereotypes, group assumptions, practices and distinct characteristics of a cultural group assigned to them. ***Value: 15 points***

Post-Campus Assignments

6. You are invited to make a presentation on one of the topics in “Families in Society” Develop an animated Power Point Presentation for this presentation. (Hard copy should be sent by snail mail, animated power point presentation should be sent via email. aljune77@aol.com)

Value: 15 points

7. Select a ministry problem that you and or other pastors must deal with. The problem should be related to the content of this course. In 2 or 3 paragraphs describe the ministry problem or challenge Write a review of literature that deals with this problem or challenge. Especially focus on books and articles that analyze the problem and suggest intervention strategies
 The paper must follow the Andrews University D.Min. Project format. It should be between 10-12 pages. (12 point font, double spacing). The specific topic must receive approval from the instructor during the intensive on-campus experience. **Value: 30 points.**

Grading system summary

In summary, the final grade for this class will be based on the following elements:

1. Pre Campus Assignments.....	30 points
2. On Campus Assignments.....	25 Points
3. Post Campus Assignments.....	45 points
TOTAL	100 points

Letter grades will be based on the following distribution:

- A = 95-100 points
- A- = 92-94 points
- B+ = 85-91 points
- B = 80-84 points
- B- = 74-79 points
- C+ = 70- 73points
- C = 65- 69 points
- C- = 60- 64 points
- F = Below 60 points