



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program
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<https://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/>

HDFS 200.001 Individual and Family Development (3:3:0)

Fall 2013

Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 PM

Enterprise Hall, Room 275

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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 distributed learning format requiring active participation of all students. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue, productive learning, and critical reflection. Activities will include instructor presentation, small-group discussions, student presentations, videos, and whole class sharing to support course content. In addition, a Blackboard online component of coursework is required.

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

This course is aligned with the standards established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

Required Texts

Karraker, M.W., & Grochowski, J.R. (2012). *Families with futures* (2nd Edition). New York, NY: Routledge.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

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/>].

Course Requirements

General Requirements

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Attendance in class and/or online is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions and/or complete online modules within the designated timeframe. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, and not completing online modules in the designated timeframe may negatively affect course grades. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register.

In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class

as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

3. In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
4. During face-to-face and live online meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in their participation grade.
5. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.
6. Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when responsible for a task, students will perform that task. When students rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

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 guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. 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.

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100	A- = 90 – 94	B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82	C = 70 – 79	D = 60 – 69	F = < 60

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.

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	15
Exams (10 points each)	Sept 25, Oct 30, Dec 11	30
Homework Assignments	Sept 18, Oct 23	30
Final Paper & Presentations	Dec 4	25
TOTAL		100

I. Attendance and Participation (15 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 (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions and

in-class exercises, (3) completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections. Go to mymason, <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, to login to Blackboard 9.1.

II. Exams (Each exam worth 10 points; Total: 30 points)

There will be three in-class exams that will cover class lectures, discussions, readings, etc. The exams will not be cumulative (i.e., the second exam will cover material after the first exam only, and the third exam will cover material after the second exam only). Exams will be closed book.

Due: Sept 25, Oct 30, and Dec 11

III. Homework Assignments (30 points)

There will be two homework assignments due during the semester. Students are on their honor to complete their homework assignments using their own words and ideas. Students must cite any and all sources used to write and construct their ideas for their papers. A word to the wise: “When in doubt, cite it!” If you have any questions about how to cite your sources, please ask your instructor prior to passing in your paper. Homework assignments should be written and formatted according to American Psychological Association (APA), 6th Edition, style rules (i.e., papers should be typed and double-spaced in 12-pt. font with 1-inch margins; please include a cover page, page numbers, and APA citations of sources).

- **Homework Assignment 1: Personal Family Representation and Genogram**

Consider the cultural and structural diversity of families today, and the functions these families perform to ensure healthy individual and family development. Consider the context of your family of origin (the family into which you were born) and your (potential) family of procreation, as you respond to the following questions.

Address all of the following in **3-4 typewritten pages and a family genogram (separate page)**. Remember to proofread your work.

1. Construct a genogram of your family system. (We will discuss genograms in class.)
2. Guided by theory (e.g., family systems theory, ABCX, symbolic interaction, structural-functionalism, etc.), describe the structure of your family of origin and its functioning.
 - What was your family structure throughout your childhood and adolescence? What is you're the structure of your family of origin now?
 - Describe your relationships with other members of your family and your family's functioning.
 - How were gender, race, class, age, and sexual orientation regarded in your family?
 - What did your family do together? What were the traditions or rituals of your family?
 - How would you describe the coping, adaptation and resilience characteristics of your family?
 - Describe power in your family and how it manifested.
3. Guided by macro-level frameworks, describe the experiences of your family in interaction with the outside world, with a focus on social location variables and macro-level forces.
 - What macro-level forces (e.g., economics, social policies, institutional practices, cultural influences) were most profound for your familial experiences?

- Describe the ways in which your family “fit in” and/or did not “fit in” with other families in your community. (Consider what prejudices or stereotypes other groups hold about your family and what prejudices or stereotypes your family holds about other groups.)
- 4. Consider your family of origin and discuss how your family of procreation may or may not look similar to the family in which you were raised (consider: family formation, family structure, gender roles, relationships among immediate and extended family, social familial networks, experiences of prejudice and oppression, and other macro-level forces, etc.). Describe how this is or is not shaped by the changing demographics, mores and norms of U.S. society.

Due: Sept 18

- **Homework Assignment 2: Gender Role and Family Socialization in a Complex World**

Address #1-3 below **in 3-4 typewritten pages** (approximately 1 page per question). Remember to proofread your work.

1. Observe and comment on one or more cultural messages that adults receive regarding their roles in U.S. families and family life generally (e.g., What gender-specific and gender-neutral messages about adult roles do you observe in the media and in your community?; What messages about family life do you observe in the spaces you occupy and in the media, etc.?).
2. Reflect on your upbringing. How were you socialized by your parents, teachers, other authority figures, and significant others in terms of gender-specific roles and family “values”? How has that had an impact on you as an adult – your educational path, career goals, choice of partner, your values, etc.? Explain your answers and give examples.
3. Reflect on your personal values regarding gender and family. How do you think your upbringing and personal values and thoughts about gender and family will facilitate or hinder the ways in which you may engage in family work in your community and/or professional life?

Due: Oct 23

IV. Final Paper (25 points)

Guided by a family theory or conceptual framework, students will write a paper that explores a contemporary issue in human development and family studies. This paper should focus on a family-focused topic of the student’s choosing and examine the following: 1) Prevalence of particular issue among families in contemporary society; 2) how this issue is shaped by culture, poverty, race/ethnicity, immigration, gender, sexual orientation, and/or other variables essentialized in U.S. culture; and finally, 3) how aspects of this issue can be further understood and ameliorated by policies focused on families. Examples of appropriate topics are: dual-earner families, young adult children returning to their parents’ homes, family health issues, teen pregnancy, long term care for aging parents, domestic violence, child abuse, child care, financial issues, family conflict, multi-generational households, social media and family relationships, divorce, etc. These 8-10 page MAX papers require clear writing, critical thinking, and incorporation of peer-reviewed journal articles and other sources in the family research literature.

Students will present their papers briefly to the class. We will discuss the expectations of these presentations in class.

Paper Due: Dec 4 (20 points)

Presentation: Dec 4 (5 points)

Course Topics and Schedule

Week/Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments DUE
Individual and Family Development: A Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological Toolbox		
1: Aug 28	Course overview and introduction to human development and family studies Changing families in a changing world	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 1
2: Sept 4	Family Theories and Research with Families	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 2
3: Sept 11	From Risk to Resilience	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 3
4: Sept 18	Family Health	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 4 DUE: Homework 1
5: Sept 25	Wrap-up & Review Exam 1: 5:45-7:10 PM	DUE: EXAM 1
Family Life Courses: Contemporary Experiences of Individuals and Families		
6: Oct 2	Being single, choosing partners	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 6
7: Oct 9	Intimate Relationships: Marriage and Civil Unions	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 7
8: Oct 16	Sexual Intimacy: Biology and Pleasure	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 5
9: Oct 23	Parenthood	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 8 DUE: Homework 2
10: Oct 30	Wrap-up & Review Exam 2: 5:45-7:10 PM	DUE: EXAM 2
Contextual Issues Facing Contemporary Families		
11: Nov 6	Family Discord	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 9
12: Nov 13	De-coupled Families	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 10
13: Nov 20	Money Matters: Economics and Family Living	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 11
14: Nov 27	Thanksgiving Holiday: NO CLASS	
15: Dec 4	Future of Families: From Family Values to	Karraker & Grochowski, Ch. 12

	Valuing Families Paper Presentations Wrap-up & Review	DUE: FINAL PAPER DUE: Paper Presentations
16: Dec 11	Final Exam: 4:30-7:15PM	DUE: EXAM 3

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.