

Syllabus for
PRM 539—The Contemporary Family
3.0 Credit Hours
Spring 2001

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Families are constituted in many different ways; single—parent families, divorced families with joint custody, dual career families and others. This course will provide students with an overview of the dynamics and dilemmas facing contemporary.

Prerequisites: None.

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to:

- A. Encourage students to develop a perspective of family that is biblically-theologically sound.
- B. Create an awareness of both the problems facing contemporary families as well as the strengths of today's family.
- C. Provide information and insight that will help class members understand how truly healthy Christian families are developed in the context of relationships that are lived in an atmosphere of grace.
- D. Examine common controversies surrounding the nature/nurture issue as it applies to gender roles, gay members of families, biomedical issues and parenting.
- E. Help individuals identify and interpret personal barriers (i.e., family shame, poor self-concept, built, false interpretations, stereotypes, etc) that might restrict their potential to empower family members.
- F. Articulate the “work of the church in relationship to families of the church.
- G. Help prepare students for state certification as a professional counselor or family Therapist.
- H. Increase respect for cultural diversity as it influences family life.
- I. Develop new ways of thinking about families by examining diversity in families.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Develop a more global perspective of the social reality of contemporary family experiences
- B. Reflect upon the key concepts expressed during the course and construct a personal perspective (theology/philosophy) for the Christian family to function in a healthy manner
- C. Employ critical thinking when considering controversial scriptural passages relative to gender and family roles

- D. Develop an awareness and understanding of persona beliefs about family functioning with theological, sociological and psychological settings.
- E. Understand how changing gender roles affect family structure
- F. Demonstrate the ability to problem solve through careful analysis of family experience case studies in which counselors and pastors may be expected to minister.
- G. Understand how the ethnic heritage of a family system will affect its functioning in a way that shows diversity
- H. Demonstrate the ability to perceive ethical/moral issues relative to contemporary scientific developments and diverse family forms.
- I. Understand the broad issues that affect a Christian understanding of sex and gender.
- J. Develop an educational program that will help adults be better able to carry out their roles as marital partners, family members, or parents.
- K. Develop communication skills which show an effective expression of meaning across social/cultural family contexts.
- L. Demonstrate skills which will assist in the practical task of establishing family ministries in the church
- M. Identify en enrichment programs and various curriculum topics which aid pastors and leaders in their task of strengthening church families
- N. Successfully complete state certification examination through consideration of the following:
 - 1 Human roles in terms of age, sex, family, and work roles
 - 2 The concept of role integration
 - 3 The various types of family and nonfamily households
 - 4 Issues relevant to household types

IV. TEXTBOOKS

Required Textbooks

Cherlin, Andrew J. Public and Private Families, 2nd ed. NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1999.

VanVonderen, Jeff. Families Where Grace is in Place, Minneapolis: Bethany House Publications, 1992.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. University Policies and Procedures
 - 1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University.
 - 2. Double cuts will be assessed for absences immediately preceding or following holidays.
 - 3. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
 - 4. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence will be charged a

- late exam fee.
- 5. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, video, multimedia, or computer software.
- 6. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.

B. School of Theology Policies and Procedures

1. **Completion of assignments**

Assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date are penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.** All work turned in two weeks after the assignment deadline will be received but will be granted a grade of zero for that assignment. **No work** is accepted after the final date of regular classes.

2. **Incompletes**

- a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the academic committee by written petition that student's work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete are excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
- b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval one week prior to the end of normal classes. **The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete.** The petition must be approved by the academic committee of the School of Theology and Missions. Students are expected to continue all course work until an incomplete is granted.

3. **Examinations**

- a. Early examinations **are not** allowed. Late examinations without grade penalty are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams or a sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician).
- b. A Petition for Late Examination must be submitted to the academic dean's office. A **\$10 fee**, plus proper documentation, must accompany the petition. The academic committee reviews each petition and grade penalties are assessed. (Late exam fee is not a grade penalty).
- c. Students taking late exams should expect alternate versions of the original exams.
- d. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**

4. **Attendance**

The Official Attendance Policy for the School of Theology and Missions is as follows:

- a. If the class meets three times a week, the missing of **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **8** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **12** class sessions will automatically results in a **grade of F**. If a class meets twice a week, the missing of **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **8** class sessions automatically results in a **grade**

of F. If the class meets once a week, then the missing of **3** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **5** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**.

- b. **The absences allowed prior to a grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses and are not designed for indiscriminate use.**
- c. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- d. Students are expected to be prompt for classes.
- e. Students are expected to remain for the entire class session.
- f. Leaving early without permission constitutes an absence.

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

- a. The course grade will be determined by the total points accumulated out of a possible 400.

Presentation	80 pts
Midterm Examination	100 pts
Book review, research reading	120 pts
Final Examination	100 pts

- b. Course Procedures

- (1) Read assigned material prior to the class sessions. Be prepared to dialogue with the class on your insights, questions, and uneasiness related to the reading.
- (2) Class procedure will include process, application, and integration of material with heavy student participation rather than just taking notes from lectures.

2. Other Policies and Procedures

- a. Textbooks should be read according to the course calendar so that they can be integrated into class discussions.
- b. Presentations planned by class members will be made by groups for the following subjects:
 - families and cultural diversity (ethnic, socioeconomic)
 - families experiencing divorce and remarriage
 - domestic abuse (physical, sexual, emotional and neglect of spouse and children)
- c. Outside reading of current research articles and a book directly related to contemporary family issues will be reported to the class and reproduced to submit in written form.
- d. The midterm and final examinations will be based on textbook readings, groups presentations, individual reading reports and lecture material. A portion of the exam points will require practical application of factual information considered during the course.

VI. COURSE CALENDAR

Week

1 Jan 10

Orientation

2 Jan 17

Cherlin, Ch 1-2

Definitions, History

3 Jan 24	Cherlin, Ch 3-4 <u>Periodical/Book Reports Begin</u>	Gender, Social Class
4 Jan 31	Cherlin, Ch 5	Ethnicity
5 Feb 7	VanVonderen, Part I	Christian Perspectives
6 Feb 14	VanVonderen, Part II	Christian Perspectives
7 Feb 21	VanVonderen, Part III	Christian Perspectives
8 Feb 28	<u>Presentations Begin</u> , Cherlin, Ch 7	Sexuality, Love
9 Mar 7	Cherlin, Ch 8-9	Spouses
10 Mar 21	<u>Midterm Exam</u> ; Cherlin, Ch 10	Work and Families
11 Mar 28	Cherlin, Ch 11	Domestic Abuse
12 Apr 4	Cherlin, Ch 12	Divorce
13 Apr 11	Cherlin, Ch 13	Remarriage and Stepfamilies
14 Apr 18	Cherlin, Ch 15	Children and Parents
15 Apr 25	Cherlin, Ch 16	Social Change

VII. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MISSIONS

PRM 539
Course #

Contemporary Family
Title of Course
MISSION

Dr. L. Breckenridge
Instructor

The lifestyle at ORU is rooted in the word "Wholeness." ORU seeks to educate the whole person, with balanced emphasis placed on the development of the mind, spirit, and body.

GENERAL OUTCOMES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Spiritual Development | 6. Valuing in Decision Making |
| 2. Physical Development | 7. Social Interaction |
| 3. Communication | 8. Global Perspectives |
| 4. Analysis | 9. Effective Citizenship |
| 5. Problem Solving | 10. Aesthetic Responsiveness |

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Spiritual formation/leadership:

Demonstrates Spirit-filled, biblically, theologically competent and historically informed church leadership.

Critical thinking/analysis! problem solving:

Understands and applies biblical/theological principles in the practice of ministry.

Communication/social interaction/global perspective:

Demonstrates the ability to communicate the Gospel in diverse social/cultural texts.

Value/ethics/decision-making:

Integrates Judeo-Christian values and ethics in personal life and ministry.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Evaluates the historical development and definition of the family according to Judeo-Christian values; articulates a Christian worldview in ethical issues which impact the contemporary family; communicates more effectively through the church to developing and changing families; shows sensitivity and global awareness of diversity in family forms; make decisions concerning issues of the family from a Judeo Christian perspective.

ASSESSMENT OF COURSE OUTCOMES

Stimuli:

Class discussions which require students to articulate their evaluation of ethical issues; examinations which require students to integrate personal experiences and text or lecture information; reading and presentations which require students to reflect upon and summarize information gleaned to be applied to practical settings

Criteria:

Examinations	50%
Research articles, presentation	50%