

223.24 • Marriage and Family (3 hrs.)
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Providence College
Winter Session, 2011
Tuesdays & Fridays 8:30

SYLLABUS

A. Calendar Description of the Course

An examination of the current status of the social institutions of marriage and the family in their historical-cultural context. Special attention is given to premarital factors and relations, marital dynamics and interaction, and family functioning and experience.

B. Purpose of the Course

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. summarize and characterize the general aspects and stages of marriage and family life experience;
2. compare the various theoretical perspectives employed by social scientists to locate and explain marriage and the family in its social context;
3. demonstrate knowledge of Christian perspectives and principles of marriage and the family, including specific biblical teachings pertaining to it;
4. outline various factors that are external to particular marriages and families that nevertheless impinge on their forms and functioning;
5. identify and describe current patterns, practices, and principles of marriage and family life;
6. interpret his or her own roles and participation as a member of a marriage and/or family;
7. express encouragement toward her or his own potential for fulfilling marriage and family relationships;
8. display an appreciation of the importance of marriage and families for the personal and social well-being of human life.

Note re. Syllabus:

It is the student's responsibility to retain their course syllabi for use as support for possible future applications to other educational institutions for transfer of credit.

C. Textbooks

REQUIRED:

Balswick, Jack O. and Judith K. Balswick. 2007. *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

All assigned collateral readings are available as PDF documents under Course Readings at www.provsoc.org.

RECOMMENDED:

Cheal, David, ed. 2010. *Canadian Families Today: New Perspectives*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

McDaniel, Susan A, and Lorne Tepperman. 2011. *Close Relations: An Introduction to the Sociology of Families* 4th ed. Pearson Prentice Hall.

Miles, Carrie A. 2006. *The Redemption of Love: Rescuing Marriage and Sexuality from the Economics of a Fallen World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

A **Selected Bibliography** for this course is posted under “Shared Document” on your Providence Student Portal for this course. It is comprised of separate sections on 1) Secular Sources, 2) Christian Sources, 3) Leading Journals, and 4) Leading Websites.

D. Course Requirements

1. Reading Checks (15%)

There will be a reading check at the beginning of most classes according to the class schedule below. The checks will consist of 2-3 multiple-choice questions from textbook chapters and one multiple-choice question from any collateral reading assigned. They will enable you to demonstrate whether you have completed the assigned reading on time with rudimentary comprehension. The questions can only be answered at the time they are given to the whole class; late-comers or absentees will forego the opportunity for credit for that reading. Your grade for this component of the course will accumulate throughout the semester.

2. Personal Reflections (4 x 5%)

After each unit of the course, write a 2-page informal reflection on selected course material that demonstrates your personal interaction with it, and functions as a form of journaling. No further study beyond doing the assigned readings and participating in class discussion is required. Comment on ideas or analyses presented in the preceding unit of the course that have interested or impressed you the most, explaining why you think they are significant. In order to develop your reflections meaningfully, you should probably limit your focus to the topics of one or two classes/readings.

Due Date:

Unit I: History and Theory	February 4
Unit II: Pre-Marital Relations	February 25
Unit III: Marriage	March 22
Unit IV: Family Life	April 14

3. Research Paper **OR** Book Review (20%)

DUE DATE: March 25

a) Write a short research paper (6-7 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font) on any relevant topic of your choice, using a formal style of writing (i.e. third person, etc.) and a social scientific style of documentation (see “The Bare Basics of ASA Documentation” in your Blackbaud student portal under “Shared Documents” for this course). As a general guideline, you should have approximately the same number of references as there are pages to your paper, and no more than half of the references may be from internet sources other than on-line academic journals, government agencies, or credible public organizations. See also the *Providence College Academic Formation Guide* for general writing guidelines. Topics that are significantly different than those covered in the classes of this course should have **prior** approval from me. Your paper should demonstrate that you have done independent research and reading beyond the assigned readings, that you have thought carefully and/or reorganized your topic in an original manner, and that you can express yourself in writing clearly and effectively. It will be graded on the quality of its content (15%) and composition (5%).

OR

b) Write a formal review (i.e. third person, etc. – 5 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font) of **one** of the following books, or any other relevant book that you have not read prior to this semester, and for which you have obtained **prior** approval from me. Non-scholarly books such as popular self-help or Christian discipleship books will be approved only if your review becomes

a “research review” that references the perspectives of other scholarship on the book you have selected, and that therefore has a bibliography. Your review should **not** focus on outlining the contents of the book you have chosen, but rather should demonstrate that you have interacted critically with the material, identifying its strengths and weaknesses while bringing fresh observations to it. Your paper will be graded on the quality of its content (15%) and composition (5%). Help in all aspects of essay writing can be found in the *Providence College Academic Formation Guide* available in the Providence Bookstore. See also the study help posted under Shared Documents in your Blackbaud student portal entitled “How to Write a Book Review.”

Amato, P. R., A. Booth, D. R. Johnson, and S. J. Rogers. 2007. *Alone Together: How Marriage in America is Changing*. Harvard University Press.

Bartkowski, J.P. 2002. *Remaking the Godly Marriage: Gender Negotiation in Evangelical Families*. Rutgers University Press.

Blankenhorn, D., D. Browning, and M. S. van Leeuwen, eds. 2004. *Does Christianity Teach Male Headship? The Equal-Regard Marriage and Its Critics*. Eerdmans.

Browning, D. S. 2003. *Marriage and Modernization: How Globalization Threatens Marriage and What to Do About It*. Eerdmans.

Cargan, Leonard. 2007. *Being Single on Noah’s Ark*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Cere, Dan, and Douglas Farrow, eds. 2004. *Divorcing Marriage: Unveiling the Dangers in Canada’s New Social Experiment*. McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Ellens, J. Harold. 2006. *Sex in the Bible: A New Consideration*. Praeger Publishers.

Loader, William. 2005. *Sexuality and the Jesus Tradition*. Eerdmans Publishing.

Martin, Dale B. 2006. *Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation*. Westminster John Knox Press.

Mathews, Alice P., and M. Gay Hubbard. 2004. *Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Modern World*. Baker.

Maushart, Susan. 2003. *Wifework: What Marriage Really Means for Women*. Bloomsbury.

- McMinn, Lisa. G. 2004. *Sexuality and Holy Longing: Embracing Intimacy in a Broken World*. Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, Carrie A. 2006. *The Redemption of Love: Rescuing Marriage and Sexuality from the Economics of a Fallen World*. Brazos Press.
- Kroeger, C.C. and N. Nason-Clark. 2010. *No Place for Abuse: Biblical and Practical Resources to Counteract Domes*. InterVarsity Press.
- Kuehne, Dale S. 2009. *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationship Beyond an Age of Individualism*. Baker Academic.
- Regnerus, M. D. 2007. *Forbidden Fruit: Sex and Religion in the Lives of American Teenagers*. Oxford University Press.
- Storkey, Elaine. 2002. *The Search for Intimacy*. Eerdmans.
- Waite, L. J. and M. Gallagher. 2005. *The Case for Staying Married*. Oxford University Press.
- Waite, L. J. and M. Gallagher. 2000. *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier, and Better Off Financially*. Doubleday.
- Wallerstein, J. S., J. Lewis, and S. Blakeslee. 2001. *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25-year Landmark Study*. Hyperion.
- Whitehead, Barbara. D. 1997. *The Divorce Culture: Rethinking our Commitments to Marriage and Family*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Whitehead, Barbara. D. 2003. *Why There are No Good Men Left: The Romantic Plight of the New Single Woman*. Broadway Press.
- Wilson, J. Q. 2002. *The Marriage Problem: How Our Culture has Weakened Families*. HarperCollins.
- Winner, Lauren. 2005. *Real Sex: The Naked Truth about Chastity*. Baker.

4. Case Study (15%)

DUE DATE: April 8

Select pertinent concepts presented in class or in the Balswick text and apply them to any one pre-marital, marital, or family relationship in which you are personally involved, or with which you are personally very familiar. You may write informally (i.e. first person, etc.), and confidentiality is assured. Select as many concepts as you can meaningfully apply and discuss in 5 pages (double-spaced, 12 point font) – do not merely outline course material. Your paper should demonstrate that you have mastered course material, and that you can use it to make sense of a real relationship you have experienced or encountered. It will be graded on the quality of its content (10%) and composition (5%).

5. Exams (15% x 2)

You will write two exams, each worth 15% of the final letter grade, and each consisting of approximately 30 multiple choice questions plus one question requiring a written answer. Each exam will hold you responsible for only but all the material in the lectures since the previous exam; the final exam is not comprehensive. See the study help posted under Shared Documents in your Blackbaud student portal entitled “How to Study for and Write (My!) Exams.” The dates of the exams are as follows:

Exam #1 February 22
Exam #2 April 14

Any request to reschedule a final exam must be approved by the Academic Committee in accordance with the policy in the College Academic Calendar. (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/programs/registrars_office/calendar/).

E. Grading Summary

1. Grade Components

Reading Checks	15%
Personal Reflections	20% (5% x 4)
Research Paper / Book Review	20%
Case Study	15%
Exams	30% (15% x 2)

Note: The last date for **Voluntary Withdrawal** from this course is Monday, March 14.

2. Grading Scale

Final course letter grades and their Grade Point equivalents will be calculated using the following scale:

<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>
91 – 99 = A+	4.0	Exceptional	67 – 69 = C+	2.5	Satisfactory
85 – 90 = A		Excellent	63 – 66 = C	2.0	Adequate
80 – 84 = A-			60 – 62 = C-		
77 – 79 = B+	3.5	Superior	57 – 59 = D+	1.0	Marginal
73 – 76 = B	3.0	Good	53 – 56 = D		Poor
70 – 72 = B-			50 – 52 = D-		
			< 50 = F	0.0	Failure

F. Course Policies

The full text of the academic policies, procedures and regulations of Providence College can be found online in the Student Handbook (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/) and the College Academic Calendar (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/programs/registrar_office/calendar/).

1. Class Attendance

Full attendance at all classes is expected, because active listening, thinking and discussing are primary learning experiences in this course. Questions on exams will be designed to reward class attendance and attention. While I am committed to making the classes as interesting and informative as possible, it is neither my role nor my gift to be an entertainer. I am happy to give additional assistance outside the classes to students who find themselves struggling with course material, but only to those who have demonstrated the self-discipline to attend all the classes they possibly can.

2. An ICT-free Classroom

Student use of electronic information and communication technologies, including laptop computers, is not allowed in class. Anyone found using one will be asked to either put it away or leave the classroom. (If you have a special learning need, please consult with me.) While I deeply regret the inconvenience for note-taking this becomes, too many students in the past have abused ICTs in the classroom, distracting themselves and their classmates, and disrespecting the educational enterprise. Our advanced technologies have by now created a need to regain the

ability to give sustained total attention to a single focus, a life skill now more in need of nurture than the ability to multi-task, though I well realize that banning ICTs does not guarantee it. As partial compensation, I will post the PowerPoint presentations from my lectures in the Shared Documents for this course in your Blackbaud student portal for one week after each topic is completed, for you to download if you wish.

3. Academic Integrity

Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all its various forms, and will be held accountable for doing so by the policy on Academic Conduct in the Student Handbook (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/). One particularly problematic breach of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is stealing from the ideas and writings of another person and passing them off as one's own. For an elaboration of the nature, types, and prevention of plagiarism, see the document entitled "Academic Dishonesty: The Problem of Plagiarism in Academic Writing" posted under Shared Documents in your Blackbaud student portal.

4. Late Assignments

Assignments will not be accepted after their due date; a grade of zero will be given for that component of the course. Furthermore, I will *not* receive requests for due date extensions. If you feel an extension is warranted, attach a cover letter to your assignment when you hand it in, explaining why it is late, and I will make a decision if and when your paper is graded. Assigning a late penalty (usually 10% or one letter grade per week) or waiving the zero grade will be considered only in the cases of medical or personal emergencies as detailed in the cover letter. Computer problems, conflicts with co-curricular activities, changes in employment schedules, or competition for library resources do not constitute such personal emergencies. Failure to plan ahead, or to maintain a margin of time for unforeseen events prior to the due date, does not warrant an extension either.

5. Missed Exams

Students who miss an exam are responsible to contact me within one week of the exam date if they still wish to write the exam. Permission to do so will be given to only those students who present evidence, acceptable to me, of medical reasons for having missed the exam. The format of the exam will be at my discretion, with essay questions likely. Students who do not write an exam by at most two weeks after the exam date will receive a grade of zero for that component of the course. Student athletes who are travelling during a scheduled exam period are

required to write their exams ‘on the road’, invigilated by a coach or supervisor, and are responsible to notify me one week prior to the exam date.

G. Class Schedule

All assigned readings from other than the Balswick & Balswick text (B & B) are posted under Course Readings at www.provsoc.org. I reserve the right to assign additional readings during the course of the term, or to alter the schedule of topics as I see fit.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Check</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
Jan. 11	Orientation to the Course		
Unit I: History and Theory			
Jan. 14	Introduction to Marriage & Family Studies		
Jan. 18	History of Western Marriage	Coontz, Stephanie. 2000. “The Way We Wish We Were: Defining the Family Crisis.” In <i>The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap</i> . Basic Books.	
Jan. 21	Contemporary Canadian Characteristics	Romano, Carlin. 2008. “For Marriage, the Honeymoon’s Over.” <i>The Chronicle Review</i> . August 1. Amato, P. R., A. Booth, D. R. Johnson, and S. J. Rogers. 2007. “The Continuing Transformation of Marriage in America. In <i>Alone Together: How Marriage in America is Changing</i> . Harvard University Press.	
Jan. 25	Day of Prayer (classes cancelled)		
Jan. 28	Theoretical Approaches	B&B ch.19 “The Erosion of Biblical Truth in a Postmodern World” B&B ch.20 “Creating a Family-Friendly Society”	
Feb. 1	Theological Perspectives	B&B ch.2 “The Family as a Developing System”	

- Mar. 1 Structures and Stages of Marriage
B&B ch.4 “Establishing a Strong Marriage”
- Mar. 4 Communication in Marriage
B&B ch.5 “Christian Marriage: A Model for Postmodern Society”
- Mar. 7-11 **Reading Week (classes cancelled)**
- Mar. 15 Marital Sexuality
B&B ch.13 “Expressing Love – Achieving Intimacy”
Tannen, Deborah. 1998. “You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation. In *Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporary, and Cross-Cultural Readings in Sociology*, 5th ed. Prentice Hall.
- Mar. 18 Power and Conflict in Marriage
McMinn, Lisa. G. 2004. “Mysteries of Marriage: Bone of My Bone, Flesh of My Flesh.” In *Sexuality and Holy Longing: Embracing Intimacy in a Broken World*. Jossey-Bass.

Unit IV: Family Life

- Mar. 22 Family Planning and Fertility **Reflection #3 Due**
B&B ch.14 “Expressing Anger – Negotiating the Inevitable Conflicts”
B&B ch.15 “Becoming Powerful Through Empowerment”
- Mar. 25 Parenting **Paper/Review due**
White, J. M., et al. 2005. “Parenthood, Parent-Child Relationships, and Socialization.” In *Families in Canada: Social Context, Continuities, and Changes*, 3rd ed. Pearson Prentice Hall.
“Sex Action.” *New Internationalist*. 2010, Issue 429.
- Mar. 29 The Economics of Family Life
B&B ch.6 “Parenting: The Process of Relationship Empowerment”
B&B ch.7 “Developing a Mature Reciprocating Self”
B&B ch.8 “Family Spirituality”

