

COURSE OUTLINE

**Psychology 131
Marriage and Intimate Relationships**

I. Catalog Statement

Psychology 131 studies the development of traditional and contemporary patterns of people living together with an emphasis on psychological and sociological theories and research. Topics examined include the historical development of marriage, diverse lifestyles (including single-parenting, the blended family, and gay and lesbian partnerships), partner compatibility, communication techniques, intimacy, conflict, child-rearing, dissolution of partnerships, and speculation about the future of relationships.

Total Lecture Units: 3.0

Total Course Units: 3.0

Total Lecture Hours: 48.0

Total Faculty Contact Hours: 48.0

Recommended preparation: Eligibility for English 120 or ESL 151

Note: This course may not be taken for credit by students who have completed Sociology 131.

II. Course Entry Expectations

Skills expectations: Reading 5; Writing 6; Listening/Speaking 6; Math 2

Prior to enrolling in the course, the student should be able to:

1. understand abstract and complex collegiate reading selections;
2. communicate learning and conceptual understanding through writing assignments;
3. learn material through class discussion and lecture;
4. add, subtract, multiply, and divide using whole numbers, fractions, and decimals.

III. Course Exit Standards

Upon successful completion of the required course work, the student will be able to:

1. describe and assess changing marital, partnership, and family roles from a historical perspective;
2. describe and assess reasons why people might elect to live married or single lifestyles today;
3. identify and assess styles of relating, including conflict management;
4. identify major factors that have contributed to changes in expectations related to marriage and family and to changing lifestyles;

5. describe different child-rearing philosophies and their techniques;
6. summarize the unique characteristics of gay and lesbian relationships;
7. compare and contrast a number of different family styles;
8. summarize and evaluate selected trends in research and theory.

IV. Course Content

Total Faculty Contact Hours=48

A. The Social and Historical Context of Marriage and Family	9 hours
1. The history of marriage and family	
2. To marry or not to marry	
3. Developing relationships	
4. Marriage, economics, and family life	
B. Managing Sexual Activities	6 hours
1. Pre-marital sex	
2. Biological differences	
3. Sex-role patterns and changing roles of women and men	
4. Safer sex	
5. Sexually transmitted diseases	
C. Marriage, Economics, and Family Life	5 hours
1. Marriage in this and other cultures	
2. Legal aspects of marriage	
3. The paid labor force and its participation	
4. The unpaid labor force and family work	
5. Cultural/ethnic implications on relationships	
D. Psychological and Sociological Contexts and Theories	14 hours
1. Expectations and reality in partnerships and families	
2. Male and female styles of communication and intimacy	
3. Managing fertility in child-free, single child, and single parent families	
4. The decision for parenting psychological and sociological dimensions	
5. The foundation and challenge of child-rearing techniques	
E. Functional and Dysfunctional Families	5 hours
1. Extremes in dysfunctional families	
2. Child abuse: causes and prevention	
3. Spousal abuse: causes and prevention	
4. Emotional and sexual abuse	
F. Ending Partnerships	3 hours
1. Legal and social aspects of marital and other dissolutions	
2. Emotional aspects of marital and other dissolutions	

G. Post-dissolution	2 hours
1. Dating options	
2. Remarriage or partnership re-entry	
3. Blended families	
H. Alternative Lifestyles	3 hours
1. Cohabitation	
2. Gay and lesbian partnerships	
3. Interracial relationships	
I. Future Directions	1 hour
1. Theory	
2. Research	

V. Methods of Instruction

The following instructional methodologies may be used in the course:

1. classroom lecture, discussion, and demonstration;
2. Taylor Johnson temperament test;
3. speakers with special expertise in the area of intimate relationships;
4. multimedia;
5. computer laboratory use in internet resources and interactive demonstrations;
6. small group activities, projects, debates, and presentations;
7. student presentations and discussions;
8. on-line instruction.

VI. Out of Class Assignments

The following out of class assignments may be used in the course:

1. homework assignment (e.g. written reaction papers to explain changing roles of women and men in relationships);
2. essays demonstrating application of concepts and critical thinking skills (e.g. written critiques of contemporary beliefs regarding the practice of safe sex);
3. research paper demonstrating use of sources and critical thinking skills (e.g. paper researching current legal aspects of marriage laws);
4. individual projects (e.g. student presentations of effective parenting strategies);
5. group projects (e.g. powerpoint presentations on the cause and prevention of spousal abuse).

VII. Methods of Evaluation

The following methods of evaluation may be used in the course:

1. four to five in-class objective and essay tests requiring demonstration of course exit standards;
2. class participation in individual or group tasks to practice course exit standards;

3. peer review of class participation in individual or group tasks to practice course exit standards;
4. in-class writing assignments (e.g. compare and contrast alternative lifestyles).

VIII. Textbook

Lamanna, M. & Riedmann, A., *Marriages and Families: Making Choices in a Diverse Society*. Belmont: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2011. Print.

12th Grade Textbook Reading Level. ISBN: 0-534-58887-5

IX. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:

1. describe and assess changing marital, partnership, and family roles from an historical perspective;
2. identify and assess styles of relating, including conflict management;
3. describe different child-rearing techniques and their effects on behaviors of the children.