

PSY345 Cultural Considerations in Understanding Family Dynamics

Summer 2023

Course Instructor: Ashley K. Randall, PhD

CYA Email: ashley.randall@cyathens.org

(Office) Hours Available: Before/after class (TBD).

Course Description

This course is designed to assist in students' cultural understanding of family relationships. The goal of this summer course is to improve understanding of the development and maintenance of close relationships, with a particular focus on increasing self-awareness and sensitivity to multicultural issues.

Course Approach

This course is designed to appeal to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. The course will be structured in the form of PowerPoint presentations, class discussions, class activities, and field work, wherein we will be visiting a number of historical sites and current community organizations that pertain to the family, broadly defined.

Students will be required to work independently and in small group settings to develop their knowledge and skills, particularly around working with individuals from diverse backgrounds. My expectation is that we will create a collective learning group that is based on respect, trust, and multicultural awareness.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Compare and contrast key theories related to the study of the family;
- B. Explain research methods associated with the study of family dynamics;
- C. Identify characteristics that are associated with family well-being and resilience;
- D. Reflect on concepts related to the family life cycle and intergenerational patterns;
- E. Recognize clinical concerns present in problematic family interaction patterns.

Course Requirements

All assignments should follow APA 7th guidelines for formatting. For more information please see: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

This course will require students to complete the following:

- 1. Reflection paper.** Students will be required to write a one-page (double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman) paper that addresses the following:
 - a. A brief introduction to yourself, including reasons for taking the course.
 - b. What are the defining characteristics of a family?
 - c. Why are relationships important?
 - d. What ways do you think your relationships have impacted your health (physical and/or mental)? Please provide relevant examples.
- 2. Multicultural application presentation.** In groups, students will be required to present a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation on a topic related to the family for a defined multicultural group. For example, coming out, parenting, adoption, divorce, etc. within a particular cultural group, broadly defined.

The purpose of this presentation is to give students in the class an overview of your cultural group and an introduction to the presenting issue. Your presentation should include:

- a. An introduction to the chosen cultural group, including key definitions and statistics related to social impact.
- b. A conceptualization of the presenting issue in relation to the cultural group.
- c. Strengths and challenges of the presenting issue in relation to the cultural group.

In addition to addressing the above, each group's presentation should present a question or two to the class to facilitate course discussion.

Presentations should include a minimum of five (5) empirical sources recently published (2013 – present), not including course readings.

3. **Cultural genogram.** For this assignment, students will submit a 10-page paper (excluding references) describing their personal genogram.

The purpose of this assignment is to increase students' awareness of cultural background and the worldviews, practices, and biases associated with differing, intersecting identities. Additionally, students will be able to critically examine the influence of these worldviews, practices, and biases on interactions with individuals from a different culture.

You are required to prepare a cultural genogram that includes information about family background information about varying aspects of identity. These include but are not limited to: age, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, ability status, education, socio-economic status, education level, occupations, and migration status.

4. **Midterm quiz.** Students will be required to take a midterm quiz that will consist of multiple-choice questions from course readings and information presented in class (e.g., lectures, videos, and activities).

Attendance and Participation: all have significant contributions to make and, if prepared, we will learn a great deal from each other. You are expected to come to class on time and prepared with comments/questions on the assigned readings.

Evaluation and Grading

Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

Assignments:

- Reflection paper = 10 points
- Multicultural presentation = 50 points
- Cultural genogram = 100 points

Midterm quiz = 30 points

Participation = 10 points

Evaluation Criteria - Course Assignments

Assignment 1: Reflection Paper (10 points)

- *Criteria 1:* Included a brief self-introduction and reasons for taking the course (1 point).
- *Criteria 2:* Included defining characteristics of the family (2 points).
- *Criteria 3:* Defined why relationships are important, cited relevant peer-reviewed literature (4 points).
- *Criteria 4:* Explained how relationships impacted one's health, including relevant examples (3 points)

Assignment 2: Multicultural Presentation (50 points)

- *Criteria 1:* Included an introduction to the cultural group, including key definitions and rates associated with social impact (e.g., X number of people are affected by X) (10 points).
- *Criteria 2:* Conceptualized the presenting issue, applying key concepts from course topics (20 points).

- *Criteria 3:* Addressed strengths and weaknesses of the presenting issue (10 points).
- *Criteria 4:* Included a question to facilitate course discussion (5 points).
- *Criteria 5:* Included relevant peer-reviewed citations (5 points).

Assignment 3: Cultural Genogram (100 points)

- *Criteria 1:* Created a (visual) cultural genogram (20 points).
- *Criteria 2:* Discussed patterns related to individual and family identity (50 points).
- *Criteria 3:* Applied key concepts covered in the course (30 points).

CYA Regulations and Accommodations

Attendance Policy

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential. You are expected to come to class on time and prepared with comments/questions on the assigned readings.

Absences are recorded and have consequences. In the event of an unanticipated absence (e.g., illness), you must notify me as soon as possible. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office.

Missing more than one class will result in your grade being reduced one full letter grade.

Academic Accommodations

If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Office of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Policy on Original Work

Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own original work. Any ideas taken from the work of others must be clearly identified as quotations, paraphrases, summaries, figures etc., and accurate internal citations and/or captions (for visuals) as well as an accompanying bibliography must be provided (Check the Student Handbook, pg. 7).

Use of Laptops

Use of laptops is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work.

Course Bibliography

Textbook:

Lamanna, M. A., et al. (2021). *Marriage, families, and relationships: Making choices in a diverse society*. Cengage.

Chapters:

Bradbury, T., & Karney, B. (2019). *Intimate Relationships* (3rd Edition). W. W. Norton & Company. Chapter 2: Influential theories.

Articles:

Argiropoulou, M., Pavlopoulos, V., & Quek, K. (2011). Conflict patterns among Greek couples: The role of values, self-disclosure, and relationship satisfaction. In F. Deutsch, M. Boehnke, U. Kühnen, & K. Boehnke (Eds.), *Rendering borders obsolete: Cross-cultural and cultural psychology as an interdisciplinary, multi-method endeavor* (pp. 17-35). Proceedings from the 19th International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology. https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/iaccp_papers/82/

Papadaki, V. & Ntiken, A. (2022). "As a Trans person you Don't live. You merely try to survive and apologize every day for who you are – Discrimination experiences among Trans individuals in Greece", *Journal of Homosexuality*, DOI: [10.1080/00918369.2021.2020544](https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2021.2020544)

Roussi, P., & Karademas, E. C. (2016). Dyadic coping in Greek couples. In M. K. Falconier, A. K. Randall, & G. Bodenmann (Eds.), *Couples coping with stress: A cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 153-169). New York, NY, US: Routledge/ Taylor & Francis Group

Shellenberger, S., Dent, M. M., Davis-Smith, M., Seale, J. P., Weintraut, R., Wright, T. (2007). A cultural genogram: A tool for teaching and practice. *Families, Systems & Health, 25*, 367-381.

Slater, P. E. (1974). The Greek family in history and myth. *Psychoanalysis and the Classics, 7*, 9 – 44.