

INTS 321: *Parent-Child Relations* (3 credits)

Fall 2019

Mondays: 10:30-1:10 pm

Robinson Hall B 103

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce upper-level undergraduate students with three aspects of parenting: a) concepts, challenges, and changes, b) family diversity, and c) family risk factors. The course considers interactions between parents and children from birth to adolescence and considers cross-cultural, historical, and societal influences. Students will also have the opportunity to learn about efforts that have been successful in changing detrimental parenting actions.

OBJECTIVES:

- Describe the historical and theoretical foundations of parenting research and practice;
- Summarize the cultural and contextual factors influencing parenthood, parent-child relationships, including topics such as parenting children with special needs and parenting in the context of various family forms (e.g., single-parent families, blended families, gay and lesbian families).
- Evaluate changes in parenting styles and parenting strategies across developmental stages from pregnancy to adulthood.
- Analyze current research on parenting and parent education and classify local, statewide, and national parenting education programs.
- Integrate research and evidence-based perspectives to demonstrate the importance of parent education.

Mason Core learning objectives fulfilled by this course include:

As part of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Learning Outcomes, you will be able to:

- Explain how individuals are influenced by contextual factors
- Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs
- Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts; terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

Writing Intensive (WI) requirements fulfilled by this course: The Faculty Senate Writing Across the Curriculum Committee has approved this course to fulfill the Writing Intensive (WI) requirement in the Integrative Studies major. These requirements are met in 4 ways: 1) ~5 in-class short reflection papers on class material, 2) a 2-5 page paper that critically analyzes parent-child relationships in the context of various ecological and cultural contexts, with a focus on the challenges of parenting and the changing nature of parenthood across development (their own as well as the child's) through analysis of a character in a film at various points in their parenting lives, and a final project that will include a minimum of a 5-page written component that is completed individually. Class time will be devoted to instruction on how to complete assignments successfully and the instructor will provide detailed comments on all writing components for the course.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Chua, Amy *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*
- Heath, Phyllis (3rd Edition) *Parent-Child Relations: Context, Research, and Application*

COURSE ASSESSMENT

- Participation 10%

- In-class Exams 50%
- Paper 20%
- Final Assignment 20%

Participation = 10%. Collaborative learning is an important feature of a learning community. Students are expected to attend class (arriving on time and **remaining until the end of the session**), to participate actively and responsibly, complete in-class writing assignments, and to hand in all assignments when due. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts.

In-class Exams = 50%. There will be two in-class tests on material covered in the *Parent-Child Relations* text and class discussions.

Each test is worth = 25% of the final grade.

Response Paper = 20%. See below.

Final Assignment = 20%. See below.

➔ **Late Work.** Papers and other assignments are to be turned in to the instructors at the beginning of class on the day due. **Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day that it is late** (including Saturday & Sunday). No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family. **Please do not plan to turn work in to your instructor's mailbox unless you have specific permission to do so.** Unless otherwise stipulated, work should be submitted in class in hard copy format; **emailed and faxed material is not acceptable.**

Disability Services

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703-993-2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. The need for accommodations must be identified at the beginning of the semester.

Honor Code

*"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to **cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie** in matters related to academic work."*

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

Commitment to Diversity:

The School of Integrative Studies is an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and strives to have faculty, staff and students that reflect the diversity of our plural society. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, class, linguistic background, religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, or physical ability.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

As in any course, some adjustments to the schedule may be made during the semester. It is the responsibility of students to come to class regularly and frequently monitor their Mason email account in order to stay informed about possible changes in activities or assignments.

	Topic	Reading Schedule and Assignments Due
Week 1 Aug 26	Introduction and Syllabus	
Week 2 Sept 2	Labor Day	
Week 2 Sept 9	Historical, Theoretical, & Ecological Models of Parenting	Chapter 1, Heath: Historical and Theoretical Influences of Childrearing
Week 3 Sept 16	Parenting Styles and Typologies I	Chapter 2 Heath; Parenting Patterns
Week 4 Sept 23	Parenting Styles and Typologies II	<i>Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother</i>
Week 5 Sept 30	In-class Exam	
Week 6 Oct 7	Diversity in Family Structure: Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives	Chapter 3, Heath: Parents and Children in Varied Family Structures
Week 7 Oct 14	Diversity in Family Structure: Applications and Interventions	View <i>Parenthood</i>
Week 8 Oct 21	Parental Socialization Strategies & Techniques	Chapter 4, Heath: Child Socialization Strategies and Techniques
Week 9 Oct 28	In-class Exam	
Week 10 Nov 4	Pregnancy, Childbirth & the Transition to Parenthood Response Paper Due	Chapter 5, Heath: Becoming Parents and Parenting Infants and Toddlers Response Paper Due
Week 11 Nov 11	Parenting in Early Childhood and Early Elementary and Middle School	Chapters 6 & 7 Heath: Parent-Preschooler Interactions and Parents and their School-age Children
Week 12 Nov 18	Parenting Adolescents and Young Adults	Chapter 8, Heath: Parent-Adolescent Interactions View <i>Closure: A Documentary on Adoption</i>
Week 13 Nov 25	Parenting Children with Special Needs	Chapter 11 Heath: Parenting Children with Special Needs View <i>My Flesh & Blood: A documentary</i>
Week 14 Nov 27	Work on Final Essay Out of Class	No Class
Week 14 Dec 2	Course Wrap-Up, Evaluations	Final Essay Due in Class

Response Paper

Three- five pages, typed using 11 or 12 point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced, and stapled. Be sure to cite the texts discussed in class to support your points.

After watching the film *Parenthood*, write an essay that describes your overall thoughts on the parent-child relationships that are portrayed, making specific references to class discussions and texts. In your essay, you should discuss:

- How is each parent affected by the nature of the child's birth and the resources of the family?
- What factors influence the satisfaction of couples during the transition to parenthood?
- How do the parents and grandparents work together to accommodate the arrival of children into the family?
- Discuss any marital conflict caused by differing parenting styles.
- What roles do the parents take in promoting their young children's cognitive development?
- How do the parents support their children's goals to realize their potential (developmental, social, emotional, etc.)?
- Describe how the parents' and grandparents' socialization patterns influence their relationships with their children.
- How does the quality of parent-adolescent attachment play out in the lives of the adolescents and their well-being?
- What are the sources of parent-adolescent conflict **and** how do these conflicts change over time?

Final Assignment

Parenting Paper. For this assignment, you are tasked with writing a paper on any developmental period that interests you (infancy, preschool, elementary school, middle childhood, or adolescence). A major requirement is that you apply theories and concepts learned in your class texts and class discussions as well as incorporate information from 3 other scholarly sources. The introduction include a brief summary of the developmental period you chose and your reasons for this choice. The body of your paper should back up the thesis offered in the Introduction. The following issues should be addressed:

- Why is child development important to understand when it comes to parenting?
- Describe and give examples of effective parenting techniques for this developmental stage.
- What are the most challenging behaviors of this developmental period? Explain how you (or any parent) can apply the parenting techniques/styles learned in class to address those challenging behaviors.
- What do you think is the most important aspect/concept and/or theory of the developmental period you chose and why?

Your conclusion should summarize your paper as well as answer: What is the most interesting thing you learned from writing this paper and why?

This paper will be a minimum of 4-6 pages long, *not* including title and reference pages. APA format required. You may *not* use Psychology Today, Redbook, Wikipedia, WebMD or similar sources for your reference material as these are not considered scholarly sources.

Written Assignment Grading Standards

All assignments are due at the beginning of class as noted in the daily schedule and must be typed using 11 or 12 point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced, and stapled.

Score of A: Superior

- Addresses the topic fully and explores the issue thoughtfully.
- Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
- Demonstrates clear, focused, coherent, and logical organization.
- Is fully developed and detailed. The point is clear and well stated.
- Good introduction with clear thesis statement, and an effective conclusion.
- Evidences superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition between paragraphs; only a few minor flaws.
- Integrates evidence from texts to support ideas and arguments.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of B: Strong

- Clearly addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
- Is effectively organized. Easy to follow and understand.
- Is well developed, with supporting detail. Logically coherent.
- Demonstrates control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition; may have a few minor mechanical flaws.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of C: Competent

- Adequately addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows clarity of thought but may lack complexity.
- Is organized. Can be followed with some difficulty.
- Is adequately developed, with some detail. Some logical fallacies or incoherent sentences/paragraphs.
- Demonstrates competent writing; shows some flaws in syntax and grammar.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of D: Weak

- May distort or neglect parts of the topic.
- May be simplistic or stereotyped in thought.
- May demonstrate problems in organization.
- May have generalizations without supporting detail or detail without generalizations; may be undeveloped. Logically flawed; several incoherencies.
- May reveal patterns of flaws in language, syntax or mechanics.
- Improper citation method.

Score of F: Inadequate

- Demonstrates serious inadequacy in addressing the topic.
- Fails in its attempts to discuss the topic. Illogical.
- May be deliberately off-topic. Extremely difficult to follow.
- Is so incompletely developed as to suggest or demonstrate incompetency.
- Is wholly incompetent mechanically.
- Improper citation method.