

PSYC3100 Special Topics: The Psychology of Parenting
Spring 2008 TR 12:30-1:45
Journalism Building, Room 512

Instructor: Dr. Kacy Welsh

Contact Info: kacywelsh@gmail.com

As I am teaching multiple classes, when you email me please include "PSYC3100 12:30" in the subject line

Office: Room 235, Psychology Building

Office Hours: MWF 10-12 (email first to be sure I'll be there!)

TA: Melissa Dengler

Contact Info: melissa.dengler@gmail.com

Office: Room 244, Psychology Building **Office Hours: By appointment**

TEXTBOOKS:

Bigner, J. J. (2006). *Parent-Child Relations: An Introduction to Parenting, 7th edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Schroeder, E. (2008). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Family and Personal Relationships, 7th Edition* Iowa: McGraw-Hill.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Discuss development from the prenatal period through adulthood and how parenting changes across the lifespan.
2. Understand the impact parents have on their children's achievement, relationships, morals, self-esteem, as well as the impact that children have on their parents.
3. Discuss healthy and effective methods of discipline and communication.
4. Critically evaluate current controversies in parenting and family life.
5. Additionally, contact with knowledge on a variety of topics related to the parenting process should (a) increase your understanding of and tolerance for the role of parents, (b) offer you successful strategies for making you a more competent parent, which in turn makes you a more competent individual, (c) increase your understanding of yourself, by allowing you to examine your own parents' parenting, and d) acquaint you with possible life crises and lifestyles that will affect you as parents: the working parent and childcare; parenthood vs. marriage; divorce and single-parenting or step-parenting; coping with an exceptional child; child abuse; child pathology, and others.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:

Lecture: Class attendance is not technically required on lecture days. It is, however, strongly recommended. There will be several in-class activities, videos, and random attendance checks throughout the semester which will reward students who come to class regularly. You will be unable to make up points for assignments completed during class or class participation on days when you were absent. Also, I will not be available to go over material presented on days when you were absent from class. I will **not** give out my lecture notes under any circumstances.

Debates: There will be 11 class debates during this semester. **Class attendance for debates is mandatory.** If you miss a debate for ANY reason (including documented illness), you will not

receive credit for participating in that debate. There will be one “freebie” that you can miss without penalty; however, since there are no excuses accepted, it would be best to save that “freebie” in case you need to miss a debate for a legitimate reason (like an illness). Please see the attached schedule for a list of the mandatory debate days.

Exams: There will be three exams, each covering 5-6 chapters of your text and the accompanying lecture material. Each exam will be worth **50 points**. Exams may consist of multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, short answer and essay questions. Exam format will vary and more details will be given before each exam. The final exam is not cumulative. Make-up exams will only be allowed with proper documentation.

Class Debates: At various times during the semester, we will be having class debates about some of the issues presented in the Taking Sides text. During these class debates, you will have the opportunity to discuss and debate controversial issues important to parenting and family life. These are issues on which experts disagree, and reasonable, strong arguments can be made on both sides. Thus, there is no one "correct" answer for any of these issues, although they are all important and, I hope, interesting.

The class debates will adopt a panel format. During each debate, 3 or 4 class members will take the pro (yes) side of an issue and 3 or 4 will take the con (no) side. The panel members are to clearly present the arguments on their side of the issue. After the panel members have presented their arguments, the debate will be opened up for questions, comments, and criticisms from the other members of the class. (More details will be given in a separate handout.)

Each student will be on one panel this semester. Your participation on the panel will be worth **25 points**. If you miss class on the day you are scheduled to be a panelist, you will receive a grade of 0 for that panel, and it will be impossible to make up the points.

Participation in the debate also counts when you are **not** on the panel. Your contributions to the class debates when not on the panel will be worth **30 points** (3 points for each debate). I will drop the lowest grade, so you have one chance to miss a debate without being penalized. In order to receive these points, in addition to being in class and participating in the discussion, a short assignment will be given to make sure that you come prepared for the session. This assignment along with your presence in class during the debate will earn you the 3 points for each debate. If you're absent, you obviously can't participate and cannot receive the 3 points. (See the discussion session handout for more info).

Participation/Class assignments: Throughout the course there will be a few small activities and assignments. These assignments will be worth a total of **45 points**. Assignments are due **at the beginning** of the class period in which they are due. You will lose one letter grade for each day that the assignment is late. I will not accept any assignments that are over 5 days late. Yes, weekends count.

It is a very good idea to exchange email addresses with several people in class- if you must miss a class, it will be **UP TO YOU** to contact another student to get any assignments that will be due and to find out what you may have missed.

All assignments must be typed unless they are completed in class, or I tell you that it doesn't need to be typed. Proofread your assignments for spelling and grammar errors. Do not rely exclusively on a word processor's spell check function because it will not catch everything. It is always a good idea to read your finished assignment out loud. This can help you catch errors you might otherwise miss. **You will lose points for excessive errors.**

Academic Honesty: Any form of academic dishonesty (e. g., plagiarism or cheating) will not be tolerated and will be met with severe penalty. For more information see the Academic Honesty guidelines outlined in the UGA handbook.

Final Grade Breakdown

Exam 1: 50 points

Exam 2: 50 points

Exam 3: 50 points

Discussion panel: 25 points

Discussion participation: 30 points

Assignments: 45 points

Total: 250 points

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Point Value</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A	226.25- 250	90.50-100
A-	223.75- 226.24	89.50-90.49
B+	218.75- 223.74	87.50-89.49
B	201.25- 218.74	80.50-87.49
B-	198.75- 201.24	79.50-80.49
C+	193.75- 198.74	77.50-79.49
C	176.25- 193.74	70.50-77.49
C-	173.75- 176.24	69.50-70.49
D	148.75- 173.74	59.50-69.49
F	0- 148.74	59.49 and below

Tentative Course Schedule

Jan 7-10	Drop/Add
Thurs, Jan 24	Debate #1: Choosing sex of infants
Tues, Feb 5	Debate #2: Intersex infants
Thurs, Feb 7	Exam 1 (Ch 1, 2, 3, 5, 6)
Tues, Feb 19	Debate #3: Spanking
Tues, Feb 26	Debate #4: Vaccinations
Tues, Mar 4	Debate 5: Mothers working Midpoint withdrawal deadline
Mar 10-14	Spring Break: No classes
Tues, Mar 18	Debate 6: Homeschooling
Tues, Mar 25	Debate 7: Statutory Rape Laws
Thurs, Mar 27	Exam 2 (Ch 4, 7, 8, 9, 10)
Thurs, April 3	Debate 8: Divorce
Thurs, April 10	Debate 9: Gay adoption
Thurs, April 17	Debate 10: Parental consent for abortions
Thurs, April 24	Debate 11: Abuse
Tues, April 29	No class: Reading Day
Thurs May 1: 12-3pm	Final Exam (Ch 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)