Course and Pre- and Co-requisites:

Required: None

Recommended: None

Required Texts and Other Readings:

Required:


**Listed as “WSW” in the readings**


Other required articles and video clips will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. All posted readings and clips are required and related questions may appear on exams.

Recommended:


Additional Materials Required:
A working computer with reliable Internet access.

**Course Description:**

In this course you will learn about different aspects of couple relationships: different types of couple relationships, common problems in couple relationships, and resources to strengthen couple relationships. You will also learn about stages of relationships, theories of love, and how to conduct research with couples.

Together, we will discuss and explore issues that couples face in modern times and will consider how many of these issues have changed due to policy, technology, acceptance, and a variety of other societal factors that impact relationships in the 21st century. You will also learn important methods of strengthening relationships that you currently maintain and may maintain in the future. Many of these methods are grounded in research on couples.

Your opinions and insights are welcome and will greatly enhance the course. They will provide unique - yet respectfully stated and considered - perspectives from which other students will learn, and will enhance the interactive atmosphere on which this course is built.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

Upon completing this course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the role that research, policy, and therapy play in influencing couple relationships.
2. Maintain an improved comprehension of different types of couple relationships and challenges that many relationships may face.
3. Recognize and comprehend theories that have been developed to explain love and relationships.
4. Enjoy an enhanced perspective on different stages of relationships.
5. Master skills and knowledge that you can apply to improve personal relationships - including critical thinking skills, an ability to recognize different perspectives in relationships, and improved communication skills.

**Program Competencies Addressed in this Course:**

The following competencies for FMSC are addressed in this course:

1. Analyze and critique the range of social structures and systems such as health, legal, and economic that affect family well-being.

**Course Requirements:**

**Format**

The course will be taught on-line via Canvas with spoken lectures accompanied by Power Point slides and other forms of media (movies, video clips, audio clips etc.). Students must “attend” all...
lectures - by listening to them in full and participating in assignments. It is important to take notes while listening to lectures; Power Points serve as only an outline - they do not contain details that will be included on exams; this information is in required readings and lectures.

**It is important to regularly check Canvas to track any changes or updates regarding the course.**

Note: this is a semester-long course condensed in to a 3 week time span. Therefore, it moves very quickly. You must stay on top of the lectures and readings. Exams and assignments appear very soon after the course begins. You should be checking Canvas and listening to new lectures regularly - possibly daily. You should also start reading and work on your Five Love Language paper well in advance of its due date. You may turn it in early, if you’d like.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Read chapters as assigned in Williams, Sawyer, & Wahlstrom (2006) and Chapman (2010), as well as all other assigned readings.**

   All reading assignments are to be completed by class time the day they are due.

2. **Complete Exam 1 (Midterm) (20% of grade, 60 points) and Exam 2 (Final - NOT comprehensive) (20% of grade, 60 points) -**

   Exams will be multiple choice and true/false. The exams will cover assigned readings, lecture material, handouts, videos, and discussions. Each exam will cover only the material presented during the periods preceding it (the final exam is not comprehensive).

   Exams are to be taken at the scheduled times and there will be no make-up exams without written documentation of a University excused absence and my prior approval.

   Any concerns regarding cheating on exams - such as students taking exams together, communicating during exams, or using course materials during exams, will be immediately reported to the University Honor Council and will result in a grade of “0” on the exam.

   **Because the exams will be taken on-line, they will be timed. They are not meant to be open-book; a strict, set time-limit will help to ensure that students are not looking up answers during the course of the exam.**

3. **Complete all in-class discussions (20% of grade; 3 discussions worth 20 points each)**

   In an effort to create an interactive atmosphere in which students learn from and enrich one another’s experiences, on-line discussions are mandatory. A discussion clip, question, or topic will be posted. Thoughtful, insightful and respectfully stated comments will receive credit towards the in-class discussion grade. You will have one week to complete the discussion requirement for that week. Full credit for discussion is earned by posting an entry that is a minimum of 100 words in length, includes a response to a previous posting (with the exception of the first posting for the week), and exemplifies thoughtfulness and critical thinking. Quality of writing will be considered in grading as well.

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Resnick
4. Complete reflection papers (20%; 3 papers worth 20 points each)

These papers will be submitted on-line, via Canvas.

Reflection papers are to be 1-2 pages in length (see Five Love Languages paper for formatting requirements). They are an opportunity for you to process through your thoughts and experiences with various topics covered in the course. Your opinions and experiences will not be graded - as they are personal; rather your writing, adherence to the assignment, and the depth of your consideration of the topic will determine your grade on each reflection paper.

Each paper assignment will include a number of related questions. You may write on just one or several of the listed questions. You do not need to address them all. Writing on just one is perfectly acceptable. Choose those that are of most interest to you.

5. The 5 Love Languages (20% of grade, 60 points) *START EARLY IN SEMESTER*

NOTE: Must be in 12-point, Times New Roman font, double spaced, with one-inch margins all around. If turned in differently, it will be returned and 10% will be lost for each day that it is turned in late as it is re-formatted.

This will be a 5 page paper (plus a reference page) - 1 page for each of the 4 sentences chosen (from 4 different chapters) and one final summary page. The Reference page will be added at the end (Technically p. 6). A grading rubric will be available.

“The Five Love Languages” Assignment:

Choose 2 sentences that you find to be the most profound from the book. These should be sentences that revealed an important aspect of relationships to you with which you were not previously familiar. These sentences should be sentences that made you stop and think, helped you learn something new, and helped you understand relationships in a new or more clear way. These sentences should each be from DIFFERENT chapters in the book. For each sentence, at 4
the top of the page, include the page number, quote it, and from there, write one page as to why you chose this sentence: what the sentence means to you, what it taught you, what you have learned and how you will change your behavior as a result.

Also, choose 2 sentences in the book with which you do not agree, or in which you see flaws. These sentences should each be from DIFFERENT chapters in the book as well. (Meaning that a total of 4 book chapters must be used in the paper). For each sentence, at the top of the page, include the page number, quote it and from there, write one page as to why you disagree with this sentence. Include why you chose the sentence, what you think is a flaw in the sentence, what your experiences have taught you that make you believe that this sentence is inaccurate, how you would change the sentence to make it better match what you believe to be true, etc.

Finally, write one page about your feelings regarding the book overall. Do you believe in this philosophy? Have you tried it to see if it works? Do you think that it is possible to use this advice to improve a relationship? Do you see problems with the book? etc.

Reference the book chapters used, in APA format at the end of the assignment. An example slide will be posted for you to follow as a guide.

This paper will be submitted on-line, via canvas. THIS PAPER IS DUE THE LAST WEEK OF CLASS AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED LATE. PLEASE START READING AND WRITING EARLY. You may Submit the paper early if you complete it early.

Course Policies:

Policies

Discussions will occur regularly via Canvas. Courses occurring on-line are unique in that the lack of face to face interaction may result in more comfort stating opinions and ideas. The expression of thoughtful insights is encouraged; however, respect and consideration for others is vital at all times. Offensive language or inflammatory statements will not be tolerated - any such cases will result in loss of credit for the assignment and removal of the offending entry from the discussion. That said, critical thinking is encouraged and it is not expected that students will always agree - disagreement is acceptable as long as it occurs in a respectful manner.

Late assignments will lose 10% for every day that they are late - beginning with the first hour after the assignment is due. An additional 10% is lost every 24 hours that pass without the assignment being completed and submitted. Example: An assignment due at 5:00 on Friday, January 9 that is turned in at 6:00 on Saturday, January 10 will lose 10%. If it is turned in on Sunday, January 11 at 5:00 it will have lost 20% by that day.

The midterm and final must be completed by the set day and time. No exceptions. Failure to do so will result in a 0 for the exam.

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***Due to the extremely condensed nature of this course into a 3 week period, NO late assignments will be accepted for the last week of class. That means that ALL assignments due the last week of class (Week 3A/3B) (January 19-January 23) MUST be turned in by their specified due date/time, or they will receive a 0. This ensures that all assignments will have time to be appropriately graded before grades are due for the semester.***

Email – The Official University Correspondence:

Verify your email address by going to www.my.umd.edu.

All enrolled students are provided access to the University’s email system and an email account. All official University email communication will be sent to this email address (or an alternate address if provided by the student). Email has been adopted as the primary means for sending official communications to students, so email must be checked on a regular basis. Academic advisors, faculty, and campus administrative offices use email to communicate important and time-sensitive notices.

Students are responsible for regularly checking their Canvas Inbox and the course “Announcements” page. Also, for keeping their email address up to date or for redirecting or forwarding email to another address. Failure to check Canvas/email, errors in forwarding email, and returned email (from “full mailbox” or “unknown user” errors for example), will not excuse a student from missing University announcement, messages, deadlines, etc. Email addresses can be quickly and easily updated at www.my.umd.edu or in-person at the Student Service Counter on the first floor of the Mitchell Building.

For technical support for University email: www.helpdesk.umd.edu or call 301-405-1400.

Important:

Due to the online nature of this course, it is best to contact me via Canvas (use the “Inbox” feature.) I strive to respond to all messages within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response from me within 48 hours or sooner, I encourage you to contact me again. It is possible that I did not receive your initial message.

Absence Policy: (Not applicable to an online course)

In accordance with University policy if you are absent for a single (1) lecture due to illness or some form of personal or family emergency, this absence will be considered "excused" and the instructor will accept a note from you attesting to the date of this illness/incident, along with an acknowledgement that the information is true. Whenever feasible, you should try to contact the instructor in advance.
Multiple or prolonged absences, and absences that prevent attendance at a major scheduled grading event (like an exam or test) will require written documentation from an appropriate health care provider/organization.

A link to pull information on the new policy covering absences from class can be found at http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/v100g.html

Religious Observances:

The University System of Maryland policy provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor in advance of any intended absences for religious observance.

Special Accommodations / Disability Support Services:

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations for test taking or other needs, you will need documentation from Disability Support Service (301-314-7682). If you are ill or encountering personal difficulties, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. You can also contact Learning Assistance Services (301-314-7693) and/or the Counseling Center (301-314-7651) for assistance.

Academic Integrity:

The University's code of academic integrity is designed to ensure that the principle of academic honesty is upheld. Any of the following acts, when committed by a student, constitutes academic dishonesty:

- CHEATING: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in an academic exercise.
- FABRICATION: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this code.
- PLAGIARISM: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

For more information see: http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html.

The Honor Pledge is a statement undergraduate and graduate students should be asked to write by hand and sign on examinations, papers, or other academic assignments. The Pledge reads:
I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.shc.umd.edu.

Inclement Weather / University Closings:

In the event that the University is closed for an emergency or extended period of time, the instructor will communicate to students regarding schedule adjustments, including rescheduling of examinations and assignments due to inclement weather and campus emergencies. Official closures and delays are announced on the campus website (http://www.umd.edu) and snow phone line (301-405-SNOW), as well as local radio and TV stations.

Course Evaluation:

The University, the School of Public Health, and the Department of Family Science are committed to the use of student course evaluations for improving the student experience, course and curriculum delivery, and faculty instruction. Your evaluations help instructors improve their courses; help deans and department chairs decide on merit pay for faculty, renewal of contracts, and support tenure and promotion decisions; and help current and future students decide on classes.

Available Support Services: The Writing Center will help students in need of writing assistance. Please see http://www.english.umd.edu/writingcenter for further details and contact information.

Grading Procedures:

Each assignment is worth 20% of your course grade.

“The Five Love Languages”: 20%  
Midterm: 20%  
Discussion comments (3 discussion): 20% total  
Reflection papers (3 papers): 20% total  
Final exam: 20%

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100-98%</td>
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<td>97-94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-83%</td>
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Resnick
B-     82-80%
C+     79-77%
C      76-73%
C-     72-70%
D+     69-67%
D      66-63%
D-     62-60%
F      59% and below

Course Outline/Calendar: (See next page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>1/5-1/6</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 1: All</td>
<td>• Signed honor code</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 2: Intro, 2.2, 2.3 &amp; links in lecture</td>
<td>• Reflection paper #1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Gottman: The Love Lab</td>
<td>• Reflection paper #2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 4: All</td>
<td>• Discussion #1</td>
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<td>• One Example: Social Exchange</td>
<td>SIGNED HONOR CODE, REFL. #1 &amp; #2, and DISC. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>1/7-1/9</td>
<td>Theories</td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 5: Intro, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4 &amp; link in lecture</td>
<td>ALL DUE: 5PM on 1/9</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 8: Intro, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Marriage</td>
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<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>1/10-1/13</td>
<td>Marriage Movement</td>
<td>• Policy Overview (full document) &amp; links in lecture</td>
<td><em><strong>NOTE</strong></em> MIDTERM WED. 1/14 COVERS WEEKS 1A, 1B and 2A ONLY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Same sex relationships</td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 9: 9.3</td>
<td>• Discussion #2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative relationships</td>
<td>• Tying the Knot (<em>full length film</em>)</td>
<td>• 5LL Paper</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• WSW Ch. 5: 5.3 &amp; Ch. 9: 9.4, 9.1</td>
<td><strong>5LLPAPER</strong> &amp; DISC. #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>1/14-1/16</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>• See posted doc</td>
<td>DUE: 5PM on 1/16</td>
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<td>Violence</td>
<td>• WSW Ch.13: 13.3, 13.4 &amp;</td>
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<td>• Rihanna Interview, 20/20</td>
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<td>• TED Talk: Leslie Morgan Steiner</td>
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<td>• WSW Ch. 7: All</td>
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<td>Sex</td>
<td>• TED Talk: Esther Perel</td>
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<td>• TED Talk: Al Vernacchio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>WSW Chats</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>1/17-1/21</td>
<td>Infidelity Couples Therapy Divorce</td>
<td>13.1, 13.2</td>
<td>WSW Ch. 14: All, Divorce Policies (Full Document)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3B</td>
<td>1/22-1/23</td>
<td>Communication Happy Couples</td>
<td>6: All &amp; links in lecture</td>
<td>The Four Horsemen; Gottman, Problem Solving, WSW Ch. 8: 8.4</td>
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Note: Numbers in brackets after learning objectives show linkage between material covered in each session and the number program competencies shown on page 1 of this syllabus.

**Session Outline**

- **REFL. #3 & DISC. #3**
  - DUE: 5 PM on 1/22
  - ***NOTE***
    - FINAL EXAM 1/23
    - COVERS WEEKS 2B, 3A & 3B ONLY
Topics:

- Introduction
- Research Methods

Learning Objective for session: [1]

- Understand the format and content of the course
- Learn about methods of conducting research with couples
- Recognize the importance of research in the study of couple relationships

Required readings & video:

- WSW Ch. 1: All
- WSW Ch. 2: Intro, 2.2, 2.3 & links in lecture
- Gottman: The Love Lab

Assignments:

***(See 1B)***
Topics:

- Theories
- Dating
- Marriage

Learning Objective for session: [1]

- Discover and comprehend the theories of love and dating
- Consider changes in dating behaviors over time, as well as circumstances that dictate dating preferences, opportunities, and behaviors
- Explore issues regarding marital decisions, success and satisfaction

Required readings & videos:

- WSW Ch. 4: All
- WSW Ch. 5: Intro, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4 & link in lecture
- WSW Ch. 8: Intro, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3
  - One Example: Social Exchange

Assignments & due date:

- Signed honor code
- Reflection paper #1
- Reflection paper #2
- Discussion #1

(ALL DUE: 5PM on 1/9)
Session 2 A
1/10 - 1/13

Topics:
- Marriage Movement
- Same Sex Relationships
- Alternative Relationships

Learning Objective for session: [1]
- Discover state and federal government’s stake in and techniques for marriage promotion
- Learn about unique aspects of same sex relationships and their historical struggle for recognition
- Explore alternative relationship arrangements

Required readings & video:
- *Policy Overview* (full document) & links in lecture
- WSW Ch. 9: 9.3
- *Tying the Knot* (*full length film*)
- WSW Ch. 5: 5.3 & Ch. 9: 9.4, 9.1

Assignments:

*** (See 2B) ***
Topics:

• Mental Health
• Violence
• Sex

Learning Objective for session: [1]

• Identify a variety of mental illnesses and garner sensitivity to and coping skills for maintaining a couple relationship in which mental illnesses are experienced by at least one partner
• Consider the dangers and different types of abuse in couple relationships, learn about the cycle of violence, and identify means of addressing abusive relationships
• Discover information about normative and non-normative sexual relationships as well as how to improve sexual relationships in a couple

Required readings & videos:

• See posted doc
• WSW Ch. 13: 13.3, 13.4
• Rihanna Interview 20/20
• TED Talk: Leslie Morgan Steiner
• WSW Ch. 7: All
• TED Talk: Esther Perel
• TED Talk: Al Vernacchio

Assignments & due dates:

• MIDTERM: 1/14 (COVERS WEEKS 1A, 1B, and 2A ONLY)
• Five Love Languages Paper
• Discussion #2

(BOTH DUE: 5PM on 1/16)
Session 3 A
1/17-1/21

Topics:

• Infidelity
• Couples Therapy
• Divorce

Learning Objective for session: [1]

• Explore the realities of infidelity, its many forms, and its impact on couple relationships
• Understand the utility, process and efficacy of couples therapy
• Consider the prevalence, indications for, impact and process of divorce

Required readings & video:

• WSW Ch. 13: 13.1, 13.2
• Couples Therapy: PREP
• WSW Ch. 14: All
• Divorce Policies (Full Document)

Assignments:

*** (See 3B) ***

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED THIS WEEK
Session 3 B
1/22-1/23
-------------------------------------------
Topics:
• Communication
• Happy Couples

Learning Objective for session: [1]
• Discover the importance of communication in couple relationships, as well as effective communication and problem solving skills
• Garner tips and recommendations for maintaining healthy and happy couple relationships

Required readings & videos:
• WSW Ch. 6: All & links in lecture
• The Four Horsemen; Gottman
• Problem Solving
• WSW Ch. 8: 8.4

Assignments & due dates:
NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED THIS WEEK
• Reflection paper #3
• Discussion #3
(BOTH DUE: 5 PM on 1/22)
• FINAL EXAM: 1/23 (COVERS WEEKS 2B, 3A, and 3B ONLY)

Additional Literature, Websites and Other Resources: See Announcements, lectures, syllabus, etc.