FCS 401 – Theory and Contemporary Issues in Family and Consumer Sciences
Section 01 - Course Syllabus - Fall 2014
Tuesday, 5:30-8:20 --- Turner 121

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30, Wednesday 11:00-12:00, & Thursday 2:00-3:00

Texts:
- Selected Reading at http://library.illinoisstate.edu/class-materials/course-reserves/

1. DEPARTMENTAL MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the department of Family and Consumer Sciences is to provide an integrative study of the human environment and the systems that impact and strengthen individuals, family units, agencies, businesses, and community at large.

2. CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION: Analysis of theories used in Family and Consumer Sciences. Emphasis is on the profession’s integrative framework and application of theory to research and problem-solving.

2.1 Overview: This course will introduce relevant theories used in the study of situations confronted by professionals in the field of Family and Consumer Sciences. An integrative approach will be followed to identify the individual contributions of different FCS areas of specialization (family resource management; foods and nutrition; human environment and interior design, apparel and textiles, and human and family development) in addressing the persistent problems of families, individuals and the communities in which they live.

3. COURSE OBJECTIVES: The successful completion of this course will enable the student to:
- Analyze and critique the following theories: structural functionalism, family developmental, exchange, symbolic interactionism, conflict, family stress, systems, feminist, and biosocial.
- Understand and apply a sense of social responsibility in your chosen area of Family and Consumer Sciences.
- Assess how appropriate theories are used to support professional decisions
- Validate each of the professional areas of expertise within FCS based on the integrative framework of the profession (Common Body of Knowledge)
- Develop a knowledge of, and an informed stance on controversial topics facing FCS professionals today
- Apply problem-solving techniques, in a theoretical context, appropriate for a variety of situations confronted by FCS professionals in their chosen area of study
- Value the consideration for human diversity and synthesis in planning and executing one’s professional life.

4. EXAMS: Three tests will cover the topics from the scheduled readings and class lectures/discussions, and will consist entirely of case study/essay scenarios.

4.1 Test Make-up Policy: Make up for missed tests will be considered on an individual basis and circumstances will require appropriate documentation by the student. The instructor expects the student to notify him as soon as possible, or as soon as possible afterwards.
5. REQUIREMENTS:
   - Read required material prior to class and participate consistently in class discussions
   - 5-minute teachings
   - Two quick thoughts (QT’s) for each class
   - Two Taking Sides presentations (2 topical presentations, one during finals week)
   - Three exams
   - Critical reflection paper on QT’s, 5-minute teaching, and presentations

5.1 Quick Thoughts: QT’s are thoughts, conclusions, questions etc. that came to you as a direct result of a specific evening’s class. For instance: What struck you as completely original? Did you change your mind about an existing conclusion that you held, or, become even more certain in your existing belief? Be concise and specific, and open to your own ideas.

*** Two QT’s are due after each class, e-mailed within 24 hours.

5.2 Five-minute teaching: Involves your insights from the week’s reading and your own experience. Did you see a common thread? Did one article, chapter, or idea strike you as more relevant or meaningful to your life, career, etc? Essentially, share your synthesis, insights, and questions directly applied to the week’s theory. --- 1 page synthesis

5.3 Presentations(2): Students will work in small groups to present selected social arguments from the selected topics below. Presentations will be approximately 25-30 minutes in length and consist of (a) a detailed introduction of your question and its importance in our culture, (b) your initial views (i.e. prior knowledge) and your initial group consensus concerning the question, (c) the yes-no arguments, (d) the process of forming the argument and final group consensus, (e) a detailed presentation of the group’s conclusion, and (f) what the future likely holds for this topic. The second round of presentations will require a specifically chosen theory used to interpret the topic.

Taking-Sides presentation topic options:
1) Will irradiation improve the safety of the food supply? (Source 2, Issue 16)
2) Are American values shaped by the mass media? (Source 3, Issue 1)
3) Can negative stereotypes in the media be reduced? (Source 4, Issue 8)
4) Should freedom of speech ever be restricted? (Source 3, Issue 11)
5) Should mothers infected with the AIDS virus breastfeed their infants? (Source 2, Issue 14)
6) Is it necessary for pregnant women to completely abstain from all alcohol? (Source 7, Issue 17)
7) Should scientists be allowed to clone children? (Source 6, Issue 3)
8) Should parents be able to select the biological sex of their children? (Source 5, Issue 6)
9) Does the world need genetically modified foods? (Source 17).
10) Is advertising good for society? (Source 3, Issue 6)
11) Does widespread hunger exist in America? (Source 2, Issue 13)
12) It is the claim of white skin privilege of myth? (Source 4, Issue 7)

- Presentation topics are from the following, available at Milner, Floor 2 Circulation Desk:
5.5 Critical Reflection Essay: This is a brief, evaluative look back over your QT’s, teaching moments, and choices of theory. What trends (at least 3) do you see in your work and thinking? Do you notice any personal strengths and weaknesses? What have you changed your mind about? How? As always, think synthesis.

5.6 General instructions for all assignments: Work may be discussed with classmates; however, each student must submit independently produced assignments. If your name is on the paper, I assume the work is wholly original with you. Written submissions are to be typed and double-spaced with a 12-point font. Oddly enough, grammar, spelling, organization, etc., will also be reflected in the grade. --- Late assignments will be reduced by 20%.

6.0 GRADING: Based on a total of 500 possible points, grades will be assigned as follows:
- 3 Exams (55 possible points each for 165 possible points)
- Quick Thoughts (2 per class for 5 points, 12 submissions for 60 possible points)
- Five-minute teachings (9/10 at 15 points each for a possible 135 points)
- Taking Sides presentations(2) (50 possible points each for 100 possible points)
- Critical Reflection Essay (40 possible points)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Meaning of the Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>Clearly stands out as exceptional performance. Has unusually sharp insight into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89.99%</td>
<td>Grasps subject matter at a level considered to be good to very good. Writes well. Accomplishes more than the minimum requirements. Work in and out of class is of high quality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79.99%</td>
<td>Demonstrates a satisfactory comprehension of the subject matter. Accomplishes all the minimum requirements, but displays little or no initiative. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for a college student. Has a generally acceptable understanding of all basic concepts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69.99%</td>
<td>Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is below average and just acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 – 59.99%</td>
<td>Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is unacceptable.</td>
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The points are an accurate reflection of the grade. There will be no further rounding.

7.0 CALENDAR

08/19 -- Class Introduction
- Taking-Sides topics introduced
- Bloom’s Taxonomy, Stereotyping, IP and Reflective Thinking
- FCS Common Body of Knowledge
- QT 1 due after class

08/26 -- Intro to Theory
- 5-minute teaching #1
- Taking-Sides topics selected
- QT 2 due after class

Required Readings:
Text --- Exploring Family Theories, pp. 1-9
Choose any two of the following:


**09/02 -- Functionalist Framework**

- 5-minute teaching #2
- QT 3 due after class

*Required Readings:*
- Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 42-67

**09/09 -- Symbolic Interactionism**

- 5-minute teaching #3
- QT 4 due after class

*Required Readings:*
- Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 11-25
- Choose any two of the following:

**09/16 -- Family Development Theory**

- 5-minute teaching #4
- Exam #1 handed out
- QT 5 due after class

*Required Readings:*
- Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 69-111
- Choose one of the following:


**09/23 -- Exam #1 due by 8:30am** via ReggieNet Assignments tab

**09/23 – Family Stress Theory**
- 5-minute Teaching #5
- QT 6 due after class

*Required Readings:*

Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 114-144

Choose one of the following:


**09/30 -- Taking-Sides Presentations #1**
- QT 7 due after class

**10/07 -- Social Exchange Theory**
- 5-minute Teaching #6
- QT 7 due after class

*Required Readings:*

Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 249-286

Choose one of the following:


**10/14 -- Conflict Theory**
- 5-minute teaching #7
- Exam #2 handed out
- QT 6 due after class

*Required Readings:*

Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 213-247

10/21  Exam #2 due by 8:30am via ReggieNet

10/21  -- Systems Theory
- 5-minute teaching #8
- QT 7 due after class

*Required Readings:*
Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 145-183
Choose one of the following:

10/28  -- Human Ecological (Bioecological) Theory
- 5-minute Teaching #9
- QT 8 due after class

*Required Readings:*
Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 185-210
Choose any one of the following:

11/04  -- Feminist Theory
- 5-minute Teaching #10
- Exam #3 handed out
- QT 9 due after class

*Required Readings:*
Text --- *Exploring Family Theories*, pp. 291-234

11/11  -- Exam #3 due by 8:30am via ReggieNet
11/11  -- Preparation for Taking Sides Presentations #2
- Adding hypotheses and theory to your presentation
- QT 10 due after class
11/18 -- No class meeting, NCFR
  • Please use this time to meet concerning your 2nd Taking-Sides presentation on 12/02

11/25 – Fall Break

12/02 -- Taking-Sides Presentations #2 (groups 1-3)
  • QT 11 due after class

**Finals Week, according to final schedule -- Taking-Sides Presentations #2 (groups 4-6)**
  • QT 12 due after class

12/12 -- Critical Reflection essays submitted electronically by 8:00am