

# General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: CFS 31 The Family in America Units 3  
Prefix No. Title

Department: Child, Family & Con Sci School: Agri Sci & Tech

### GE Category (Indicate one category only):

Foundation: A1\_\_\_; A2\_\_\_; A3\_\_\_; B4\_\_\_  
Breadth: B1\_\_\_; B2\_\_\_; C1\_\_\_; C2\_\_\_; DX; E\_\_\_  
Integration: B\_\_\_; C\_\_\_; D\_\_\_; International/Multicultural\_\_\_

Existing Course\_\_\_; Revised Course\_\_\_; New Course X

Course Included in Current GE Program\_\_\_

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.

Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

**Proposed catalog description:** Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

(SEE ATTACHED)

Enrollment limit per section: 48

Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 2; Year 3 4

### Attachments:

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

### Approval for Inclusion in General Education

Nina J. Albeck Mar 5, 1998 [Signature] 3-18-98  
Department Chair Date School Curriculum Committee Date

[Signature] 3-19-98 [Signature] 12/15/98  
School Dean Date General Education Subcommittee Date

[Signature] 12/22/98  
Associate Provost Date

1/14/98

**ATTACHMENTS 1-4**  
**GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE PROPOSAL**  
**G.E. Category: D Lower Division Breadth**

**Proposed New Course:** Child and Family Sciences 31: **The Family In America** 3.0 Units

**Department:** Child, Family, and Consumer Sciences  
**School:** School of Agricultural Sciences and Technology

**Course Description:**

Interdisciplinary introduction to American families, their place within society and their influence on human behavior. Topics include historical development, social functions, methods for studying, cultural and sub-cultural influence and meaning, family types, parenting, family violence, and the impact of race, class, and gender.

**ATTACHMENT ONE: Specifications Statement for three lower social science units:**

Of all social institutions, the family is the single most important source of individual support and identity as well as a major source of satisfaction. In the most significant ways, the family is the foundation of society. The family facilitates individuals being socialized and taking their places as productive citizens in various walks of life. Understanding the American family so that the student may more effectively participate as an effective family member is a critical element of the stated mandate of E.O. 595 and 405, Area D. "Courses approved to meet this requirement must *introduce students to the methodologies and analytical concepts necessary to evaluate society today and to promote more effective participation in the human community*;" (California State University, Fresno General Education document p. 14, italics added).

Amid social change the family, society's underpinning institution, faces unprecedented challenges. When these challenges go unmet by unprepared family members, families lose their ability to fulfill the primary functions with both family and societal dysfunction resulting. Symptoms of dysfunction include child abuse and neglect, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, run-aways, family violence, gangs, sexism, racism, poverty and crime. The costs to families and society as a consequence of dysfunction is difficult to accurately assess.

The repercussions of decreased human potential extend from generation to generation. Increasingly we witness the further effects of attachment disorders, family fragmentation, and community disintegration. The degree of personal and social anonymity we experience in our daily lives fosters detachment. This detachment along with rapid change and deteriorating social conditions breed fear and frustration in many.

The problems of families and society in general affect the California State University community. As in the larger community, many of the students here are juggling work/school/family responsibilities, and are doing so with extremely limited time, minimal financial resources, and virtually no support system. The strain for them and their families is

tremendous. The consequences of unrelenting strain are often evident in the quality of their significant relationships.

Contemporary American Society and the American family are in a state of significant transition. These conditions support the need for a general education course which invites students to critically examine the dynamic American family. This examination will occur using interdisciplinary social and behavioral science research and theories. Specifically family systems theory will provide the context and research from child and family sciences will be explored.

**ATTACHMENT TWO, Common Elements Statement:**

1. The broader context for the following objectives is the achievement of an enhanced ability of students to evaluate family life in American society, a keener awareness of the dramatic issues facing them as they interact in a family and increase their capacity to effectively participate as a family member. To this end the following specific student objectives will be achieved.
  - Understand the function of the family as a nurturing environment for its members.
  - Compare differences and similarities of American families with diverse cultural backgrounds.
  - List and explain significant influences upon family form and function such as; race, class, gender, sub-culture and culture.
  - Describe vital social functions families have fulfilled for individuals and society in a historical context.
  - Compare the findings of social science research on the nature of the family with beliefs/myths which are widely held.
  - Compare methodological techniques in the study of marriages and families.
  - Analyze family theory and apply it to the study of one's own family
  - Assess the ways race, class and culture influence gender roles.
  - Describe theories of gender role socialization.
  - Discuss love as a social construction and its historical influence on family relationships.
  - Explain mate selection from theoretical, cross-cultural and historical perspectives.
  - Examine the breadth of human sexual expression.
  - Explain the motives for and characteristics of nonmarital lifestyles.
  - Differentiate the motives for and meaning of marriage.
  - Assess personal beliefs and attitudes towards marriage.
  - Describe the research findings on marital satisfaction over time.
  - List and discuss the variety of motives for and styles of parenting.
  - Identify the impact of work/career/job on family structure and function.
  - Discuss the economic well-being of families in America.
  - Describe how the following challenges impact family life:

Inequities in wealth	Parenting
Health and health care	Violence
Substance abuse	Divorce
Racism and ethnic discrimination	Remarriage
	Dying and death

2. Common required student activities include:
  - Family History and Genogram Paper
  - Exams
  - Each section of this course will meet the lower division writing requirement of 2,000 words
  
3. Common aspects of grading policy include:
  - Regular attendance
  - Exams
  - Paper(s)
  
4. Representative texts:
  - Lamanna, M. & Riedmann, A. 1997 Marriages and Families: Making Choices in a Diverse Society. Wadsworth
  - Swartz, M.A. & Scott, B.M. 1997 Marriages and Families: Diversity and Change. Prentice-Hall
  
5. Approximate course schedule:
 

Week	Content
1	Marriages and Families: A Historical View
2	The Functions Families Serve and Myths About Marriages and Families Research and Theory: Ways of Studying and Explaining Marriages and Families
3	Gender Role Socialization: The Influence of Race, Class and Culture
4	Love as a Social Construction: The Influence of Gender and Race
5	Dating, Coupling and Mate Selection in a Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspective
6	Sexuality as Social Learning: Human Sexual Expression Historically and Across the Life Cycle
7	Nonmarital Lifestyles: Single, Cohabitation, Lesbian and Gay, and Communal Living
8	Review for Mid-Term Exam and Exam: Chapters
9	The American Marriage Experience: Motives, Meanings, Satisfaction, and Change
10	Reproduction and Parenting: Historical Overview and Contemporary Issues
11	Evolving Work and Family Structures: The Impact of Changing Work and Family Roles
12	Challenges Confronting Today's Families: Economy, Health, Racism, Dying and Death, and Strengthening Families
13	The Roots of Family Violence: A Historical View, Myths and Types
14	Divorce and Remarriage In The United States: Historical and Cultural Elements
15	Marriage and Families in the Twenty-First Century: Race, Class and Gender

## ATTACHMENT THREE, Typical Syllabus:

### CFS 31 DESCRIPTION:

Interdisciplinary introduction to American families, their place within society and their influence on human behavior. Topics include historical development, social functions, methods for studying, cultural and sub-cultural influence and meaning, parenting, violence, family types, race, class, and gender.

### OBJECTIVES:

The main goal of this class is to increase your understanding of the multi-faceted nature of families in America and their impact upon society and human behavior. My goals for each of you include completing the class with a deeper understanding of yourself as a family member and a keener awareness of the dramatic issues facing the family in America. This will lead to your effective participation in the human community generally and the family specifically. I also want the class to stimulate your thinking regarding issues such as marriage, love, sexuality, parenting, children's needs, violence, divorce and remarriage. In addition what place families have in our national priorities will be explored. My hope is that you will personally benefit by this opportunity to more deeply understand the impact of the family on the human experience. Specific reading assignments will challenge your thinking and give you the chance to discuss a variety of ideas. There will also be small group experiences which will provide a forum for discussion.



### INSTRUCTIONAL POLICY, REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

#### Attendance:

I believe that your presence in class is so vital that your grade will be negatively affected if you miss too many class sessions. I think that missing two or three sessions because of various circumstances is reasonable, however, each session you miss after three will reduce your overall course grade by 5 percentage points. Missing a third of the class meetings (10) will result in failing the class. When exams and papers are due it will be essential for you to be here in order to receive credit. I hope you will want to be in class because what happens in class is valuable and you are important to make it so.

I have also noticed that some students delay the completion of assignments until the last possible moment. To facilitate discussion, clarification, and learning, it is vital that you complete all assignments

by the class periods they are due. This means having read appropriate chapters before the class period in which they will be discussed. Your involvement through being prepared to participate in discussions and answer questions based on the assigned readings will greatly enhance the course.

Generally, I do not accept late papers except under extreme circumstances and with prior notification. In those cases where assignments are accepted after the due date, I will follow these guidelines: If the assignment is received within one week of the due date, the grade will be reduced by one full letter grade. If the assignment is received within two weeks, the grade will be reduced by two letter grades. Any assignment received after two weeks of the due date will receive the maximum grade of "D". No assignments will be accepted after the last week of classes begins.

#### PAPER 35%:

To complete this assignment you will write a "family history" paper which includes a family Genogram, and a discussion of several elements concerning your family. The 8-10 page, 2,000 word paper, discussed further on another handout, will be clearly supported by appropriate library research, i.e. a minimum of three professional literature sources from books or periodicals. In addition several concepts from course material including text, discussions, videos and lectures will be discussed as they relate to your family. For example, some of the paper might use the chapter on Love as a background to discuss the part love plays in your family. This discussion might include how your parents fell in love, the way your parents love, what they taught you about love, what gender differences you notice in the way love is expressed in your family and what obstacles to love and loving relationships exist(ed) in your family. Please feel free to come to my office during an office hour and have me look at your paper before it is due. This feedback should help you receive a higher grade on the paper.

#### SERVICE LEARNING 20%

An experiential learning assignment involving TEN hours of community service and a paper will comprise 20% of your grade and is discussed on a separate handout.

#### EXAMS 45%:

The purposes of exams in this class include; 1. to evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching, 2. to access the strength and weaknesses of your learning, and 3. to stimulate your study of the material. I have planned three exams throughout the semester. See the course schedule for specific dates. These exams will cover assigned readings and the in-class lecture/discussions. These true/false and multiple choice exams will be taken on Scranton form 882-ES-LOVAS, which can be distinguished by blue bubbles. No late exams will be given. Because study groups are often helpful to improve exam performance I encourage you to form them early in the semester. I also suggest you meet in and out of class to better understand the material.

#### SUMMARY OF GRADING AREAS:

Attendance, Paper 35%, Service Learning 20%, Exams 45%

#### CFS 31 ASSIGNED BOOK:

Swartz, M.A. & Scott, B.M. Marriages and Families: Diversity and Change

I hope this semester will include time to examine your integrity. While the pressure to improve your grade and the temptation to cheat is an issue for many students, one's self respect is also a constant issue. Most of us would violate our better selves, our integrity, if we cheat.

For clarification please note excerpts from the University policy on cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is "any or all actions by a student which are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent or deceptive means."

"Since proven cheating/plagiarism can result in severe penalties and consequences, students are expected to clarify with their instructors whether or not certain actions would or would not be acceptable in writing papers, taking examinations, doing homework, and other activities pertaining to any given class and/or laboratory. If a student observes one or more students cheating and/or plagiarizing, it would be appropriate for the student to confront those students directly and/or to notify the instructor so that the instructor could take appropriate action."

I am here to help you do the best you can in this class. If, for any reason, you have difficulty in the class, please come to my office for a visit. "Note: If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need course materials in alternative formats, notify your course instructor immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs."

Professor: Richard D. Berrett, Ph.D.

Office: FFS 202

Phone: 278-5140

Hours: M/W 1:30-2:00 or T/TH 9-9:30, 11-12 1:30-2 or by appointment

Spring            CFS 31 Course Schedule            M/W

Week    Content and Assignment

- 1        Introduction To Course: discuss syllabus and assignments  
Marriages and Families: A Historical View, Chapter 1 of Marriages & Families
- 2        The Functions Families Serve and Myths About Marriages and Families  
Research and Theory: Ways of Studying and Explaining Marriages and Families, Chapter 2
- 3        Gender Role Socialization: The Influence of Race, Class and Culture, Chapter 3.
- 4        Love as a Social Construction: The Influence of Gender and Race, Chapter 4.
- 5        Dating, Coupling and Mate Selection in a Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspective, Chapter 5
- 6        Sexuality as Social Learning: Human Sexual Expression Historically and Across the Life Cycle, Chapter 6

- 7 Nonmarital Lifestyles: Single, Cohabitation, Lesbian and Gay, and Communal Living, Chapter 7
- 8 Review for Mid-Term Exam and Exam: Chapters 1-7
- 9 The American Marriage Experience: Motives, Meanings, Satisfaction, and Change, Chapter 8
- 10 Reproduction and Parenting: Historical Overview and Contemporary Issues, Chapter 9
- 11 Evolving Work and Family Structures: The Impact of Changing Work and Family Roles, Chapter 10
- 12 Challenges Confronting Today's Families: Economy, Health, Racism, Dying and Death, and Strengthening Families, Chapter 11
- 13 The Roots of Family Violence: A Historical View, Myths and Types, Chapter 12
- 14 Divorce and Remarriage In The United States: Historical and Cultural Elements, Chapters 13 and 14
- 15 Marriage and Families in the Twenty-First Century: Race, Class and Gender Issues, Chapter 15

FINAL EXAM IS SCHEDULED FOR

**ATTACHMENT FOUR, Cost Factors:**

No special cost factors are associated with this course.