FCS 5380: Family Problems: Fall 2013  
(3 credit Hours)

General Course Information

Time and Location: Online only  
Instructor: Carrie LeFevre Sillito, Ph.D.  
Office: 326 AEB  
Email: carrie.sillito@fcs.utah.edu

Office Hours: By appointment  
Website: Canvas.utah.edu  
Prerequisites: No Prerequisites required

Course Description: Examines the social science research in the area of family crisis. Specifically, this course examines problems associated with poverty, violence, divorce, delinquency, death etc.

Course Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to identify characteristics of families in crisis and describe barriers and supports to overcoming crisis in families. Students should be able to use the ABC-X model to explain how events, resources, and perceptions can lead to stress or crisis in families.

Course Texts:
REQUIRED:


Optional (MUST CHOOSE ONE):


Important note: All assignments, exams, and quizzes are to be completed on Canvas in this course. Students in the course will be expected to have computer proficiency and computer access to complete these assignments, exams, and quizzes. If you have any problems with your Canvas account, please contact the campus help desk. Students are responsible for having access to Canvas before assignments or exams are due as NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENTS, OR EXAMS WILL BE ACCEPTED. All assignments are due by 11:59 PM Saturday of the assigned week

Code of Conduct & Accommodations

- Faculty and Student Responsibilities: All University policies and procedures will be followed. Please refer to the University of Utah Faculty Handbook (http://www.admin.utah.edu/fhb/ ) and Student Code (http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html).

- Plagiarism: Cases of suspected cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean. The penalty for cheating is an automatic failing grade for the course, in addition to other potential penalties decided by the Dean's Office.

- ADA Statement: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

- Disabilities: Please inform me of disabilities with written documentation from the CDS within the first 2 weeks of class so appropriate accommodations can be made.

- Accommodations: Some of the writings, lectures, films or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if this course is one you are committed to taking. If you have concerns, please discuss it with me within the first 2 weeks of class.
• **Athletics:** If you are a member of a university athletic team, you must provide me with a schedule of games and team commitments during the first two weeks of the semester.

• **Student Assignments:** I will retain unclaimed student exams and papers only until January 1, 2014. Please make a note of this for your records.

• **Syllabus and Course Event Schedule:** This syllabus is a tentative schedule only. All dates and assignments are subject to change. I will notify class via Canvas email or in class prior to any changes. It is your responsibility to check Canvas email and attend class for information regarding changes to schedule.

• **Final Course Grade:** I absolutely WILL NOT allow you to “make up” missed assignments at the end of the semester in order for you to achieve a desired grade. This is grade inflation, is unfair to the other students in the course, and is not a true reflection of your academic work. If you want a good grade in the course, do the work well and turn it in on time throughout the semester.

**Course Requirements & Grading:**

• **Reflective Book Report:** (20%) - Requirements for reflective book report are found at the end of this syllabus on a separate page.

• **Exams (40%):** There will be two exams in this course. Each exam will be 20% of the final grade. **Exams are open note, open book and COMPLETED ON CANVAS. However, exams are to be completed individually; there is to be NO collaboration on exams between class members and other class members or other people. Exams are timed, and you will have 120 minutes to complete each exam. Answers submitted after time expires will not be accepted. You may take the exam on a personal computer or at any opened computer lab on campus. *Exams are found under “assessments” on Canvas*. There is no cumulative final exam in this course. Because exams are opened-note, there is not a study guide for the exams. Exams have both a short essay component, and a multiple choice component.

• **Article Summary (20%):** There are two article summaries due this semester. Each is worth 10% of your final grade. The first article summary should include a short summary (1/2 page to 1 page for each article) of the assigned articles from Week 1 to Week 6. The second summary should include a short summary (1/2 page to 1 page for each article) of the assigned articles from Week 9 to Week 15.

• **Online Assignments and Discussion Board Posts (20%):** Most weeks throughout the semester there will be a short assignment or discussion board post to help solidify your learning for the week. For discussion board posts, the grade is based on your response to the question AND responding to at least one post by another student. Other online assignments vary by week, and full descriptions are found on Canvas.

**Point Allocation:**

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<th></th>
<th>Number Required</th>
<th>Percent Each</th>
<th>Total allocation to Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Book Report</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Summary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Assignments</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94% - 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>80% - 83.9% B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% - 93.9%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>77% - 79.9% C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87% - 89.9%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>74% - 76.9% C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84% - 86.9%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>70% - 74.9% C-</td>
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Guidelines for the Reflective Book Report

You may choose to read ONE of the following books for your reflective book report.


Reflective book reports are due November 23, 2013 by 11:59 PM. It is your responsibility to pace yourself so you can have the book read and report written by this date. A reflective book report is not simply a summary of the book. Instead, it provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the critical issues faced by individuals and families in the book. Please adhere to the following guidelines as you prepare your reflective book report:

1. Reflective book reports should begin with a cover page. Please include your name, the title of the book, the author, date, and a statement indicating that the review is your own work.

2. As you read the book, make notes of your reflections, reactions, thoughts, and feelings toward what you have read. These notes will need to be typed. Normally, sufficient notes should be minimum three pages.

3. Write a summary relating the book to topics covered in this course. Your summary should include specific examples from course lectures and text book readings. Your summary should explain what this book says about individuals, families, society, communities, resiliency, and family crisis. Please also include examples of how this reading and the course have changed your prior understanding of crises in families. This summary should be 4-6 pages in length when in size 12 Times New Roman font with 1” margins and double spacing.

4. Grades are based on quality and thoughtfulness of response, evidence of reflective thinking, spelling and grammar, and adherence to the guidelines presented in this explanation. A complete grading rubric is on Canvas.
**ABC-X Assignment Example**

This will show an example of how you could complete the ABC-X case studies and assignments that are required throughout the semester. You should always list at least 5-10 possible resources and 5-10 possible perceptions. You can list more.

**A – Event or situation:**

ABC-X assignment is due for Family Stress course and I need to get it finished so I can get credit, do well in this class, and graduate someday.

**B – Possible Resources:**

1) The text book, the lecture, past knowledge from other courses.
2) If I read the book or listened to the lecture before the due date, I won’t have as much stress.
3) If I looked at the assignment before the due date, this would also be helpful.
4) If I know how to type quickly or have previous experience with the stressor listed in the assignment that would be a good resource.
5) If I don’t understand the assignment, I could email the professor. She is great about checking her email M-F, but not as good checking it Saturday and Sunday. So – if I want a quicker response, it’s better to email her when it’s not the weekend.
6) If I have regular access to a computer with reliable high-speed internet, it will help me get the assignment turned in on time
7) If I don’t procrastinate, that is also a resource
8) In a real assignment, I could list individual resources or vulnerabilities, family resources or vulnerabilities, community resources

**C- Possible Perceptions:**

1) If I wait until the last minute, I’m likely to be stressed by this assignment
2) If I haven’t read the book or listened to the lecture, I may be overwhelmed by this assignment.
3) I may not understand why it’s important to understand the ABC-X model yet, so I might think this is a waste of time
4) I might be excited to learn about family stress theory, so I might be anxious to put my knowledge to work.
5) If I’ve adequately prepared for the assignment, I probably won’t be as stressed out about completing it.
6) Maybe I had something come up with friends that I’d rather do, and I am annoyed that I didn’t do this earlier, so I want to get it finished as fast as possible
7) In a real assignment, I could talk about how families can redefine a stressor event, how SES or racism may play a part in perceptions, and how adaptation to past stress may help the family.

**X- Outcome: family stress or family crisis:**

**Stress:**

**Low Stress:** If I prepared in advance, this would probably be a **LOW stress**, but not a crisis. Then if something else happened in my life (a sick child, my own illness, something fun with friends), I could still finish it on time and get credit.
**High Stress:** On the other hand, if I complete it on time and submit it, but do it really quickly and don’t think through it, I might get a lower score than I want. This could be **HIGH STRESS** and lead me to have to reevaluate so I can do better.

**Crisis:** If I didn’t get the assignment done on time, it might not be submitted on time. If it were not submitted on time, I would not get credit, and this would negatively affect my final grade. It could turn into a crisis if I realized that I couldn’t get the grade I wanted in the course.

**Resiliency:** The last part of the ABC-X model is to discuss resiliency. How could the person/family recover from the crisis or stress. Here are some examples following this assignment example

If I miss or procrastinate a lot of assignments, my grade would be less resilient over time. I’d get fewer points, and it would negatively affect me overall grade. On the other hand, if most of the time I get assignments in on time and do them well, I’ll probably have a high and resilient grade in the course. Having one “crisis” and missing an assignment due will probably not hurt my grade a lot, but over time, the effect would be greater.