

Department of Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies (SMF)

SMF 207: Parents, Children, & Family Relations

Winter 2019

Mondays & Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.

SJ2 Room 2002

Instructor: Dr. Denise Whitehead

Email: denise.whitehead@uwaterloo.ca (Best way to contact me!)

Office: Sweeney Hall 2217

Phone: 519-884-8110 x28281

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 to 12:30, Wednesdays 2:30 to 3:30 and

By appointment (please email me).

Correspondence with Instructor

WELCOME to SMF 207!! I am delighted that you are taking this class. I am generally available immediately after class to answer any quick questions you may have. Office hours are on a first come, first served basis. You are also welcome to make an appointment to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet with me if you need more time and are unable to see me during my office hours.

Email is generally answered the same day – Monday to Friday during business hours – and at other times when I am able. If you haven't heard from me within 24 hours during the business week, please resend your email in case I didn't receive or it got lost among the long list of emails I receive.

Please contact me/come to see me if you are having medical/psychological issues that are compromising your ability to complete the course successfully. Generally, tackling these issues earlier, rather than later in the course, allows for more options.

Mental Health Services

On Campus

- Counseling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 x32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counseling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from the Student Life Centre and across the street from St. Jerome's University.

Off campus, 24/7

- Good2Talk: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students.
Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Extended Assessment Unit Phone: 519-749-4300 x6880
- Here 24/7: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- OK2BME: Support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning teens in Waterloo.
Phone: 519-884-0000 x222

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website

Download UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)

Download the WatSafe app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

Course Calendar Description

This course examines parent-child relationships from a broad interdisciplinary perspective. Topics may include parenting practices, voluntary childlessness, the transition to parenthood, parental separation, gay and lesbian parenting, and care of aging parents.

Prereq: SMF 101, or previous SMF 206

Course Overview

This course provides a perspective of parent, child and family relations over the life span seizing on an interdisciplinary approach drawing on family studies, psychology, social psychology, and sociology.

The course will be comprised of lectures, class discussions (both large and small groups), and activities in order to 1) orient ourselves to the language(s) of various historical, psychological, sociological, anthropological and cultural theories of parents and child relations and families, and 2) facilitate the critical thinking that is required for reading and critiquing research literature.

One of the cornerstones of this course will be the opportunity to raise a **Virtual Child** from birth to age 18 allowing you to consider your parenting philosophies and put these and various parenting theories into practice. The *Virtual Child* assignments give you the opportunity to directly relate your experiences and decisions of virtual parenting to the course readings and lecture materials.

Participating in a raising a virtual child is designed to give you some insights into the extent of the challenges and choices that parents face. There is no expectation that people enrolled in this course must become parents, but rather that we develop compassion, insights, and understanding for this role and the work it entails so we can apply this as citizens and as professionals that work with families and children.

Course Goals and/or Learning Outcomes

This course has been designed so that you will be able to:

- ❖ Summarize and understand theories of child rearing.
- ❖ Describe and analyze social, cultural and socio-economic influences on parents and children and the impact on child rearing and development across the life span.
- ❖ Describe and analyze various family formations and their strengths and challenges.
- ❖ Apply critical thinking and self-reflective skills to the analysis of parenting theory and practice, both written and oral.
- ❖ Engage in raising a *Virtual Child* from birth to 18 years to learn about the impact of parenting practices and other socio-economic factors on child development and socialization.
- ❖ Articulate the bidirectional process of the parent-child relationship.
- ❖ Continue to develop academic writing skills by effectively utilizing academic sources in your *Virtual Child* assignments as part of your analysis and demonstrate high APA compliance when referencing.

Required Textbook and How to Purchase *My Virtual Child*:

TEXTBOOK: Bigner, J.J. & Gerhardt, C. (2019). *Parent-Child Relations: An Introduction to Parenting*. New York: Pearson. (Available through the bookstore in both hard copy and EBook – either version is acceptable)

MY VIRTUAL CHILD (NO Textbook): Also available through the Bookstore Website (ISBN 9780205690336): Cost of the Access code ONLY (no textbook) is \$40

Textbook and My Virtual Child Access Code are also bundled together for a total cost \$123.20 (see UWaterloo Bookstore)

(NOTE:*Students may choose the NO COST option of 3 papers in lieu of completing the Virtual Child – see below***)**

Assessments	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Mid-term (in class)	February 11 th , 2019	25%
Final Exam	(TBA during exam period)	40%
My Virtual Child Simulation (MVC)	3 Assignments	35%
MVC#1 (Infancy, Toddler and Preschooler)	Sunday February 10 th by 10 p.m. in DropBox	10%
MVC#2 (Middle Childhood)	Sunday March 3 rd by 10 p.m. in DropBox	10%
MVC#3 (Adolescence)	Sunday March 24 th by 10 p.m. in DropBox	15%
OR No Cost Alternative to the Virtual Child	See below for details	(35%)
		100%

TESTS

The tests will be Multiple Choice. All course readings, materials, lectures, films, activities, discussions etc., will be evaluated.

Tests will only be rescheduled under very limited conditions; it is your responsibility to read and abide by the following:

1. You **must** notify me PRIOR to the test if you are unable to write at the scheduled time due to medical or religious circumstances (or at minimum on the day of the test). **Students who fail to do so will receive a grade of ZERO on the test.**
2. You must provide appropriate documentation (see UW Policy Regarding Illness and Missed Tests* - a **UW VIF form must be submitted**) in order for me *to consider* rescheduling a test. See <https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness>
3. Rescheduling is at the discretion of the course instructor. Verification of Illness Form (VIF) dates will weigh heavily in this decision (i.e., do not expect to write a make-up test one week after your VIF has expired). Tests will typically be re-scheduled on the first FRIDAY following the testing date.

Class Schedule & Readings

Readings are primarily from the Bigner & Gerhardt text and additional readings are available on LEARN/Course Reserves via LEARN (which can be found under the heading “Library Resources”)

NOTE: This outline is a preliminary list of the readings. I will continue to add readings as we progress through the course and want to explore new themes and territory. You are responsible for all material that is assigned in this course. I typically post an item in the NEWS section of LEARN to alert students about updates.

** This syllabus may be subject to change at the discretion of the instructor (e.g., some topics may roll into a future class to ensure adequate coverage).

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	January 7	Welcome! Introduction to the course	Please read the syllabus carefully before next class and skim/review the <i>My Virtual Child Assignments</i> to help you orient your note taking and reading so that you can find the concepts you need when writing.
		Welcoming Your New Baby - My Virtual Child	Purchase code (online via UW bookstore) and Sign into <i>My Virtual Child</i> and complete preliminaries – Welcome to virtual parenthood!
			**If you are opting for the optional assignments in lieu of the Virtual Child, please email Denise by Wednesday January 16 th , 2019 notifying your intention so that we can discuss and organize.
	9	The Evolving Context of Parenting	Bigner & Gerhardt: CH. 1

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
2	January 14 16	Parenting Approaches	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapter 2 Read: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2018/11/01/peds.2018-3112.full.pdf View Doc Zone in class
3	January 21 23	Historical & Cultural Approaches Theoretical Perspectives on Parent-Child Relations Parenting: Rights and Responsibilities	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapters 3, 4 & 5
4	January 28 30	The Transition to Parenthood Parenting Infants (birth to 1 year) & Toddlers (12-36 months) Guests: Stephanie & Baby Hunter	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapters 6 & 7 See LEARN/Course Reserves for this chapter - Cuddling vs. the Football Hold: Why Parenting Differences are Not Deficiencies (From Kyle Pruett & Marsha Kline Pruett (2009). Partnership parenting: How men and women parent differently – why it helps kids and can strengthen your marriage. Philadelphia: De Capo Press. **After you have read Chapters 1-7 and the Pruett chapter raise your virtual baby to 3 years

5	Feb 4 6	Parenting Preschoolers (3-5 years)	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapter 8 **After you have read Chapter 8, raise your virtual toddler to a preschooler (ages 3-5 years) Assignment #1 - Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers DUE Sunday February 10th by 10pm in DropBox
6	Feb 11 13	Midterm Dr. David Seljak on Fatherhood & Fathering	Chapters 1-8 plus additional readings and all lecture materials
	Feb 16-24	READING WEEK	No Emails answered during this time
7	Feb 25 27	Parenting in Middle Childhood	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapter 9 After you have read Chapter 9 raise your virtual child to 11 years 11 months. Assignment #2 - Middle Childhood Due Sunday March 3rd by 10 pm in DropBox
8	March 4 6	Parenting Adolescents and Teens as Parents	Bigner & Gerhardt: Chapter 10
9	March 11 13	Parenting: Family Composition and Dynamics Parenting Interrupted and Fragile Families	Bigner & Gerhardt Chapters 11 & 12 **Raise you VC through Adolescence (12-18 years) Assignment #3 - Adolescence Due Sunday March 24th by 10 pm in Dropbox

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
10	March 18 20	Blended and Intergenerational Family Systems	Bigner & Gerhardt Chapters 13 & 14 And available on LEARN - Winters, K.C., & Arria, A. (2011). Adolescent brain development and drugs. <i>Prev Res.</i> , 18(2), 21-24. Assignment #3 - Adolescence Due Sunday March 24th by 10 p.m. in DropBox
	Fri March 22nd, 2019	Drop, Penalty 1 Period ends	<i>WD (Withdrew, no credit granted) grade assigned for course(s) dropped</i>
11	March 25 27	Family Formation and Parenting in LGBT Contexts	Bigner & Gerhardt Chapters 14
12	April 1 3	Toward Better Outcomes VIRTUAL CHILD WRAP UP: Final Parent Meeting & Course Debrief (Wed April 3rd)	Bigner & Gerhardt Chapter 15 Denise summarizes the course in 7 minutes
	FINAL EXAM	Final Exam: Date TBA Will scheduled in final examination period	Covers Chapters 9-15 plus additional readings and all lecture materials.

My Virtual Child (MVC) Assignments (35% - break down below)

The complete details and questions for these assignments are contained in a separate document and posted on LEARN.

There will be THREE assignments related to the on-line simulation ***My Virtual Child*** and the material in the text, readings and lectures that we will be covering. I have aimed to time these assignments so that we can cover the material in a timely fashion and leave you sufficient time to complete the assignments. **Raising your virtual child and being able to integrate your course learning as part of your analysis is a critical aspect to successful completion of this course.** You demonstrate this integration through appropriate use of citations (APA).

All assignments are to be submitted on the noted due date by **10 p.m. in DropBox**.

VC Assignment	Topic	Due Date	Weight
Assignment #1	Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers (Birth to 5 years)	Sunday February 10 th by 10 pm in DropBox	10%
Assignment #2	Middles Childhood (6-11 years)	Sunday March 3 rd , by 10 pm in DropBox	10%
Assignment #3	Adolescence (12-18 years)	Sunday March 24 th , by 10 pm in DropBox	15%
			35% of total final grade

No Cost Option to *My Virtual Child*: Three Research Papers

Alternative Assignment per University of Waterloo Guidelines

In accordance with UW *Guidelines Pertaining to Learning Resources and Field Trips* <<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/guidelines-pertaining-learning-resources-and-field-trips>> students are NOT required to make any purchase for a course where the item is over \$50 or worth more than 20% of the student's grade. *My Virtual Child* assignments exceed the 20% threshold and therefore, students must be offered an alternative assignment that does NOT involve any cost.

(Note: For this course these assignments have received approval from the SJU Acting Dean for the 35% grade aspect for those who elect to complete the course using *My Virtual Child*).

First, please approach me privately if the cost of *My Virtual Child* is prohibitive – there may be some ways to help. Also, the *Virtual Child* can be purchased separately from the text. One option we can explore is whether some students can work together as “parents” to share the cost of the program. Write-ups for the assignments would be done **individually**, but the parenting can be shared. This has been done very successfully in the past.

For those students who wish a NO COST option you may choose to complete THREE (3) written research papers that will carry the same percentage weight and due dates as the virtual child assignments (your topic will be discussed with the professor). You will write three research papers on each of the age groupings profiling: infancy, toddler & preschool (Birth – 5 years), school age (6-11), and adolescence (12-18). Each paper is expected to provide an accurate and illustrative understanding of parenting at each of these stages

Each paper must be 4-5 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt, Times New Roman, and include 2 external references that are journal articles and/or academic book chapters as well as the textbook and other assigned readings. Each paper must conform to APA citation and referencing.

YOU MUST notify me by email by January 16th of your decision to elect the research paper option and then arrange to come and see me during office hours to discuss how to execute this assignment.

Late Work

All assignments are due in DropBox on the date and time noted in the syllabus. Any assignment submitted after the DropBox due date/time will be subject to a 10% penalty per day, including weekends. Time starts to run as soon as the paper misses the date AND time. Late assignments will receive only a grade, no other written feedback. After 3 days late assignments will NO longer be accepted.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is one form of academic misconduct. A student guilty of plagiarism, the use of another person's thoughts and writings as his or her own, may experience disciplinary action in the form of academic penalties.

In order to avoid plagiarism, a student must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Every statement of fact not generally known, and every opinion which is not arrived at independently, requires a reference to the literature being used.
2. All direct quotations (i.e., text taken directly from the source) must be in quotation marks, or if a certain length (e.g., 40 words or more) must be indented and single-spaced.
3. Every quotation requires a reference, including page number.
4. In summarizing another person's words, a student would need to use different words and change the sentence structure of the original statements. Such paraphrases must also, of course, be referenced (but no page numbers).

PLEASE NOTE: Professors are required to report suspected cases of plagiarism to the appropriate Dean's office for investigation and, if guilty, an assessment of penalty. Proper APA referencing and appropriate use of quotation marks often goes a long way in avoiding plagiarism.

Important Information

Academic Integrity: To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.