Salem State College  
School of Social Work  

SWK477: Social Work with Families in Transition  
Summer II 2005  

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Office Hours: MWF 1-3  
Course Times: This is an asynchronous distance learning course  

Course Description:

This course focuses on family life in the United States and covers a range of topics relevant to social work practice including divorce, remarriage, gay/lesbian families, cohabitation, the marital relationship, family violence, family life in communities, health and illness in the family, gender roles, and parent-child relationships. There is a special focus on the appropriate social work skills and interventions to support “families in transition.”

Course Objectives:

A. The student will become knowledgeable in the following subject areas:

   a. The various ways to define “family.”
   b. Current US demographics related to family structure and formation.
   c. The risk and resiliency factors for children during divorce.
   d. The developmental tasks of step and blended families.
   e. The special needs of gay and lesbian families.
   f. The life-course perspective on marriage.
   g. The life-course perspective on parenting.
   h. The impact of gender roles on families.

B. The student is expected to develop skills in the following areas:

   a. Assess the needs of families in transition from an ecological point of view.
   b. Select appropriate intervention strategies for families.
   c. Identify and apply basic social work skills with families in transition.

Text & Other Readings


**Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Salem State College is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students, in compliance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids and adjustments. Any student who has a documented disability requiring an accommodation, aid or adjustment should speak with the instructor immediately. Students with disabilities who have not previously done so should provide documentation to and schedule an appointment with the Office for Students with Disabilities and obtain appropriate services.

**Plagiarism**

Salem State College assumes that all students come to the College with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who will exhibit high standards of honesty and personal conduct in their academic life. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are considered to be serious offenses against the College community.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty:** Submitting another person’s work as one’s own. This includes, for example, copying another person’s work during examinations; purchasing papers; copying papers, reports or portions of papers, material from a website; copying laboratory or computer results; and presenting material from another course or paper without proper acknowledgment, citations and references.

Penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty can include an automatic grade of F for the course as well as being reported to the Vice President, Academic Affairs, and can lead to suspension or expulsion from the college. See the current Salem State College Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogues for complete descriptions of College policies on academic dishonest and the appeals procedures.

**Format of the Course:**

This course is an asynchronous distance learning course. That means that it is not held at any one specific time. The instructor will post her lecture on SSC e-learning platform (Blackboard) every Monday afternoon along with discussion questions for each student to respond to by the following Friday evening (by midnight). The other assignments for the course are outlined below. They are all due on Monday evenings (by midnight).
Weekly Discussion Questions:

Each week students will be responsible for responding to a set of discussion questions taken directly from the readings. Therefore, it will be essential to keep up to date on your reading assignments. Discussion question responses will be posted to the Discussion Board in Blackboard. You will see instructions for posting on the Blackboard site.

Midterm Examination:

The midterm examination will consist questions that test students knowledge on the course reading and lecture material.

Final Examination:

The final examination will give students a case study that describes a family in transitions (divorce, remarriage, parenting, care-giving, coming out, death illness, etc.). Students will then be responsible for writing an essay that supports their determination of what level of social work intervention would be appropriate for this family (and why) and what services (and how) should be provided to the family. The student analysis will include the use of a family time line, family genogram and a family ecomap.

Family Genogram:

Each student will be responsible for developing a genogram of their own family (instructions will be provided) and providing an analysis. This genogram will outline who is in your immediate & extended family and the relationships between family members.

Family Ecomap:

Each student will be responsible for developing an ecomap of their own family (instructions will be provided) and providing an analysis. The ecomap will help to identify your family’s relationship to the larger community and the resources of that community.

Family Timeline:

Each student will be responsible for creating a family timeline of significant transition points for their own family and an analysis of whether each transition was successfully negotiated, including reasons why or why not.
Assignments:

Weekly Discussion Questions: 20%
Midterm Examination: 20%
Final Examination: 20%
Family Genogram: 10%
Family Ecomap: 10%
Family Timeline: 10%
Participation & Enthusiasm: 10%

!! Important: Many of your assignments are due in the early part of the semester. I have done this for two reasons: 1) Because this class is online, I want everyone to get engaged early in the semester (In other words- this is not a class to slack off on) and 2) To counter-balance your other courses that usually have more assignments at the end of the semester. !!

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1- Lecture Posted 7/11 “Divorced Families”</td>
<td>Families Across Time 24-36 Families in Transition 197-231</td>
<td>Discussion Question 2 (p. 34, FAT) Due 7/15 by midnight Family Timeline Due 7/18 by midnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2- Lecture Posted 7/18 “Remarried Families”</td>
<td>Families Across Time 37-47 Families in Transition 232- 249</td>
<td>Discussion Question 1 and 3 (p. 47, FAT) Due 7/22 by midnight Family Genogram Due 7/25 by midnight</td>
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<td>Week 3 – Midterm Posted 7/24</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam Due by 7/28 @ midnight</td>
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<td>Week 4- Lecture Posted 2/28</td>
<td>Families Across Time 77 - 87</td>
<td>Discussion Question 3 (p.</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Midterm Posted 3/7</td>
<td>Families in Transition 180 - 189</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>Midterm Exam Due 3/11 by midnight</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Lecture Posted 3/21</td>
<td>Families Across Time 92-103</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Lecture Posted 3/28</td>
<td>Families Across Time 105- 113</td>
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<td>“Family Violence”</td>
<td>Families in Transition 506- 521</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Lecture Posted 4/4</td>
<td>Families Across Time 117 - 126</td>
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<td>“Families in Communities”</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>“Health &amp; Illness in Families”</td>
<td>Families in Transition</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Lecture Posted 4/18</td>
<td>Families Across Time 187 - 200</td>
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<td>“Parent-Child Relations”</td>
<td>Families in Transition 254- 298</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Lecture Posted</td>
<td>Families Across Time 215-227</td>
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<td>4/25</td>
<td>Families in Transition 93 - 130</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Final Posted 5/2</td>
<td>Final Exam Due 5/8 by midnight</td>
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