

Family Relationships

Fall 2022

Course Overview

PSYC 394
MWF
1:10 -
2:10PM
OLRI 300

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Your Instructor



Welcome! I'm so glad you're here.

In this class, we'll explore the research on family relationships, including parent-child, inter-parental, sibling, and extended and blended families, and we'll make this stuff PERSONAL. We will consider how our own family experiences are reflected in (and distinct from) what we read in research. My hope: You'll gain a deep understanding about family relationships, and in doing so, you'll feel more anchored in your own family relationships.

At the same time, there are still many unanswered questions about why, or how, family relationships and their consequences occur. Many believe the reason for these unanswered questions is due to inadequate attention to theory. To that end, in this course, we'll explore family relationships via the most significant classic and emerging theoretical frameworks concerning family relationships.

Course goals:

- Think comprehensively about family relationships, what influences them, and how they develop and change across the life span.
- Understand, recognize, and distinguish key theories in the field of family studies and analyze their usefulness and limitations of each theory.
- Integrate research and theory on key family relationships to form a more complete picture of individual and family development.
- Refine critical thinking skills through exploring, discussing, and analyzing diverse theoretical viewpoints in family studies.
- Apply theoretical and conceptual frameworks to your own interests in family studies.
- Enjoy the course! Family studies is one of the most interesting fields of study, and for many people, this course sparks a life-long professional career studying and working with families.

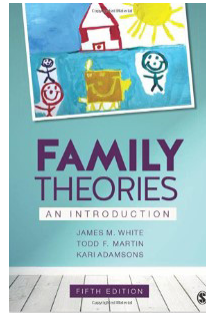
To the adventure that awaits!

Annie

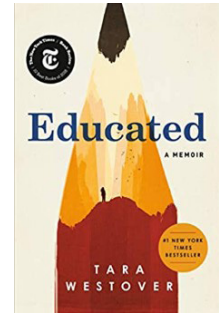
Required Texts

Two texts are required for this course. You may use any available formats (e.g., softcover, e-book, etc.), but be sure to get the correct edition (5th) of the Family Theories book.

Both texts are available at the campus bookstore and online (e.g., Amazon). In addition, one copy of each text will be available on reseserve at the library.



White, J. M., Martin, T. F., & Adamsons, K. (2019). Family theories: An introduction (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.



Westover, T. (2018). Educated: A memoir. Random House.

Other readings will be posted on Moodle.

Meeting with Annie

Student hours: Monday & Tuesdays, 3 - 4pm

Student hours take place in my office (OLRI 331) or by Zoom. During my student hours, I am available to meet with any students for any reason (e.g., personal concerns, course content questions, assignments, etc.). During these hours, I am available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Outside of office hours, you may schedule appointments with me: check my Google calendar (apezall1) and email me a few times (between 8:30am - 5:00pm) that work with both of our schedules. I will select a time and confirm it with you.

Finally, you may just swing by my office and see if I am available. You are welcome in my office any time the door is open; if the door is closed, I am unavailable.

Course Schedule

In general, we will follow the schedule below. See Moodle for the full course schedule and list of deadlines.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	class @ 1:10		class @ 1:10	Weekly thought paper due @ 5:00pm		class @ 1:10
	Empirical research on families		Theoretical perspectives on families		Synthesis & Reflections!	

Assignments

Weekly Thought Papers

Throughout our Family Relationships class, with a few exceptions—notably, at the beginning and end of the semester—you'll write a weekly thought paper, 2-3 pages long, that includes a brief summary of the theory we learned about that week, a brief summary of the empirical research we read about that week, and your thoughts on the extent to which that theory is a useful tool for clarifying what we now know about family relationships.

Due: Thursdays at 5:00pm

Format: Word documents, submitted via Moodle.



Synthesis & Reflection Presentations

We'll cover a lot of material every Monday and Wednesday of this semester. By the time Friday arrives every week, it'll be the perfect time to synthesize what we've learned earlier in the week and reflect on what it all means. You'll do this in pairs across the semester. On your group's designated week, you'll be responsible for leading the class in an engaging discussion that synthesizes the empirical and theoretical research we covered that week and proposes critiques and applications of the theory in understanding families across relevant settings (e.g., therapeutic setting, programmatic setting, research).

Due: Fridays at the start of class.

Format: I envision this being done in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. This is not required, but you

can integrate something like a small group activity as a method of teaching and facilitating deeper thinking. Along with your presentation, you and your partner(s) need to provide each student with a printed handout that summarizes your designated theory, the research you've covered, and anything else that seems relevant.

Final Paper

At the end of the semester you'll write a 8 - 10 page paper wherein you summarize the events of Tara Westover's memoir, *Educated*; apply four theoretical frameworks of your choice from the semester to explain the her family relationships; and explain how each of the four family theories you selected can be used to inform directions for intervention, application, or change.

Due: Friday, December 9th, 5:00pm.

Format: Word document, submitted via Moodle.

Grading Philosophy

I love helping students learn about psychology and develop as thinkers, researchers, and writers. Too often, however, grading gets in the way of these goals. In fact, grades can actually *inhibit* learning, particularly deep learning of material (Rust, 2002). For writing in particular, grades can shut down the process of development--students who earn low grades may give up out of frustration, and students who earn high grades may think that there is no room for improvement. Everyone can work to become a better writer and thinker (me too!), and grading along the way often limits writers' progress. At the same time, there is a place for grades in the college classroom. In this class, therefore, we will take a somewhat different approach to assessment and grades--a system called "Contract for B."*

Contract for B

Throughout the semester, I will assess your work and give you a lot of feedback. The only thing that I will grade, however, is your final paper. This way, I can be your mentor throughout the class without grades getting in the way. I do not expect your work to be perfect, but I do expect you to meet the basic requirements of each assignment. I also expect that you will incorporate my feedback and work to improve your knowledge and skills. Staying on contract requires the following:

1. Attendance: Be present, on-time, and fully prepared for all class sessions and meetings. Arriving late or leaving early = 1/3 of an absence; being unprepared = 1/2 of an absence. You may have two absences without penalty. Additional

absences will require special circumstances (e.g., doctor's note) or flexibility tokens (see next page).

2. Engagement: For the paired- or small-group presentations, complete your fair share of the work for your presentation. In class, be a productive member of our community (e.g., participate, ask questions, allow space for others to participate and ask questions). Actively participate in class discussions.

3. Completing Work: Submit all weekly thought papers and final paper, on time and complete. Present your reflection & synthesis presentation with your peer(s) on time. Late assignments will not be accepted (unless accompanied by a flexibility

token).

4. Editing: In your thought papers and final paper, your work will be free from errors that I've commented on earlier in the semester, thereby demonstrating that you are reading and applying my feedback. Consider getting help from fellow writers and the MAX Center.

5. Final Paper: Substantially rewrite and revise your final paper based on the feedback you receive. We will have a conference about your final paper during finals week.

6. Awareness: Keep track of your progress in the course; keep track of whether you are staying on the contract for B. If you are unsure of your progress, schedule a meeting with me.

**My thanks to Dr. Cari Gillen-O'Neel for creating and sharing this contract.*

Staying on Contract & Flexibility

As you can see, to stay on Contract for B you must: work hard, be prepared, incorporate feedback to improve the quality of your work, and be an active member of our class community. Staying on contract also requires punctual attendance and meeting deadlines. However, I recognize that life sometimes interferes with attendance and deadlines, and so I offer four “flexibility tokens” that allow you to stay on contract despite small infractions. One token may be redeemed for: one additional absence or one 24-hour extension. Your four tokens may be used in any combination.

For example, you may miss four additional classes OR you may miss two additional classes and submit two papers 24-hours late. In each of these examples, your four tokens would cover the flexibility, and you would still be on contract. Once your tokens are gone, additional absences or extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances (e.g., a medical emergency with a doctor’s note). If you have one additional absence or late assignment beyond your four tokens, we may be able to work out a plan to get you back on contract. If this is your situation, please schedule a meeting with me. However, two additional absences or late assignments or a major infraction (e.g., plagiarism or failure to contribute to your group for your presentation) will take you off contract.



Final Grade

Although I will give you feedback throughout the term, your final paper is the only thing that I will grade. During our final conference, I will examine your paper and assign a cursory grade based on the quality of your work. If you are satisfied with that grade, you are done. If you are not satisfied, you may continue to revise until the deadline. At that point, I will take a closer look at your paper and assign a final grade. Your final grade will be no lower than the one assigned at the conference, but it is not guaranteed to be higher.

The grade that you earn on your final paper will be your course grade. However, if you stayed on contract during the semester, the lowest grade you could possibly receive in the course is a B. In other words, the contract provides you with a grade safety-net; even if the quality of your final paper is below a B, your behavior in the course (e.g., punctuality, hard work, and improvement) would be enough to warrant a B in the course. Grades above B require excellence in writing (i.e., an excellent final paper). Throughout the semester, I will give you a lot of feedback and many examples of excellent writing to help you see the quality of work that I am looking for. If you broke contract, you will move to a more traditional grading system (see next page). Students who have broken contract typically earn between a NC and a B-. In other words, even if the quality of your final portfolio is above a B-, your behavior in the course (e.g., missing class, missing deadlines, or not contributing to your group for your presentation) typically cannot justify a higher grade.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

What if I go off-contract?

If you choose to go off contract, your grade will be determined by the formula to the right. Late papers will earn 0 points.

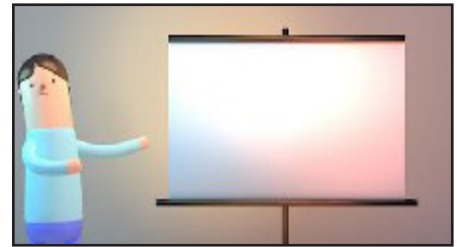
• Attendance & Participation:	10%
• Thought Papers:	40%
• Small group presentations:	10%
• Final Paper:	40%

What if I need to take an incomplete?

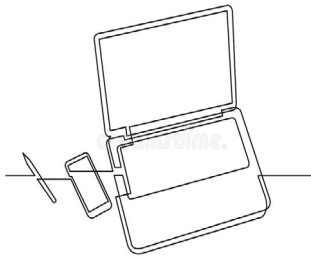
Macalester College strongly discourages assigning incomplete grades. Unless a majority of assigned work has already been submitted, an incomplete will not be given. If extenuating circumstances arise, I will direct you to the Dean of Students, and I will consider the Dean's advice when making decisions about incompletes.

Can I get your PowerPoint slides?

You bet! I will post slides on Moodle after each lecture. If I forget, please feel free to email me with a polite reminder.



Can I use technology (phones, laptops, etc.) in class?



Please set your phones to silent before class, and if you must use your phone during class time, please discretely step outside. Laptops and tablets are welcome as long as they are used as learning aids (e.g., for note taking). "Multitasking" (e.g.,

checking email during class) can impede your learning (Hembrook & Gay, 2003) and it can be distracting to those around you (including me!). I reserve the right to ban technology that becomes detrimental to our classroom culture.

What do I need to know about plagiarism & academic integrity?

Plagiarism is the presentation of others' thoughts, ideas, or words as your own. Plagiarism can be blatant, such as directly copying other's words, or it can be subtle, such as failing to properly cite another's ideas. Either way, plagiarism violates Macalester College's expectation that all

members of the community act with academic integrity. If you are unsure about citations, wording, or similarity of structure, please meet with me to discuss these issues; I can help you make sure that you are citing and paraphrasing appropriately. If I have any reason to suspect your integrity in this

class, I will contact you. After that meeting, I will determine what further steps are appropriate, and I may refer you to the Director of Academic Programs, who will determine additional consequences. If you have any questions, please contact me or refer to the website below.

www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/

ACCESSIBILITY COMMITMENT

I am committed to creating an accessible and inclusive class where every student can participate fully in course activities and benefit from course materials. I am happy to talk with you about how to maximize your experience in this class and to discuss how you learn best. Please don't hesitate to be in touch with your requests and suggestions.

What I will do for every student:

- Post assignments at least two weeks in advance of when they are due.
- Share PowerPoints and other materials used in class lectures.
- Meet with you individually during student hours for extended study or discussion.
- Submit an Early Academic Warning and contact the Dean of Students if your performance slips or if I notice a pattern of frequent absences.
- Facilitate your connection to the MAX Center or other sources of support on campus.

- Be as flexible as possible in the event of a crisis or emergency (provided that you have also spoken to someone in the Dean of Students office).

What you can do if your needs are not met by the above:

If you know you have a disability that affects your learning process, I encourage you to meet with the staff in our Disability Services office. Doing so will allow you to receive accommodations. The website below is your best guide to this process. The staff in the Disability Services office will send me a confidential letter detailing your accommodations. Meet with me after you've met with the Disability Services team so we can work together to ensure that your needs are met.

If you are not registered with Disability Services:

If you wait to self-advocate until you are in trouble in this course, you may be too late. I cannot accommodate you retroactively. Without a letter from Disability Services, I cannot offer a flexible schedule of assignment deadlines or a flexible attendance policy.



disabilityservices@macalester.edu

Kagin Commons

651-696-6275

www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/

Email me!

Outside of class and office hours, email is the best way to contact me. I respond to emails as soon as possible. Outside of work, however, I try to spend as much time as possible with these guys, so I typically only respond during work hours (8:30am - 5:00pm on weekdays).



Call me "Annie"

Students sometimes wonder what to call their professors. You may call me Annie. If you prefer to be more formal, Dr. Pezalla or Professor Pezalla are also okay with me.

My pronouns are she/her. Please tell me your name and pronouns, too!

Your Health & Well-Being

I encourage you to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and throughout your career at Macalester. In addition to being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academics. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on you and your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset or need to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please contact me and/or find support from other sources (see Moodle for a list of resources).

