

CAREY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
SYLLABUS
INDS 630 Faith and Life: Family
Online

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June 26 – August 31, 2017
3 Graduate Credits

Course Description

Families encounter many challenges as the post-modern mentality of relationships confronts the traditional values of marriage and family. Christian families experience subtle tensions when trying to live out their Christian morals and values. This course explores various struggles Christians may face when attempting to practice Christian values in their marriages and families. The course will also provide a Biblical foundation for family life. You will be encouraged to reflect on your family of origin and to explore the keys to a Christian marriage and family life. The course will also equip you with the awareness and the understanding of common issues in Christian families.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe family and family relationship from Biblical and theological perspectives.
2. Explain how factors in your family of origin such as family dynamics and birth order influence and shape you.
3. Employ skills and practices that will strengthen family relationships in the context of marriage enrichment and parenting.
4. Explain the common challenges that families are facing today including pornography, addictions, family violence, infidelity, same-sex marriages, divorce, remarriages and blended families.

Required Reading

Books:

Balswick, Jack and Judith. *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014. (418 pages)

Chapman, Gary. *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*. Chicago, Northfield Publishing, 2015. (209 pages)

Cloud Henry and John Townsend. *Boundaries with kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children*. Michigan: Zondervan, 1998. (224 pages)

Richardson, Ronald W. *Family Ties that Bind: A self-help guide to change through family of origin therapy*. Bellingham: International Self-Counsel Press, 2011. (142 pages)

Thomas, Gary. *Sacred Marriage*. Michigan: Zondervan, 2000. (274 pages)

Course Requirements

This ten week course consists of self-directed learning as well as interactive learning amongst students. This course includes reflection, response, participation, interview, research and presentation. You are expected to read and learn the theoretical aspects of the course material through self-directed studies. Another significant part of your learning will take place through online interactive forums and field activities such as research and interviews. The course includes activities that aim to create hands-on experiences and to foster an interactive learning environment.

To complete this course, you will need to:

1. Complete all the required reading (20%)
2. Participate in a weekly online discussion forum (20%)
3. Conduct a personal family-of-origin project (20%)
4. Research and present an online presentation on an assigned challenging issue faced by today's families (40%)

1. Weekly Online Forum: Reading and Discussion Forums

Forums run for 6 weeks and are **due every Wednesday and Saturday**. Marks will be evaluated on both the level of participation in the forum (10%) and the quality of 2 selected postings (see Section C below: 10%).

Using concepts acquired from required reading, you are expected to answer the discussion question(s) prepared by the instructor as well as to interact with your peers through the postings on the forum. You should anticipate spending 3 to 5 hours each week on discussion forums. Saturday is the last day of the study week. We take Sundays off and begin the new week again on Mondays. The basic pattern for most weeks is as follows:

- A. Each week, you will be assigned pages from one or more of the course texts for online learning and interactions. *It is vital that you complete the required readings by Wednesday and submit an initial post by mid-night on Wednesdays.*

The assigned discussion questions will be related to the topic of the week. Initial posts are expected to be about 200 words.

- B. You have 3 days (Thursday to Saturday) to read posts on **all** discussion questions and make a substantial response by the mid-night on Saturday. *Both the initial post and the substantial response are **required** each week.*

Each missed post will result in a one percentage point drop of the final grade, unless you make arrangements prior to the deadline with your professor. *The Saturday immediately after the current discussion is the final day for timely posting.*

- C. **Only 2 initial posts will be graded.** Refer to the Course Schedule and Discussion questions and choose 2 topics that interest you the most. The 2 graded initial posts should be about 400 words instead of the normal weekly 200 words initial post. Grammar, spelling and writing style will also be graded.

Include the words “GRADABLE POST” at the top of post to distinguish between the graded initial posts and the regular weekly initial posts. The 2 graded initial posts will be 10 % of the student’s final grade (5 % each)

Expectations for weekly online participation

You are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities. Timely participation is essential to allow time for interaction between students. Failure to participate in a timely manner will result in a grade of zero for the activity. Participating in discussions and activities will involve about 3-5 hours per week, *excluding* reading time.

You are expected to submit their first post by midnight every Wednesday and respond to at least three different fellow students’ postings and questions by midnight on Saturday. you are required to integrate the readings in your posts. An initial posting should not exceed 200 words, while responses to the initial post should not exceed 150 words.

Evaluation of participation

Weekly grad	Description
10 = A	Exceptional in every respect. Display a deep integration between the readings and application. Provides a sustained and respectful challenge to the group.
9 = A-	Very good work: Organized, relevant, and deep contribution that makes reference to the readings and uses them in a way that is appropriate to the subject.
8 = B+	Good work – contributions and interactions with peers express complete thoughts and are well-supported.
7 = B	Generally good work, but with several areas of weakness – for example, in application, depth of comprehension, etc.
6 = B-	Minimally acceptable contribution. Requires improvement. See parameters.
5 = C+	Inadequate contribution. Requires improvement See parameters
0	Late work without prior approval from instructor.

The virtual conversations are designed to encourage you to reflect deeply and prayerfully on the assigned readings, as well as to interact with other students for deeper learning and discovery. Conversations will be evaluated based on the level of critical thinking, the integration of the material with life and biblical theology, the perspicuity and freshness of

the groups' contribution, and the continuity in the conversation (that is, that individuals read attentively and respond to what is said coherently). Posts should be concise and should not repeat previous points. All quotations must be correctly cited (author's last name and page number). Conversations should reflect a good comprehension of the reading/theory and how it is manifested in practice.

2. Family-of-origin Paper (20%, 1500 words)

This assignment is to encourage students to begin a journey of self-growth by looking at their own family of origin. The Scripture talks about the need to "leave his father and mother" (Gen 2:24) in order to start his/her own family. Using the guideline offered in Richardson's text, examine and identify the dynamics in your family and find ways to deal with the self-defeating patterns and/or unfinished business that may arise from your family of origin. After going through the steps suggested in Chapter 8 of Richardson's text, you are required to write a concise report of your findings, insights and learnings throughout the exploration process.

3. Research on an assigned challenging issue faced by today's families (20%, maximum 3000 words), give an online presentation (10%; around 30 min) and provide feedbacks to other students. (10%)

The purpose of this assignment is to help you to develop a deep understanding of one current issue challenging modern families. In addition to conducting thorough research on your selected issue, you are also expected to provide insightful responses to their classmates' presentations. Each student is required to present their learnings in a research paper and to give a creative online presentation.

Research topics include:

1. Violence in families
2. Depression and the family
3. Addictions and the family
4. Pornography and the family
5. Martial conflicts
6. Infidelity
7. Parenting
8. Divorce & Remarriage
9. Same sex couples
10. Blended family

The research paper should at least consist of three section:

- 1) A concise exploration of the topic (particularly its impacts on families);
- 2) Biblical and theological responses and integration;
- 3) Ways or suggestions to deal with the challenges; 3) Biblical & theological responses.

Please select 1st & 2nd preferences of research topics and send it to the professor for approval by the end of week 4.

For the online presentation, students are encouraged to use creative and multi-media modes of presentation such as the use of PowerPoint, video clips, etc. Students will have the opportunity to go through all the online presentations in week 7, and are required to provide feedbacks to each (around 100 words for each presentation) in the following week. Comments should be constructive and hopefully expand the scope of learning for all students.

Course Outline

- Topic 1: Biblical & theological foundation of families
- Topic 2: Exploring the contemporary family life
- Topic 3: Understanding your family of origin
- Topic 4: Biblical perspectives of the marriage relationship
- Topic 5: The essence of the marriage relationship: LOVE
- Topic 6: Biblical parenting: principles & practice
- Topic 7: Challenges of today's marriages & families

Week/Date	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 June 26-30	Introduction	Reading: Balswick, Jack and Judith. <i>The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home</i> . Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014. (Ch. 1-2) Online self-introduction posting
Week 2 July 3-7	Topic 1: Biblical & theological foundation of families	Reading: Balswick, Jack and Judith. <i>The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home</i> . Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014. (Ch. 3-4) Online posting & Response #1:
Week 3 July 10-14	Topic 2: Exploring the contemporary family life	Reading: Balswick, Jack and Judith. <i>The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home</i> . Michigan: Baker Academic, 2014. (Ch. 5-6) Online posting & Response #2:

<p>Week 4 July 17-21</p>	<p>Topic 3: Understanding your family of origin</p>	<p>Reading: Richardson, Ronald W. <i>Family Ties that Bind: A self-help guide to change through family of origin therapy.</i> Bellingham: International Self-Counsel Press, 2011.</p> <p>Online posting & Response #3:</p>
<p>Week 5 July 24-28</p>	<p>Topic 4: Biblical perspectives of the marriage relationship</p>	<p>Reading: Thomas, Gary. <i>Sacred Marriage.</i> Michigan: Zondervan, 2000.</p> <p>Online posting & Response #4:</p>
<p>Week 6 July 31 – August 4</p>	<p>Topic 5: The essence of the marriage relationship: LOVE</p>	<p>Reading: Chapman, Gary. <i>The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts.</i> Chicago, Northfield Publishing, 2015.</p> <p>Online posting & Response #5:</p> <p>DUE on Aug. 6: Family of Origin Paper (20%)</p>
<p>Week 7 August 7-11</p>	<p>Topic 6a: Biblical parenting: principles & practice</p>	<p>Reading: Cloud Henry and John Townsend. <i>Boundaries with kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children.</i> Michigan: Zondervan, 1998.</p>
<p>Week 8 August 14-18</p>	<p>Topic 6b: Biblical parenting: principles & practice</p>	<p>Preparation for Presentation</p> <p>Online posting & Response #6:</p>
<p>Week 9 August 21-25</p>	<p>Topic 7a: Challenges of today's marriages & families (Presentation)</p>	<p>Give a creative online presentation by August 25th (10%):</p>
<p>Week 10 August 27-31</p>	<p>Topic 7b: Challenges of today's marriages & families (Feedback)</p>	<p>Provide Feedback responses to each student by August 31 (10%)</p> <p>DUE on September 3rd : Research Paper (20%)</p>

Time Investment and Evaluation

Online Course: 10 weeks (15+ hours per week)

Total course workload requirements: 135 hours

Assignments	Time investment	Evaluation/Percentage
Reading (about 1,200 pages)	40 hours	20%
Online discussion participation	20 hours	10%
Online Gradable Postings (2 units)	10 hours	10%
Family of Origin Paper	20 hours	20%
Research paper	30 hours	20%
Presentation & Feedbacks	15 hours	20%
	135 hours	100%

Bibliography

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Johnson, Todd M. 2015. *Our Global Families : Christians Embracing Common Identity in a Changing World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan : Baker Academic,.

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Academic Policies

Please see the **Carey Academic Catalog** for more details:

<http://www.carey-edu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Academic-Catalog-2016-2017-FINAL.pdf>

Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions to fulfil degree requirements. This includes on-line webinars and/or live-streamed portions of courses.

Carey Grading Scale

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for details on the Carey grading scale.

Course Withdrawal Policy

A student who withdraws after the period for which tuition refunds are available within the first half of the course will receive a “W” on their transcript. Beyond those dates, they will receive an “F.”

Extensions

Extensions for course work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If an extension will make it impossible for the professor to submit the final grade no later than one month following the final assignment, the student must petition the Registrar’s Office. If the Registrar’s Office grants such a request, the final extension deadlines will be clearly established. Work granted an extension may receive a grade reduction of up to one-third of the final mark.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest and responsible scholarship. Students are expected to submit original work and give credit to other peoples' ideas. Academic dishonesty is acting in a manner to gain unearned academic credit. Examples of academic dishonesty are:

- Plagiarizing by misrepresenting the work of another person (in whole or in part) as a student’s own work or failing to give credit for either wording or ideas that belong to another.
- Submitting the same material for credit in more than one course (whether the earlier submission was at Carey or another institution).
- Using unauthorized aids of any sort in examinations, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized recording and use of class lectures.

Penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense. All students are responsible for knowing and practicing academic integrity and must become familiar with the plagiarism student resource at: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/>.

Gender Language

As language usage changes, the church must discern where its language must change in order to bear faithful witness to the gospel. Modern English usage has moved away from using masculine terms to refer to groups that include women. Using of such terms in worship, writing, or conversation miscommunicates the invitation of the gospel and the nature of the church. Assignments that don’t conform to the gender language policy will be returned to the student for resubmissions.

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for more details on this policy.