INTRODUCTION
The family represents the primary setting within which individuals acquire information concerning health, learn specific health-related behaviors, and function as caregivers to others. Because the family and the health and well-being of its constituent members are interconnected in fundamental ways, it is critical that we develop an understanding of this primary institution, the factors that impact on its form and functioning, and their relation to health and health-related concerns. Our general goals will be to examine the ways that families of various forms and functions provide for the mental and physical well-being of their members and interface with other health institutions and agencies. A primary emphasis of this course is on the concept of family diversity with respect to issues of ethnicity and cultural background, socioeconomic status (i.e., income, education), family headship and marital status, sexual orientation, and family extendedness. A concomitant focus will be on exploring the range of diversity that is present within defined subgroups, thereby giving some sense of the complexity of structure and function apparent within contemporary American families. Finally, a life course perspective is adopted for understanding the nature of the family and the dynamic forces (i.e., individual, family, culture and social change) that impinge upon it.

Readings for the course represent a combination of professional journal articles and chapters related to identified content areas, as well as writings from the popular press. The inclusion of writings from the popular press will foster awareness of the types of concerns and issues faced by contemporary families. A portion of this work is autobiographical in nature and conveys a personal viewpoint. It is anticipated that some of this work will be provocative with the intention of encouraging us to consider points of view that may be different from our own. This course provides a context within which participants can critically and actively explore a broad range of information concerning the nature of families in America. In order to accomplish this, we attempt to establish an environment in which individuals actively and thoughtfully participate in discussions and class presentations. Further, each person must commit to participating in the course in an active manner and define specific goals for their own professional development.
COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will examine families as a primary context for understanding health and health-related behaviors. Major topics include: 1) substantive and ethical overview of families and health, 2) historical perspectives on the family, 3) the impact of demographic trends on family structure and functioning, 4) family diversity with respect to social class, race/ethnicity and culture, and sexual orientation and their implications for understanding health phenomena models and theories of the family, 5) families as the context for socialization to health beliefs and practices, 6) the provision of family-based care, 7) health profiles of family members and their family roles, and 7) the history and current status of family-based skills, programs, and practice concepts.

The class format will include lectures and class discussion based on assigned readings, attendance at and participation in presentations made by speakers, and small group activities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/EXPECTED COMPETENCIES
The student will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss various models of the family generally and specifically as they relate to concepts of physical and mental health and health-related behaviors.

2. Identify and discuss significant demographic trends and their impact on families in relation to health status and health-related behaviors.

3. Identify current family forms and their prevalence and incidence for various population groups.

4. Understand the nature of social status group differences (i.e., ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status) in the structure and organization, and functions of families in relation to health and health-relevant behaviors.

5. Identify the major functions of the family as a context for primary health socialization (i.e., self-care, informal care and support, help-seeking behaviors and formal resource use).

6. Describe the role of family beliefs and norms in relation to health and health-related behaviors and their impact on health orientations.

7. Understand the position of families within a life course framework that highlights salient tasks and goals for various stages of family development.

8. Identify primary institutions and organizations (i.e., medical, educational, social service, public health) that interface with families and describe their orientation to issues of family health.
9. Identify models of public health practice that are targeted toward the family and describe their similarities and differences.

10. Identify behavioral and educational intervention models aimed at improving the health of families.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Class Participation and Activities**
The course meets once a week; Friday 9-12. Regular attendance and participation in discussions of the readings, speaker presentations, and group activities are required. Please contact me should you an emergency arise that prevents you from attending class.

**Article/Chapter Critiques**
It is a requirement of this course that assigned materials are read prior to class sessions. In order to facilitate your reading and learning experience, each class participant is required to complete two (2) critiques of the readings for the week and to organize and lead a class discussion or activity based on the readings and your critique. Format and guidelines for the article/chapter critiques will be provided. The critiques contribute 15% to your overall final grade.

**Assignments**
Each class participant will complete 3 assignments involving an examination of contemporary families or the health and human service agencies, organizations or programs that serve them. These assignments will be due at specified times during the term.

Assignment #1: Complete a family observational "study"
Assignment #2: Complete a family health genogram
Assignment #3: Review a family-based agency, organization, or service provider and make a class presentation.

**Family and Health Paper**
The purpose of the final paper is to research a particular topic of your choosing that is related to the broad area of families and health. The specific form for the paper is a review of the literature that is relevant to your topic, focusing on the health problem, condition, or health concern and its significance for the family. The paper should discuss the identified health problem, condition or health concern with specific attention to topics and issues that are covered in the course. Guidelines for the paper outline and final version will be provided. Successful completion of the final paper requires that you start work on it early and plan your time carefully to meet specified deadlines. Please inform me by Friday, September 19th of the topic that you have selected for the paper.
READINGS
Readings for the course are available as a coursepack from Dollar Bill Copying. A copy of the coursepack is available electronically through PHISA E-reserves and at the SPH library (hard copy).

GRADES
Grades in this class are based on:

1. Active participation in class activities and discussions (10% of grade)
2. Two article/chapter critiques and facilitated discussions (15% of grade)
2. Class assignments (A total of 45% of grade)
   Assignment #1: Family Observation-10%
   Assignment #2: Family Health Genogram-15%
   Assignment #3: Family-based Practice-20%
3. Final paper (30%)
TOPIC OUTLINE AND READINGS

SEPT. 5TH  INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF COURSE AND TOPIC AREAS

No readings required.

SEPT. 12TH  SUBSTANTIVE AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY-BASED HEALTH


SEPT. 19TH HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY LIFE; CONCEPTUAL MODELS OF THE FAMILY

Coontz, Stephanie (1992). Chapter 1: The way we wish we were: Defining the family crisis (pp. 8-22) and Chapter 2: "Leave It to Beaver" and "Ozzie and Harriet": American families in the 1950s (pp. 23-41) in The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap. New York: Basic Books.

Coontz, Stephanie (1997). Chapter 1: Getting past the sound bites: How history and sociology can help today’s families (pp. 11-32) and Chapter 2: What we really miss about the 1950s (pp. 33-50). In The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America’s Changing Families. New York: Basic Books.


SEPT. 26TH FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS: CURRENT PROFILES AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE


Coontz, Stephanie (1997). Chapter 3: Why working mothers are here to stay (pp. 51-75), Chapter 4: The future of marriage (pp. 77-95), and Chapter 5: Putting divorce in perspective (pp. 97-108). In *The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America’s Changing Families*. New York: Basic Books.


**OCT. 3RD DIVERSITY AMONG FAMILIES: RACE. ETHNICITY AND CULTURE**


**OCT. 10TH DIVERSITY AMONG FAMILIES: SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

Weston, Kath. (1991). Chapter 3: Coming out to "blood" relatives (pp. 43-75), Chapter 5: Families we choose (pp. 103-136). In Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship New York: Columbia University Press.


**OCT. 17TH** HEALTH-RELATED BEHAVIORS: NORMS FOR HEALTH, ILLNESS AND HEALTH PRACTICES, COMMUNICATION AND DECISION-MAKING


OCT. 24TH HEALTH OF THE FAMILY: INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, INFORMAL CAREGIVERS AND CARE RECIPIENTS


OCT. 31ST  MODELS OF FAMILY-BASED HEALTH PRACTICE


NOV. 7TH  FAMILY-BASED HEALTH: PROGRAMS AND SKILLS


**NOV. 14th**  CLASS PRESENTATIONS

**NOV. 21ST**  CLASS PRESENTATIONS

**NOV. 28TH**  THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

**DEC. 5TH**  COURSE SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS


