

# Psychology of Family Violence (Psyx 348) Syllabus

## Fall Session 2017

### Course Information

Meeting Location and Time: Education 214, Tuesday & Thursday 11:00am-12:20pm

Final Exam: Monday, December 18, 10:10am-12:10pm

Prerequisites: PSYX 100: Introduction to Psychology

Recommended: PSYX 222: Psychological Statistics and PSYX 340: Abnormal Psychology

### Instructor Information

Instructor: Jacob Bloch

Email: Jacob.Bloch@umontana.edu

Office: Skaggs Building 361

Office Hours: Wednesday 12:30pm-2:00pm & Thursday 12:30pm-2:00pm

### Required Materials

Miller-Perrin, C. L., Perrin, R. D., & Renzetti, C. M. (2018). *Violence and maltreatment in intimate relationships*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

### Course Description

This course will explore the theoretical explanations for the presence of violence in American families, as well as cover research and interventions in the areas of child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, dating violence, and elder abuse.

### Course Goals

1. This course is designed to increase students' understanding of the psychology of family violence as it occurs in our society.
2. Additionally, the course aims to explore theory and research that seeks to explain the occurrence of family violence.
3. Finally, in this course, we will also briefly explore interventions used for family violence.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand basic terminology, history, assessment, and scientific methods used to study family violence throughout the lifespan.
- Acquire a basic understanding of the theories surrounding the etiology of family violence.
- Acquire basic knowledge of the consequences related to the experience of family violence throughout the lifespan.
- Understand relationships between scientific research, public policy, and prevention/intervention methods for specific areas of family violence.
- Analyze current issues, myths, and controversies related to family violence research, theories, and interventions through course discussion and activities.
- Acquire critical thinking skills in interpreting research and demonstrate acquired knowledge through participation in course discussion and class activities.

### Course Disclaimer

Throughout the course we will be discussing and viewing very sensitive material that pertains to family violence. This may be difficult to hear or to watch. It is imperative to evaluate whether or not you are prepared to participate in this class. If not, please see me after class, and we can discuss your options. **Although you might feel prepared to take this course, the sensitive nature of the material might be**

**overwhelming at times.** Please see me after class if this is the case, and we can discuss your needs. IMPORTANT: This course is NOT designed to replace therapeutic work. Consequently, overly personal information should not be relayed in class discussion.

Finally, many topics about which individuals tend to feel very passionate will be discussed and debated throughout the course of the semester. IMPORTANT: I ask that you *remain respectful* of others' opinions, even if they do not match your own or are controversial.

## **Teaching Philosophy**

There are as many ways of teaching this course as there are instructors; accordingly, I teach with a certain set of biases and assumptions that it is important to make clear. First, I am biased toward *scientific* explanations of human behavior, those that are grounded in both theory and data, and I will focus primarily on these explanations throughout the course. Second, I have a bias in favor of processing the more controversial material through healthy class discussions. Therefore, throughout the course I will present material that may trigger certain personal opinions in each of you. I expect these discussions to be respectful, healthy, and open to everyone.

I will facilitate your learning of the material in class, online, in my office hours, and via email. Finally, I believe that students learn best through active engagement with the material. This is reflected in the fact that I supplement material from your text with films and guest speakers, I offer extra credit for going above and beyond reading the text for the course, and I request in-class discussion.

## **Course Guidelines and Policies**

### **Disability Modifications**

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406-243-2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

### **Academic Misconduct**

You are expected to adhere to the University's [student conduct code](#) with regard to academic integrity. All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the student conduct code.

### **Syllabus Changes**

I reserve the right to make any necessary changes or accommodations to this syllabus throughout the course. You will be notified during class of any changes. However, if you miss class it is your responsibility to gain any information regarding changes.

### **Communication**

If any relevant and/or important information arises between classes I will attempt to contact the entire class through the University of Montana email via Moodle, so please be aware. Additionally, feel free to email me with any questions, comments, or concerns you are having about the course.

### **Grading/Evaluation**

I will use rounding to your advantage in calculating final grades. For example, if you finish the course with a final point total of 89.5, I will round up to a 90 and your final grade will be an A. However, if you

finish with an 89.4, your grade will be rounded to an 89 and your final grade will be a B. Please feel free to talk to me about any questions regarding final grade calculations.

Your final grade for this course will consist of a total of 3 tests, in-class participation, a reflection journal, and extra credit. Your final exam is optional and may be used to replace your lowest exam grade.

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Point Value for Exams</u>	
90-100	A	Exam 1	80 pts
80-89	B	Exam 2	80 pts
70-79	C	Exam 3	80 pts
60-69	D	Final Exam (optional)	80 pts
0-59	F	In-Class Participation	45 pts
		Reflection Journal	15 pts
		Extra Credit	6 pts
		TOTAL :	306 Pts /3

### **Incompletes**

Departmental and university policies regarding incompletes do not allow changing “incomplete” grades after one year has passed since the “I” was granted.

### **Pass/No Pass**

For students taking this course P/NP, a P is a grade of A, B, or C. A NP is a grade of D or F.

### **Exams**

The exams will consist of multiple choice questions. The material covered on the exams will be from the readings, class lectures, discussion groups, films, and speakers for the classes prior to the test date. NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE ALLOWED WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION AND APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION (EMAIL OR IN PERSON). The final exam will be cumulative, covering all the material from the course.

However, the final is OPTIONAL. This means that if you are pleased with your status in this class by the last day of lecture then you do not have to take the final and you will not be penalized. However, if you take the final exam, and get a higher grade than the grade that you received on one of your previous exams, I will replace your lowest exam grade with your final exam grade. If you do not score better on the final than on any of your previous exam grades, you will not be penalized (your final exam grade will be, in effect, thrown out).

### **In-Class Participation**

Attendance and participation in the class are a fundamental aspect of the learning that will take place in this course. Class and group discussions and activities will focus on the integration and application of course topics. To gain a full perspective on the material we will be discussing, it is very important that you attend class. It is noted on the course schedule what chapters and topics will be discussed each day. You are expected to have read each chapter before it will be discussed. Learning just from the textbook will hinder your ability to gain all that this course offers, and may leave you insufficiently prepared for exams. Small group discussions will be held randomly and attendance during these discussions constitutes 15% of your final grade. Participation in these discussions will be on a credit no-credit basis. In addition, numerous film clips will be shown that pertain to the topics we are discussing. *Some of*

*these films can be upsetting and all students should be aware of their limits and leave, if necessary.* Missed classes may result in missing a small group discussion, which will mean you will not earn the check for that activity. Miss class at your own risk—there is no way to make up missed group discussions and activities.

### **Reflection Journal**

Because of the dismal nature of much of the material presented in this class there will be a 15-20 minute block set aside approximately once a week in which you will be asked to reflect on the course material. This exercise is to help you better understand and express your thoughts and feelings about this material. *It is NOT designed to replace therapeutic work.* These are your private thoughts about the material. I will not read any of it, unless given permission. I will only be asking you to submit them, so that I can check for completion. Submissions are due our last class day and will be returned to you on our last exam day. The reflection journals are worth 5% of your final grade.

**Due: 12/7/17**

### **Extra Credit**

Options #1 and #3 are worth 3 points each and may only be completed once. Option #2 will grant you 1 point for each 30-minute block of research participation. You may earn a total of 3 points via option #2. You may receive a maximum of 6 extra credit points through a combination of these 3 options. Written assignments should be written in 12 pt Times New Roman following APA conventions.

**Due: 12/12/2017.**

### **-LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED-**

1. Reflection Paper: Conduct a PsychINFO literature search on a topic of your choice that is related to family violence, select a peer-reviewed research article, and write a 2-page reflection. Include a summary of the article followed by an analysis and reaction (e.g. your thoughts about the study design, conclusions the researchers made, ideas for future studies, how the research applies to the course and addresses social problems, etc.). Include a copy of the article you are reviewing. See page 6 for supplemental information on PsychINFO. **Name the file:** "(Last Name), Reflection EC, (Name of Article You Reviewed), PSYX 348." For example, "Smith, Reflection EC, Psychological Abuse: A Variable Deserving Critical Attention in Domestic Violence, PSYX 348." **Turn in the assignment via e-mail.** I will send you a response to confirm that I have received it.

2. Grad. Student Research Volunteer: Sign up for and participate in a research project being conducted in the psychology department during the semester. Signing up for studies occurs via an online sign-up system. **To sign up, you will need to create an account online. When doing so, (1) be sure you use your umontana e-mail address as your username (so if your umontana e-mail address is [jane.doe@umontana.edu](mailto:jane.doe@umontana.edu), you would enter jane.doe); if you don't do this properly, you will not get the account information. Also, (2) be sure you enter the right course section number, or else you may not be properly credited.** Signing up and checking studies is easy – for directions on how to do this, please go to the following web page: <http://cas.umd.edu/psychology/Undergraduate/default.php> Then click on the link titled "SONA Research Participation."

Each experiment has a different name. Once you have participated in a specific experiment, you may not sign up for any other experiment with the same name. If you do, you will only receive credit for the first experiment.

Your credit will be tracked via the online system – you will be awarded credit for participation within 72 hours of participating by the researcher who was in charge of the study. If you check your credit and it has not been awarded in a timely fashion, **contact the experimenter listed as the contact on the study** to resolve this conflict.

At the end of the term, your instructor will automatically get your credits from the online system.

3. Media: you may read a book or watch a movie (other than those shown in class) where family violence is a central topic. To receive the 3 points, you will need to submit a 2-page review describing the role of family violence in the story, any notable myths or theories that are presented (debunked or perpetuated by the presentation), and how your understanding of family violence impacted your perspective while reading/watching. Would you recommend this book/movie to others? Why or why not? How did it impact you? What did you learn? Did it inspire you to become engaged in changing a particular social problem? **Name the file:** “(Last Name), Media EC, (Title of the Book or Movie), PSYX 348.” For example, “Smith, Media EC, The Color Purple, PSYX 348.” **Turn in the assignment via e-mail.** I will send you a response to confirm that I have received it.

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Chapters Covered*	Notes
Week 1	Thursday (Tr) – Aug 31	Syllabus	<b>Welcome! Introduction &amp; Myths</b>
Week 2	Tuesday (Tu) – Sep 5	1	<b>History &amp; Definitions</b>
	Tr – Sep 7	2	<b>Methods &amp; Perspectives</b>
Week 3	Tu – Sep 12	2	
	Tr – Sep 14	3	<b>Child Physical Abuse</b>
Week 4	Tu – Sep 19	3	<i>The Unquiet Life of Eli Creekmore</i>
	Tr – Sep 21	4	<b>Child Sexual Abuse</b>
Week 5	Tu – Sep 26	4	
	Tr – Sep 28	<b>EXAM DAY</b>	<i>EXAM 1</i> – chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 Bring Scantron & pencil
Week 6	Tu – Oct 3	5	<b>Child Neglect</b>
	Tr – Oct 5	5	
Week 7	Tu – Oct 10	6	<b>Child Psychological Maltreatment</b>
	Tr – Oct 12	6	
Week 8	Tu – Oct 17	7	<b>Abuse – Adolescent &amp; Emerging Adult Relationships</b>
	Tr – Oct 19	7	<i>Hunting Ground</i>
Week 9	Tu – Oct 24	7	YWCA – Guest Speaker
	Tr – Oct 26	8	<b>Partner Abuse for Adults – Victims</b>
Week 10	Tu – Oct 31	8	<i>Telling Amy’s Story</i>
	Tr – Nov 2	<b>EXAM DAY</b>	<i>EXAM 2</i> – chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 Bring Scantron & pencil
Week 11	Tu – Nov 7	9	<b>Partner Abuse of Adults - Perpetrators</b>
	Tr – Nov 9	9	CVA / Police – Guest Speaker

Week 12	Tu – Nov 14	10	<b><i>Abuse – People with Disability and the Elderly</i></b>
	Tr – Nov 16	<b>10</b>	<i>Complaints of a Dutiful Daughters</i>
Week 13	Tu – Nov 21	Ch. X on Moodle	<b>Understudied Populations</b>
	Tr – Nov 23	<b>No Class</b>	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
Week 14	Tu – Nov 28	Ch. X Moodle	<b>Understudied Populations</b>
	Tr – Nov 30	11	<b>Societal Response to VMIR</b>
Week 15	Tu – Dec 5	11	
	Tr – Dec 7	Special Topic	Legal System – Guest Speaker
Week 16	Tu – Dec 12	<b>EXAM DAY</b>	<i>EXAM 3</i> – chapters 9, 10, 11, and X Bring Scantron & pencil
FINAL	<b>MONDAY – DEC 18</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM DAY</b> <b>*10:10-12:10*</b>	<i>Final Exam</i> – Cumulative Optional Replaces Lowest Exam Grade Bring Scantron & Pencil

\*\*This schedule is tentative and adjustments will be made as needed. All changes will be announced in class, so attendance is in your best interest!

### Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q: Have there been any studies looking at the interaction between X and Y in Z context?  
A: A quick search of PsychINFO using search terms relevant to the course (e.g. intimate relationship violence, child abuse, etc.) will turn up ~160,000+ research articles. Sometimes questions arise which I can't or don't feel comfortable answering (e.g., I'm not going to guess and call it fact) and often these questions are great jumping off points for independent research. Additionally, studying family violence is a relatively new idea and there are many questions that are difficult and/or impossible to answer at this point.
- Q: What is PsychINFO?  
A: PsychINFO is an online tool for searching articles, book chapters, etc. in the field of psychology. It contains more than 4 million records from the 1800s to present, with some records that are even older. It is an ideal starting point when you want to delve deeper into a certain topic or have questions of the format, "how is X related to Y in Z context?"
- Q: How do I access PsychINFO?  
A: [Go to the Mansfield Library webpage](#) , select the "Databases" tab, then you can find PsychINFO under "P" or type "PSYCHINFO" in the search bar.
- Q: What if my search turns up too many articles?  
A: You may narrow your search by adding other constraints, such as the publication type or year, or by adding another keyword to your search. For example, "substance use" would yield thousands of articles, but adding the keyword "bipolar disorder" and/or "adolescent" would narrow this down considerably.

5. Q: What if I can't access the article I want to read online?

A: Although many articles are available online, some require going to a print copy of the article (e.g., physically finding a journal in the library). We don't have every journal in our library, so if there's one you want but can't get you may decide to choose keep looking or place an interlibrary loan request.