

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.

COURSE SYLLABUS

DBFA 410

CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT, RESEARCH AND EMERGING PARADIGMS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STUDIES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course looks at the role, function, and value placed on marriage in today's society. Remarriage issues, same-sex marriages, and contractual marriages are examined alongside traditional marriage to address the scope and breadth of relational issues to be understood in preparing to do competent Marriage and Family counseling in today's world.

RATIONALE

The traditional and biblical definition of family is being undermined and attacked like never before. Contemporary thought on marriage and family issues leads to what is commonly termed today as a “modern family,” one not defined by biological or marital status, but instead one defined by the culture and/or a subjective feeling of “being in love.” This course offers the student exposure to both sides of philosophical and pragmatic thought on these paradigms so the student can effectively debate and stand for the Judeo-Christian definition of the family, yet provide the research and biblical hermeneutic to back it up. The goal is to provide counselors, pastors, and marriage and family champions both a scientific and theological foundation to God’s design for the family and the personal and societal benefits of a healthy marriage and an involved mother and father within the home. This course is offered in an eight-week format and includes extensive readings, experiential observations, review papers, and interactions with other students via Discussion Board.

I. PREREQUISITE

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Blackboard [recommended browsers](#)
- D. Microsoft Office

IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify the prevalent and emerging thoughts and paradigms on marriage and family in the 21st century.
- B. Discuss from a balanced attitude of grace and truth, both sides of the redefinition of marriage.
- C. Explain a well-researched and biblically-based argument for traditional marriage between a man and woman.
- D. Identify the various scientific and spiritual benefits of marriage.
- E. Describe the components a God-centered, Christian home and its benefits on children and society at large.
- F. Identify 21st century challenges for raising a Godly family.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations notes.
- B. Course Requirements Checklist
After reading the Syllabus and Student Expectations, the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.
- C. Discussion Board Forums (4)
Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to provide a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. The student is required to answer questions with a minimum 250-word thread based on that particular module/week's audio and video resources. Students will also be required to post a minimum of two (2) replies of 100 words each to other students' threads. Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.
- D. 4 MAT Review (2)
The 4-MAT Book Review system is a way of responding to readings that requires the learner to interact with new ideas on several levels, including a Summary, Concrete Responses, a Reflection, and personal Application. Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.
- E. Movie Review (1)
The Movie Review assignment provides an opportunity to focus on a movie with a strong marital theme. Students must interact with the movie's content in a way that aids understanding of the impact of movies on the counseling process, including a Review, the Therapeutic Implications, and the Personal/Professional Implications of the movie. Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.

G. Mid-Week Reflection Journals (4)

The journal assignments provide a forum for the student to reflect on their studies in the course. This is a private reflection between the student and the professor related to their journey through the course. Reflecting on the course material, outside material, personal experience, and Biblical truth can create meaning and facilitate next steps for the student at course end.

VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (4 at 80 pts ea.)	320
Reflection Journal Entries (3 at 40 pts. ea.)	120
Final Reflection Journal (1 @ 80 pts.)	80
4 Mat Review (2 at 160 pts ea.)	320
Movie Review (1 at 160 pts ea.)	160
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 900–1010 B = 800–899 C = 700–799 D = 600–699 F = 0–599

C. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Accommodation Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport.

If you have a complaint related to disability discrimination or an accommodation that was not provided, you may contact ODAS or the Office of Equity and Compliance by phone at (434) 592-4999 or by email at equityandcompliance@liberty.edu. Click to see a full copy of Liberty's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or the [Student Disability Grievance Policy and Procedures](#).

VII. SUGGESTED READINGS

Corvino, J. & Gallagher, M. (2012). *Debating same-sex marriage*. Oxford University Press: New York, NY. ISBN: 978-0199756315

Deal, R. (2006). *The smart stepfamily: The seven steps to a healthy family*. Bethany House Publishers. ISBN: 978-0764212062

Dobson, J. (2004). *Marriage under fire: Why we must win this battle*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah. ISBN: 1-59052-431-4

House, H. W. (Ed.). (1990). *Divorce and remarriage: Four Christian views*. Grand Rapids, MI: Intervarsity Press Academic. ISBN: 978-0830812837

Sire, J. W. (2009). *The universe next door: A basic worldview catalog* (5th ed.). Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. ISBN: 0830838503

COURSE SCHEDULE

DBFA 410

Textbooks: Balswick, J. & Balswick, J. *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home* (2014).
 Waite, L. & Gallagher, M. *The Case for Marriage: Why Married People are Happier, Healthier and Better off Financially* (2000).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 1-2 Case for Marriage: ch. 1-3 Presentations (3)	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1	10 0 80
2	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 3-5 Case for Marriage: ch. 4-6 Presentations (3)	Movie Review Mid Week Reflection Journal #1	160 40
3	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 6-10 Presentations (3)	DB Forum 2	80
4	Case for Marriage: ch. 7-10 Presentations (2)	4 MAT Review #1 Mid Week Reflection Journal #2	160 40
5	Case for Marriage: ch. 11-13 Presentations (3)	DB Forum 3	80
6	Balswick/Balswick: ch. 13-14 Case for Marriage: ch. 14 Presentations (3)	4 MAT Review #2 Mid Week Reflection Journal #3	160 40
7	Balswick/Balswick: ch. 15-17 Presentations (2)	DB Forum 4	80
8	Balswick/Balswick ch. 18-20 Presentations (3)	Final Journal Summary #4	80
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

* Please refer to the Course Content for the week for specific presentation information

NOTE: Each course week (except Module/Week 1) begins on Tuesday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Monday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.