

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 620

RESEARCH AND EMERGING PARADIGMS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STUDIES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the causes of divorce, the psychological consequences for both children and parents, factors that challenge positive adjustment after a divorce, and strategies for successful remarriage. Other public policy and legislative issues related to marriage and the family are further examined, as well as legal, cultural, and theological implications for the 21st century. Ethical concerns and multicultural factors are also considered.

RATIONALE

The concept of marriage and family has changed significantly over the last 50 years. As Human Service Workers, we must be equipped to help member of the family unit. The goal of this course is to provide you with the tools to assist families, which will enable you to better serve and counsel more effectively I the local community contexts.

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. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

American Psychological Association. *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (Current ed). Washington, DC: Author.

Deal, R. (2014). *The smart stepfamily: The seven steps to a healthy family*. (Revised ed.) Bethany House Publishers. ISBN: 9780764212062.

House, H. W. (Ed.). (1990). *Divorce and remarriage: Four Christian views*. Grand Rapids, MI: Intervarsity Press Academic. ISBN: 9780830812837.

Sire, J. W. (2009). *The universe next door: A basic worldview catalog* (5th ed.). Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. ISBN: 9780830838509.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

- A. Computer with basic audio/video equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)

- C. Blackboard [recommended browsers](#)
- D. Microsoft Word

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- A. Identify the prevalent emerging thoughts and paradigms on marriage and family in the 21st century.
- B. Explain the redefinition of marriage providing a biblically-based argument for traditional marriage.
- C. Identify the various scientific and spiritual benefits of marriage.
- D. Describe the components a God-centered, Christian home and its benefits on children and society at large.
- E. Identify 21st century challenges for raising a Godly family including, but not limited to, stress, busyness, technology, single parenting, etc.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations/notes
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (4)

Each forum will require the student to answer questions with a minimum of 400 words based on that particular module/week's readings (Dr. Dobson's works and/or the core text), as well as video/audio content. The student will be required to post at least two (2) replies of 200 words each to other students' threads.

- 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, Reflection, and Personal Application. Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.

- E. *Debating Same-Sex Marriage* Reflection Paper

The student will read the required text *Debating Same-Sex Marriage*, then construct a well-written 3–5-page paper in current APA format (not including Title Page or References) addressing the topic. Use the outline below for the format of your paper.

- Section 1 – Summary: Summarize the author's position and argument on the subject of same-sex marriage.
- Section 2 – Response: Present your response to the author's argument addressing perceived strengths and weaknesses of the author's argument.

- Section 3 – Setting: Present an approach for addressing same-sex marriage in families, churches, and pastoral counseling settings.
- Section 4 – Conclusion: Provide a concise conclusion summarizing the subject of same sex marriage and the role of a pastoral counselor in addressing the topic.

Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.

F. The Importance of Marriage Paper

The student will address the importance of marriage in a well-written 3-5-page paper in current APA format (not including Title Page or References). Use the outline below for the format of your paper:

- Section 1 – History: Present a concise explanation of the role, purpose, and function of marriage from the lens of history.
- Section 2 – Personal Perspective: Present your personal understanding of the role, purpose, and function of marriage today.
- Section 3 – Current Challenges: Identify and address the current challenges confronting marriage today.
- Section 4 – Conclusion: Provide a concise conclusion summarizing the importance of marriage and the role of a pastoral counselor in addressing the topic.

Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.

G. Research Paper

The student will write a research paper that describes the prevalent attitudes, beliefs, paradigms, and contemporary thoughts related to one of the following topics. The paper should also outline how the components of the chosen philosophy contrast to the biblical purpose of marriage and family. The student can use the Balswick's text to help contrast the prevailing beliefs of the topic with a scriptural foundation. Finally, the paper should offer supporting research for how the prevailing topic is impacting marriages, children, and families.

- Feminism
- The Homosexual Agenda
- The 21st Century Sexual Revolution (access to pornography, etc.)
- Postmodern Views on Gender Roles
- The Concept of No Fault Divorce
- Declining Marriage Rates and the Impact on Children
- (Other topics with the professor's permission)

The paper should be 8–10 pages in length in current APA format (not including Title Page or References) with at least eight references from current sources (half must come from research/journal articles).

Please see the specific assignment instructions included with the course materials.

VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (4 at 100 pts. ea.)	400
4 MAT Review: Waite & Gallagher	100
<i>Debating Same Sex Marriage</i> Paper	100
The Importance of Marriage Paper	100
Research Paper	
Topic	50
Outline	50
Final	200
Total	1010

B. Scale

A = 940–1010 A- = 920–939 B+ = 900–919 B = 860–899 B- = 840–859
 C+ = 820–839 C = 780–819 C- = 760–779 D+ = 740–759 D = 700–739
 D- = 680–699 F = 0–679

D. Dual Relationship

The faculty is responsible to interact with counseling students in a supervisory capacity/role. As such, faculty may provide students professional principles, guidance, and recommendations as it relates to the context of the student-client setting. The faculty is responsible to avoid dual relationships with students such as entering a student-counselor or student-pastor relationship. Thus, the faculty does not provide personal counseling addressing student personal problems. If a faculty member perceives that a student is in need of personal or professional counseling, then that faculty member will recommend that the student pursue either pastoral or professional assistance from a counselor in their community.

E. Limits of Confidentiality

In the event of a student's disclosure, either verbally or in writing, of threat of serious or foreseeable harm to self or others, abuse or neglect of a minor, elderly or disabled person, or current involvement in criminal activity, the faculty, staff, administrator, or supervisor will take immediate action. This action may include, but is not limited to, immediate notification of appropriate state law enforcement or social services personnel, emergency contacts, and notification of the appropriate program chair or online dean. The incident and action taken will become part of the student's permanent record.

F. 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](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

DBFA 620

Textbooks: Balswick, J. & Balswick, J. *The family* (2014).
 Corvino, J. & Gallagher, M. *Debating same-sex marriage*. (2012).
 Waite, L. & Gallagher, M. *The case for marriage* (2002).

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
1	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 1–2 Case for Marriage: ch. 1–3 5 presentations	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1 - Thread	10 0 50
2	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 3–5 Case for Marriage: ch. 4–6 Corvino & Gallagher: ch.1–2 4 presentations 1 audio clip	Research Paper: Topic DB Forum 1 - Replies	50 50
3	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 6–10 Corvino & Gallagher: ch. 3–4 4 presentations 1 audio clip	The Importance of Marriage Paper DB Forum 2 - Thread	100 50
4	Case for Marriage: ch. 7–10 Corvino & Gallagher: ch. 5 5 presentations	Research Paper: Outline DB Forum 2 - Replies	50 50
5	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 11–12 Case for Marriage: ch. 11–13 4 presentations 3 audio clips	4 MAT Review DB Forum 3 - Thread	100 50
6	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 13–14 Case for Marriage: ch. 14 4 presentations 2 audio clips	<i>Debating Same Sex Marriage</i> Paper DB Forum 3 - Replies	100 50
7	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 15–17 5 presentations	DB Forum 4 – Thread Research Paper: Final	50 200

MODULE/ WEEK	READING & STUDY	ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS
8	Balswick & Balswick: ch. 18–20 4 presentations 1 audio clip	DB Forum 4 - Replies	50
TOTAL			1010

DB = Discussion Board

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