

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

DBMF 400 – MARRIAGE AND FAMILY SYSTEMS: FOUNDATIONS, MODELS AND TECHNIQUES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of marriage and family dynamics, specifically looking at various foundations and models for effective people helping. A wide range of marriage and family issues and definitions are examined. Ethical concerns and multicultural factors are also considered.

RATIONALE

There's never been a more dramatic attack on marriages and the family than we are currently experiencing today. In addition, there has never been a more difficult time to be a parent. The 21st century has brought with it a host of challenges fighting for the heart of the traditional family. Yet, research consistently shows the necessity of a stable family system to bring about healthy children and ultimately, healthy societies. It is important to present effective marriage and family models to help marriages and families lay a solid biblical foundation and navigate the difficult issues. This course is offered in an eight-week format and includes extensive readings, experiential observations, exams, a research paper, and interactions with other students via Discussion Board.

THEME SCRIPTURE

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” *Genesis 2:24* (NASB)

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. SUGGESTED READINGS

Clinton, T. & Trent, J. (2010). *The quick reference guide to marriage & family counseling*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Kostenberger, A. J. & Jones, D. W. (2010). *God, marriage, and family: Rebuilding the biblical foundation* (2nd ed.). Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R. & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and interventions*. (3rd ed.) New York, NY: W.W. Norton.

IV. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING

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

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CRITICAL COMPETENCIES

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

- A. Identify current trends, issues and threats to the family system in the 21st century.
- B. Define both “marriage” and “family” from a Judeo-Christian perspective rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- C. Describe the Judeo-Christian definition of marriage and family against the current cultural attempts to redefine it.
- D. Identify and describe to parents the necessary conditions for raising confident children.
- E. Identify issues that families face such as infertility/miscarriage, single parenting, family crises, postpartum depression, homosexuality, stepfamilies, technology and stress.
- F. Describe techniques for raising spiritually healthy and vibrant children.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

- A. **Textbook Readings and Lecture Presentations.**
- 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)

Each forum will require the student to answer questions with a minimum of 250 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 then be required to post at least two (2) replies of 150 words each to other students' threads in the same module/week. Instructions for the successful completion of this assignment can be found in Appendix A.

D. Movie Reviews (2)

The student is to complete 2 movie reviews by watching a movie of his/her choosing that has a strong marital/family theme. The student must then complete a 2-3 page critique of the movie as it relates to the topic of marriage (the page count does not include the title page). The student must pay particular attention to how the ideas presented in this movie might be used to give helpful advice to couples/parents in a marital/family setting. These assignments must have a title page with the student's name, the course number, the instructor's name, the assignment number (Movie Review 1), and the date. The reviews must be written in current APA format. Instructions for the successful completion of this assignment can be found in Appendix B.

E. 4MAT Book Critiques (2)

The student will complete two 4MAT papers during the course of his/her study. The reviews will be written using any two of the three assigned texts for this course. The critiques must be written in current APA format. Instructions for the successful completion of this assignment can be found in Appendix C.

VII. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES

A. Points

| | |
|---|------|
| Course Requirements Checklist | 10 |
| Discussion Board Forums (4 @ 50 pts. ea.) | 200 |
| Movie Reviews (2 @ 200 points each) | 400 |
| 4MAT Book Critiques (2 @ 200 each) | 400 |
| 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 Academic Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport

D. Dual Relationships

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.

Appendix A

Discussion Board Instructions

General Instructions/Guidelines

Submit your initial 250 word post into the designated Discussion Board Forum for your classmates to read and respond to. You will then need to read and respond to a minimum of two other students' posts. Be sure to use your readings/presentations to support your feedback on both your initial and response posts. The replies should be at least 150 words each. Initial post and replies need to be in APA format with citations.

This is to be a collegiate interaction amongst peers, giving scholarly feedback while withholding judgment or opinion. These interactions should demonstrate an ability to appraise, evaluate, and analyze constructs related to the discussion board question. Responses to others should help facilitate and enhance an educated discussion on the specific concepts addressed in the questions.

Initial posts are due by Friday at 11:59 p.m. (EST) of the assigned Modules/Weeks, and at least two replies are due by Monday at 11:59 p.s. (EST) of the assigned Modules/Weeks.

Appendix B

4MAT Book Critique Instructions

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. Please use the following format in preparing 4-MAT BOOK REVIEWS:

1. **Summary**: Summarize what you have read as if you were the author boiling down the book into 150 to 200 words. Prove that you comprehend the readings by writing a no-nonsense summary.
2. **Concrete responses**: In 200 to 250 words, relate a personal life episode that this book connected with in your own life experience. This is your chance to tell your story and make new ideas found in the book your own.
3. **Reflection**: What new questions pop up for you in response to what you have read? Keep a rough note sheet at hand as you read. Begin with questions like, "What would I like further information on?" Where do I not agree/strongly agree with the author?" or "What bothers me/excites me about this content?" This section should be at least 200 to 250 words.
4. **Application**: How does information found in this book influence how you are going to continue your own personal growth process? What actions or changes are you going to make in your life as a result of your learning? Your response here is a matter of

obedience first, questions later. Be precise in summarizing your action steps (limit these comments to about 150 to 200 words).

Appendix C

Movie Review Instructions

You will write a 2 – 3 page movie review in current APA format that focuses on a movie with a strong marital/family/parenting theme. You must interact with the movie's content in a way that helps you understand the impact of movies on the counseling process. Use the following format when completing your Movie Reviews – include the headings below in each of your reviews.

The Review - Give your impression of the movie with a brief plot summary. Resist the urge to retell the entire plot. Share the scenes that had either the greatest impact on your thinking or the most potential for use within the counseling relationship. What aspects should viewers look for if they have not seen the movie? What themes/scenes do you feel warrant further reflection and why?

Therapeutic Implications - Answer the following questions for this segment of the review:

- Having noted the scenes that warrant further reflection, how would you use these scenes to give advice to the couples/families struggling with the identified issues?
- Are you using this scene to make an emotional, cognitive, or spiritual connection?
- What is your rationale for choosing these scenes?

Personal/Professional Implications - Answer the following questions for this segment of the review:

- How did you connect with the movie on a personal level?
- How did it confirm or challenge some of your perceptions of marriage?
- How will you utilize this information (personally or professionally) to impact your delivery of counseling services?
- Were there any scenes that you strongly agreed/disagreed with on a personal level and why?

COURSE SCHEDULE

DBMF 400 – MARRIAGE AND FAMILY SYSTEMS: FOUNDATIONS, MODELS AND TECHNIQUES

| MODULE/ WEEK | READING & STUDY | ASSIGNMENTS | POINTS |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------|
| 1 | The Current Cultural Crisis: Rebuilding the Foundation/ Models and Techniques in Preschool Yrs MFHR – ch. 1-4, 6 Legacy: ch. 1-2 | Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1 | 10 0 50 |
| 2 | Marriage: The Foundation of Family Life/ Models and Techniques in Elementary Yrs MFHR – ch. 7-10 Legacy: ch. 3-4 | Movie Review # 1 | 200 |
| 3 | The Tie That Binds: Family in the OT & NT/ Models and Techniques in Teen and Young Adult Yrs MFHR – ch. 11, 14, 16-18 Legacy: ch. 5-6 | DB Forum 2 | 50 |
| 4 | Building Confidence in Kids Building Confidence: ch. 1-5 Legacy: ch. 7-8 | 4MAT # 1 | 200 |
| 5 | Building Confidence in Kids Building Confidence ch. 6-10 Legacy: ch. 9-10 | DB Forum 3 | 50 |
| 6 | Special Issues Related to the Family / Singleness and Homosexuality MFHR – ch. 25 Legacy: ch. 11-12 | Movie Review # 2 | 200 |
| 7 | Divorce and Remarriage / Single Parenting MFHR – ch. 15, 20, 22-23 Legacy: ch. 13 | DB Forum 4 | 50 |

| | | | |
|--------------|---|-----------------|-------------|
| 8 | Learning to be the Family of God/ Spiritual Development of Marriage and the Family MFHR – ch. 12-13 | 4MAT Review # 2 | 200 |
| TOTAL | | | 1010 |

DB = Discussion Board

NOTE: Each course week begins on Tuesday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Monday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET), except for Module/Week 8, which ends on **Friday** at 11:59 p.m. (ET).

VIDEO/AUDIO PRESENTATIONS:

Module 1: *Welcome and Course Introduction*
Dr. James Dobson and Ryan Dobson (**video presentation**)

Building a Family Legacy – DVD #1
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Module 2: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #2*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Module 3: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #3*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Parenting Newborns and Those Early Years – I & II
Dr. Meg Meeker (**Family Talk radio broadcasts**)

Module 4: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #4*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Parenting 101: From Discipline to Sexuality – I & II
Dr. Meg Meeker (**Family Talk radio broadcasts**)

Module 5: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #5*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Be There for Your Son – I & II
Dr. Steve Farrar (**Family Talk radio broadcasts**)

Module 6: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #6*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Beating the Baby Blues
Dr. Meg Meeker (**Family Talk radio broadcasts**)

Module 7: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #7*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

Module 8: *Building a Family Legacy – DVD #8*
Dr. James Dobson (**video presentation**)

The Seven Habits of a Healthy Marriage
Dr. Eric Scalise (**video presentation**)

90-SECOND VIDEO COMMENTARIES FROM DR. DOBSON:

Module 1: *The Foundation of Society*

Module 2: *Keys to a Healthy Marriage*

Module 3: *Time with Children*

Module 4: *How Dads Shape Kids*

Module 5: *Actions Lead to Consequences*

Module 6: *Keeping Grandparents Close*

Module 7: *Single Parent Blues*

Module 8: *Growing Up with Values*