

**From “Newlyweds” to Separate Beds**  
**FSOS 4150 - 006**  
**Summer 2007**  
**(1 Credit)**

Instructor: Brian Willoughby  
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Class Meetings: McNeal 144

Friday, June 13      8:30am – 4:55pm

Saturday, June 14      8:30am – 3:50pm

**Course Description**

This class will utilize the MTV show “Newlyweds” starring Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson to discuss marital relationships from a life course perspective. We will not be analyzing Nick and Jessica’s relationship as a whole (although we will discuss certain aspects of it) but will use their experiences caught on camera to discuss issues that influence all marriages and relationships such as conflict, communication, and relationship virtue. The class will mix discussion, lecture, video clips, and activities in order to help each student understand the complexities of marital relationships and how relationships change and grow over time.

It is expected that everyone in the class will be courteous and attentive when others share their thoughts, ideas, or experiences. Everyone has their own unique experiences and has something unique to offer the class. Everyone is expected to be tolerating of the diverse opinions expressed in the class.

**Course Objectives**

After completing this course you should:

1. Be able to identify how individual premarital factors influence later marital relationships.
2. Be able to articulate the core elements of marital relationships and how each one impacts the couple as a whole and individually.
3. Understand how a marriage evolves and changes over time.
4. Identify personal situations and factors that may impact your own future relationships.

## Assignments/Grading

### 1. Attendance

As a one credit summer class taught over the course of two days, attendance is mandatory and necessary to pass this class. Students are expected to attend all sessions on both days that class meets. At the end of each class session students will turn in a short sentence or two about what they thought about the material presented, personal insights, or questions. These reflections will constitute your attendance grade in the course. Attendance will be 10% of your final grade.

### 2. Mini Quizzes

Throughout the class students will take 4 mini quizzes (one before lunch and one at the end of each day). These quizzes will test knowledge discussed and covered in the sessions previous to the quiz and will not be cumulative. The purpose of the quizzes is to make sure you stay attentive and engaged in the material. Quiz scores will be 40% of your final grade

### 3. Final Paper

The majority of your grade in the class will come from a final paper. In this paper you will be expected to choose a premarital risk factor for divorce and discuss how it may impact your future relationships and marriage. The paper should be a minimum of 6 double-spaced pages. It is expected that you will include outside research articles you have found into your paper (you should include at least 3 peer-reviewed articles in your paper). The final paper is due July 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm. Papers should be dropped off in my mailbox (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of McNeal Hall, the floor under my office). Papers will be deducted 2 points for every day they are handed in late including weekend days. The paper will be 50% of your final grade.

## Course Evaluation

Attendance	10%	10 points
Quizzes	40%	40 points
Final Paper	50%	50 points
		<hr/>
		100 points

- A – 90 – 100% of total points
- B – 80 – 89% of total points
- C – 70 – 79% of total points
- D – 60 – 69% of total points

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University of Minnesota has a **uniform grading and transcript policy**, which can be accessed via link from the Family Social Science home page for courses: <http://fsos.che.umn.edu/courses.html>

The policy cites the following definitions of grades:

- A Achievement that is **outstanding** relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B Achievement that is **significantly above** the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C Achievement that **meets the course requirements** in every respect.
- D Achievement that is **worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements**.
- S achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to C- or better
- F Work that was completed but at a level of achievement **not worthy of credit**; or work that was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an incomplete.
- I Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., hospitalization) a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between the instructor and the student.

The Family Social Science instructors endorse and adhere to university policies regarding **academic misconduct, disability services, and sexual harassment**. Detailed information about these policies and others can be obtained from the following website:  
<http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/index/titles.cfm>

**Scholastic misconduct** is broadly defined as "any act that violates the right of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, (but is not necessarily limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student's work." Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.

**Disability Access:** It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations early in the semester. Further information is available from Disabilities Services (180 MacNamara Alumni Center); disability access statements may be found at: <http://ds.umn.edu/Students/Enrolled/> University policy prohibits **sexual harassment** as defined in the December 1998 policy statement, available at the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Questions or concerns about sexual harassment should be directed to this office, located in 419 Morrill Hall

**Day 1**

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Session 1</b>	<b>8:30 – 9:50</b>	<b>Introduction/What is this Class?</b>	
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>10:00 – 11:20</b>	<b>The Impact of Premarital Factors on Marriage</b>	<b>Mini-quiz 1</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>11:30 – 12:30</b>		
<b>Session 3</b>	<b>12:30 – 1:50</b>	<b>The Honeymoon Period</b>	
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>2:00 – 3:20</b>	<b>Taking a Life Course Perspective on Marriage</b>	
<b>Session 5</b>	<b>3:30 – 4:55</b>	<b>Gender and Role Expectations</b>	<b>Mini –quiz 2</b>

**Day 2**

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
<b>Session 6</b>	<b>8:30 – 9:50</b>	<b>Communication</b>	
<b>Session 7</b>	<b>10:00 – 11:20</b>	<b>Conflict Resolution</b>	<b>Mini-quiz 3</b>
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>11:30 – 12:30</b>		
<b>Session 8</b>	<b>12:30 – 1:50</b>	<b>Martial Virtue</b>	
<b>Session 9</b>	<b>2:00 – 3:20</b>	<b>Divorce and Marital Problems</b>	
<b>Session 10</b>	<b>3:30 – 3:50</b>	<b>Wrap-up</b>	<b>Mini quiz 4, paper due July 30<sup>th</sup> 5:00pm</b>