

# Capstone Seminar in Psychology: Psychology of the Family

## PSYC – 494

### Spring 2026

**Professor:** Jeremy Jewell, Ph.D.

**Class Location:** Alumni Hall 0401

**Office:** Alumni Hall, Room 0139

**Class Times:** Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 – 10:45 am

**Office Hours:** Tues/Thur 8:30 to 9:30 am (or preferably by appointment)

**Email:** [jejewel@siue.edu](mailto:jejewel@siue.edu)

#### **Course Description (3 credit hours)**

Psychology of the family is an undergraduate course that will focus primarily on the various theories regarding the development and psychological functioning of the family unity. The course will discuss the role and functioning of families from a developmental and systemic perspective. Additionally, the diversity of families and what is considered a “family” will be discussed.

#### **Required Textbooks**

Walsh, F. (2015). *Normal Family Processes, 4th Edition*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Each student is encouraged to purchase the APA Publication Manual (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). At the least, each team must have access to this text in order to help with their poster presentation.

#### **Course Format**

The information in the textbook will be supplemented by lecture during class. I assume that all students will be able to read the textbook and other readings on their own and I will not necessarily discuss all factual material presented in the text. However, students are responsible for all information that is assigned in the various readings. The purpose of this policy is to free class time so that the topics presented in the text may be analyzed and discussed in more depth. Classroom activities will range from lecture to group discussion and debate. It is my hope that all students will be able to participate in the learning process so that the material is made more personally meaningful and relevant to everyone.

#### **Guidelines**

In order to support this classroom environment, the following **guidelines** are in effect.

1. Be courteous and respect the opinions of others.
2. Be on time and do not leave class early unless there is an emergency.
3. **Cell phone use is prohibited during class, including texting.**
4. Do not engage in side conversations as this disrupts the rest of the class (except during group activities of course).
5. Class attendance is required. Please send me an email or call if you will not be in class (students are responsible for getting any assignments made during class if absent). Any student that is absent for more than 4 classes in a semester may be withdrawn from the course (with a grade of WR).
6. **The student code of conduct and academic code will be fully enforced.** Cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of F and a referral to the Provost. Late assignments will incur a 5% penalty for every day late.

## Learning Objectives

1. Students will understand the various theories regarding family development and functioning. Students will be able to identify the similarities and differences between these various theories.
2. Students will understand how family environment and functioning affects the psychological development of individual family members.
3. Students will understand the diversity that exists within what is considered a “family”, including the role of stepfamilies, blended families, single parent families, extended family members, etc.
4. Students will understand how family environment and functioning is impacted by the cultural context of the family.
5. Students will understand how various psychological problems in individual family members impact, and are impacted by, the family unit.
6. Determine and implement a study, including data analysis using SPSS and interpretation of statistical results.
7. Students will be able to determine appropriate analyses to be conducted for a variety of data types and research designs.
8. Students will write a full APA style paper using proper formatting and appropriate content.
9. Students will be able to present their research findings in the form of a poster and oral presentation.

## Grading

Students' grades will be determined by the following:

### *Individual Assignments*

**Exam 1 (100 points)**

**Exam 2 (100 points)**

**Final Exam (100 points)**

**Quizzes (10 points each x 8 = 80 points)**

**Final paper (100 points)**

*Extra credit will NOT be available. Do your best on the assignments in order to get the grade you want.*

### *Team Assignments*

Students will be assigned to their teams and team members should sit with each other during class. Teams will not be changed once assigned. The following grades will be determined by the weighting of peer evaluations. Each team member will anonymously rate all other members of their team at the end of the course. Each person will assign a portion of the 100% workload to each member (for example each member would receive 20% in a 5 member team). This score will then serve to amend each person's team grade. The resulting percentage for each member will serve as a multiplier for their team grade. In this way, team members will be encouraged to “pull their weight”. I reserve the right to override the peer evaluation score if it appears it is being used unfairly. **If you anticipate reducing the weight of a team member, you must have consulted me prior to the end of the semester regarding this situation and you must justify this in writing.**

**Research proposal (20 points)**

**In-class poster presentation (10 points)**

**Final poster presentation (100 points)**

Final grades are as follows:

- A (567+ points)
- B (504-566 points)
- C (441-503 points)
- D (378-440 points)
- F (below 378 points)

## Course Requirements

### *Exams*

Three exams will be given throughout the semester. The midterm exam will be 'in class' and cover material discussed up to that point while the second exam will be a 'take home' exam and will cover the topics of family psychology presented after the first exam. Material from the textbook, lecture, handouts, in-class activities, and films will be covered in the exams. **The final exam will occur on Thursday 5/7 from 8:00 am to 9:40 am** and will cover the content of your poster. Exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay items. Make-up exams will only be offered in case of an emergency and with a documented and acceptable excuse (e.g. doctor's note). Make-up exams will cover the same material but the format will be entirely essay questions. There will be no make-up exam offered for the final exam.

### *Quizzes*

A short quiz will be given on every class period that we have readings regarding psychology of the family. Items on the quiz will be drawn from reading material assigned for that day. The purpose of the quizzes is to reward students who have read and prepared for that day's class. A student's lowest quiz grade will be dropped for a total of 8 quizzes.

### *Final Paper*

**See description at end of syllabus.** The first half of the final paper is due on 3/17 at noon. This first half will consist of the introduction, methods, and references sections. **10 points will be deducted from the grade of the final paper if the first half of the paper is not submitted as previously described.** Students will be required to make edits to this first half when turning in their final paper at the end of the semester. All of the final paper is to be completed **individually, with no collaboration on the writing of the paper.**

### *Research Proposal*

Each team will complete a brief research proposal that includes the following 1) title of the research project 2) variables to be measured 3) instruments (and scores) used in the research and 4) procedures. Research proposals are typically 2-4 pages and should contain adequate detail. Each student will receive a team grade based on thoroughness and completion of the assignment.

### *IRB Application*

Each team will complete an IRB application for their research project and turn in to be reviewed by the IRB. Further details will be given in class. Each student will receive a team grade based on completion of the assignment.

### *In-class Poster Presentation*

Each team will display their poster (regular 8.5 x 11 paper only) in class, and will answer questions regarding their poster as posed by classmates. The purpose of this assignment is to get feedback from peers regarding the poster and layout, as well as practice answering questions

regarding their poster. Each student will receive a team grade based on completion of the assignment.

***Final Poster Presentation***

See description at end of syllabus.

**Course Schedule**

The following dates regarding course material will be followed generally. However, the dates for scheduled exams are firm. Students are expected to have read the assigned chapter **before** class.

DATE	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT
1/13		Introduction Review syllabus
1/15	Chpts. 1 & 2 (Walsh)	Understanding family normality
1/20	Chpt. 4 (Walsh)	Two parent families
1/22	Chpts. 16 (Walsh)	The family life cycle
1/27	Olson reading (2020)	Circumplex model of family functioning
1/29	Pgs. 1-26 & 71-90 (Patten) Walsh Chapter 21 ( <b>optional</b> )	Identifying research variables / Measuring family environment / SRMFF
2/3	Team meetings on your own – NO CLASS IN PERSON	
2/5		Personality measures and variables (IPIP)
2/10	Team meetings on your own – NO CLASS IN PERSON	
2/12		Tips on doing a literature search and review of research projects
2/17		Setting up a study / Regression
2/19		Regression continued
2/24		Review and team meetings
2/26		Midterm exam (in class) Research proposal and IRB application due
3/3		Basics of APA writing and meet with teams
3/5	Team meetings on your own – NO CLASS IN PERSON	
3/10	Spring Break	
3/12	Spring Break	
3/17	Chpt. 5 & 6 (Walsh)	Divorce and Single parenthood First half of final paper due
3/19	Chpts. 1 & 2 (Cronk)	Setting up a database in SPSS

3/24	Chpt. 7 (Walsh)	Stepfamilies
3/26	Chpts. 3 & 5 (Cronk)	Data entry and analysis
3/31		Data entry and analysis
4/2		Writing results and discussion
4/7	Team meetings on your own – NO CLASS IN PERSON	
4/9		Poster creation
4/14		Review of posters
4/16		Poster presentation to class
4/21		Final paper consultation
4/23	<b>SRA Poster Session (3:00 – 4:45 in the MUC 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)</b> in lieu of class	
4/28		Take Home Second Exam distributed
4/30	No class in person	Final paper due at midnight Department Assessment Test due
5/7	<b>Final Exam 8:00 am to 9:40 am!!</b> Second exam due (turn in via email)	

## **PSYC 494: Senior Assignment Class Project**

You will conduct a psychological study on the topic of family environment and/or family functioning with your team. You will read relevant literature, construct a clear purpose and rationale, as well as methods, test participants, analyze your data, and create a professional poster to present at the Senior Assignment Poster Session. Each individual will also write a separate (individual) APA Style paper on their team's project.

### **Content Guidelines**

1. Your project must be designed with a quantitative DV that reflects either a personality variable in some domain, or some measure of psychological functioning. All measures must be approved by the instructor. Note that you will use the PSY 111 subject pool, so you should choose a topic on which you can gather a wide range of expertise/knowledge/creativity from this pool. This is a TEAM project, and therefore it must be a topic approved by all team members. It is of utmost importance that you find a topic that interests you, as this will lead to greater motivation on your part.
2. Your project must be designed to investigate 3-4 predictor variables. We will go over major classes of PVs in class. Your choice of PVs must be theoretically or empirically motivated, and based on class and/or outside readings. It is highly encouraged that each team derive their PVs mostly from the Self-Report Measure of Family Functioning (Bloom & Naar, 1994). Other measures may be used with approval, however.

### **Methodological Guidelines**

1. Your DV and the majority of your PVs must be continuous in nature (unless I approve otherwise).
2. Be sure to collect age, gender, and ethnicity data as you'll need these for your Participants section
3. You will need to report the reliability of all of your measures, where applicable. This means that you should either find measures with established reliability, or (if you create your own measures), determine the reliability of the measures from your own data.

### **Poster Guidelines**

1. For a poster, APA Style should be followed in terms of your reference citations, use of numbers, sections, etc, but the formatting (font size, etc.) guidelines are not followed. Also, posters should be graphically rich and easy to read, thus being an idea place to use bullet points, headings & subheadings/subsections, etc, instead of lengthy text and full paragraphs.
2. Remember that this is a PROFESSIONAL presentation. Leave glitter, clip art, crazy colors, etc., for art projects. I'd stick to professional colors (black, navy, red, green, white, etc.).
3. Posters contain all elements of a paper (Abstract, Review of the Literature, Methods, Results, Discussion, References,), as well as a title, but you SHOULD create additional subsections (e.g., hypotheses, conclusions) if they seem relevant.
4. Provide examples of your stimuli/questionnaires, etc. You don't have to put the entire thing up there, just sample items/questions.
5. Use graphs to illustrate your results, although you can also use text and tables. Make sure that you label and title your graphs/tables.
6. Arrange information in columns, to be read one column at a time, from left to right
7. Use large font for good visibility: 18 pt. or larger
8. Make title text larger than body text, make poster title text largest
9. Use decoration to catch the eye, but never obscure content
10. Only use colored text if it improves visibility

11. Use at least 5 references
12. Your poster **SHOULD NOT LOOK LIKE A PAPER**. It should be heavy on graphics, examples, lists, bullet points, etc.

## **Paper guidelines**

Each student will write his/her own paper based on their research project. Papers are typically 11-15 pages, double spaced and including title page and references. With two exceptions, at no time may you look at, read, hear, etc., the paper of any of your teammates as the paper is an individual effort. These two exceptions are the methods and results sections. Because of the nature of the project, it makes sense that the methods and results sections will follow from the group's effort. Therefore, material in the methods and results section may be shared between group members, while any copied or paraphrased material in the introduction or discussion section of the paper is prohibited. If copied material is found in more than one teammates paper, it will likely result in charges of academic dishonesty, a referral to the provost, and an F in the course. **The final paper is due at midnight on 4/30 and must be uploaded to Black Board using the Turnitin "Final Paper" coursework option.** Your paper will be graded using the following template:

## Final Paper Rubric – Capstone in Psychology

<u>Pts earned</u>	<u>Pts Possible</u>	<b>APA Style</b>
_____	1	Title page (appropriate title, author, affiliation)
_____	1	Manuscript page header & headings
_____	3	Reference agreement
_____	3	References in text
_____	3	Reference list
_____	2	Numbers, abbreviations, spacing, tabs, margins
<b>Content</b>		
_____	8	<b>Abstract</b>
_____	22	<b>Introduction</b> General introduction Organization (transitions, flow, direction) Clarity of writing (easy to understand) Literature Review (content, relevance) Clear rationale/purpose for your study Hypothesis with PVs, DV
_____	16	<b>Method</b> Participants (#, age, gender, source, ethnicity) Instruments (descriptions of instruments, sources) Procedure (step-by-step)
_____	19	<b>Results</b> Data compilation (how PVs/DVs determined) Computed reliabilities Descriptive statistics (M & SD on all major variables) Inferential statistics (Regression) Use of headings and good writing to clarify
_____	22	<b>Discussion</b> Hypothesis-Results agreement Comparison with other literature and theory Explanation of results, Alternative explanations Limitations Implications, conclusion
_____		<b>Deductions</b> Grammar and spelling (-1 per mistake) Missing references (-5 for each reference under 10)
<hr/>		
_____	<b>100</b>	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>

**Department of Psychology SRA Policy:** All students at SIUE are required to do a Senior Assignment in order to graduate. This is the class in which you will work on this project. In order to pass the Senior Assignment requirement, you must 1) pass your Capstone course with a grade of C or better, 2) present a poster based on the project you completed in the Capstone class at the Department of Psychology's Senior Assignment Poster Session, 3) have your poster deemed acceptable by the faculty (i.e., a mean rating of 3 or above on the faculty evaluation form) and 4) fulfill any other senior assignment requirements stipulated by your professor. In the event that you do not fulfill all four requirements in a given semester, you will need to retake the Capstone course and complete all four requirements in a subsequent semester. For example, if you receive below a C in the Capstone course, even if your poster presentation is deemed acceptable by the faculty, you will fail to complete the senior assignment requirement and must retake Capstone in its entirety with a new project. If you receive a C or better in the Capstone course, but your poster presentation is deemed unacceptable by the faculty, this in most circumstances will result in having to retake Capstone in its entirety, unless the Capstone professor presents evidence to the contrary. In order to help you with this endeavor, you have several resources: your Capstone professor, the Senior Assignment Coordinator (Dr. Shimizu), and two Senior Assignment Graduate Assistants (Madison Fradelos and Haley Burton).

This semester's Senior Assignment Poster Session will take place on **Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 from 3:00 to 4:15, with a pinning ceremony to follow from 4:15 to 4:45, in the Morris University Center (MUC) Conference Center on the 2nd floor. Your attendance at this event is mandatory in order to pass Senior Assignment – please plan your schedule accordingly!** In the event that a medical emergency or other extenuating circumstance (e.g., jury duty, death in the family, religious obligation) might prevent you from attending the Senior Assignment poster session, you must seek approval from your capstone instructor immediately and provide documentation. Should you miss the poster session for this reason you may be required to complete an individual makeup assignment equivalent to the poster session.

Below are important dates and deadlines for you to remember before the SRA day.

1. There will be a mandatory in-class meeting with the SRA graduate assistants during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes (please check your syllabus for the date). Please make every attempt to be in class on that day. Should you be absent, you MUST contact the SRA graduate assistants as soon as possible for an individual appointment with them to hear this information.
2. ONE member of your group should email the SRA GAs ([psychsra@yahoo.com](mailto:psychsra@yahoo.com)) by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March (i.e., the week of March 16<sup>th</sup>) the following information.
  - a. Your Capstone professor's name
  - b. The title of your poster
  - c. The names of all other members of your group (PLEASE check spelling!)

Finally, you can reach Dr. Shimizu, the Senior Assignment Coordinator, at [mshimiz@siue.edu](mailto:mshimiz@siue.edu) or during his office hours (Mondays 12:00 – 12:50 pm).

## **The Senior Assignment Poster Session (and Practice Session)**

The following are questions that you should know the answers to for your poster. Also, you should be able to give a 3-4 minute “walk-through” of your poster. This will help you for your poster and poster session. Teams SHOULD NOT ‘assign’ certain sections of the poster to a particular teammate. Rather, each person on the team should have adequate knowledge of the entire poster.

### **Questions to Know of Your Poster**

#### **Background**

- What made you interested in this topic?
- What studies support your hypothesis/hypotheses? What studies go against it/them?

#### **Method**

- what are your predictor and criterion variables?
- what did participants in your study actually do?
- are your PVs between or within-subjects?

#### **Results**

- Why did you do the analyses/analysis you did? (why regression, etc.)
- Can you explain what you found without the numbers

#### **Discussion**

- do your results match your hypotheses?
- why do you think you got the results you did?
- what would you do differently if you could redo your study?
- what do your results mean for the real world? What are some implications/applications of your study?

#### **General**

- what have you learned by doing this project?
- what have you learned about the research process?

## Course Policies

Extra Credit: Note that in this class there will be no extra credit, so work hard throughout the semester to get the grade you want.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Notify the instructor of any needed accommodations for documented disabilities as soon as you can. "If you are a student with a disability that requires curricular or co-curricular accommodations, please go to Disability Support Services for coordination of these accommodations. All accommodations are individualized and require documentation of the functional impacts of the disability and severity. DSS is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270; you may contact them to make an appointment by calling (618) 650-3726 or sending an email to [disabilitysupport@siue.edu](mailto:disabilitysupport@siue.edu). Please visit the DSS website located online at [www.siue.edu/dss](http://www.siue.edu/dss) for more information. Also, according to SIUE safety and procedures policies, students with disabilities have the option of developing a written plan for evacuation in the unlikely event of an emergency that requires evacuation. If any student with a disability would like to develop a written evacuation plan for this class, contact the instructor."

Withdrawal from Classes and Incomplete Grade Policies: For the 5-week summer term, you may withdraw from a class with a W (no instructor signature) until the end of the day on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of class. Until the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> day of class, a student may only withdraw with the signature of the instructor, and will receive either a WP or a WF. When students discontinue attending class and do not withdraw from a course they may receive the grade of UW (Unauthorized Withdrawal). The grade of UW will only be given when a student's grade based on the course requirements is an F. The grade of UW is calculated as an F in a student's grade average. The granting of a grade of I (Incomplete) is not automatic and is available only in cases when a student has completed most of the work required for a class but is prevented by a medical or similar emergency from completing a small portion of the work not later than the end of the following semester. An I must be approved by the instructor with appropriate documentation provided by the student. If an instructor agrees to give a student an I, the instructor will fill out a Memorandum of Incomplete Grade to be kept with the student's records. If the work is not completed by the time specified on the Memorandum, the grade will be changed from I to F.

Academic Honesty: I trust you will be honest in this course. Cheating on exams, plagiarism on class assignments, and other forms of cheating will result in a grade of "F" in the course, a letter to the Provost, probable disciplinary probation or expulsion, and other sanctions will be provided to the fullest possible extent. Included below are descriptions of plagiarism as outlined by the Department of Psychology and the Undergraduate Catalog.

The Psychology Department's Policy on Plagiarism: "Plagiarism includes presenting someone else's words without quotation marks (even if you cite the source), presenting someone else's ideas without citing that source, or presenting one's own previous work as though it were new. When paraphrasing from another source or your own work, at the very least, the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Additionally, you should not submit a paper, or parts of a paper, written to fulfill the requirements of one class for the requirements in another class without prior approval of the current instructor and appropriate citation. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. Plagiarism is one type of academic misconduct described in SIUE's Student Academic Code (<http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>). University policy states that "Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the Provost." (<http://www.siue.edu/policies/1i6.shtml>). The University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University. To insure that you understand how to avoid plagiarism, we encourage you to review the information on plagiarism

provided on the Department of Psychology web page at <http://www.siu.edu/education/psychology/plagiarism.shtml>.”

The Undergraduate Catalog provides the following statement on plagiarism: “The University gives high priority to matters of academic ethics and abhors all types of cheating, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of representing the work of another as one’s own and may consist of copying, paraphrasing, or otherwise using written or oral work of another without proper acknowledgement of the source or presenting oral or written material prepared by another as one’s own. Instructors may impose sanctions for academic cheating in accordance with the Student Academic Code. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct beyond failure for an assignment and/or for a course is disciplinary probation.”

Department Writing Policy. “As a student in this course, you will be expected to display university-level writing, which includes completing course assignments that meet the following basic writing criteria. Specifically, all written assignments completed for this course should include:

- clear transitions from sentence to sentence and idea to idea (e.g., paper flows well);
- verb tense consistency;
- clear and unambiguous sentences and ideas;
- writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and major grammatical errors;
- properly formatted citations and references (if relevant).

This is by no means an exhaustive list of basic writing skills, but will give you an idea of what we are looking for in our papers. If you feel you need help with your writing, you are encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center on campus (<http://www.siu.edu/is/writing>) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students (<http://www.siu.edu/is/writing/resources.shtml>). If your graded written assignments fail to meet the basic writing requirements listed above (and any others found to be appropriate by your instructor), the instructor will stop the grading process and return the paper to you.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the Student Academic Code (3C2) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. The full text of the policy can be found here: <https://www.siu.edu/policies/3c2.shtml>.

### **Recordings of Class Content**

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness or quarantine. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course materials without the express permission of the instructor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University’s Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: <https://www.siu.edu/policies/3c1.shtml>.

APPLY TO ONE OF OUR PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAMS!

The SIUE Department of Psychology has three graduate programs:

**The Clinical Child and School Psychology graduate program has two tracks:**

**Clinical Child Psychology Track.** Students in this track receive a Master's degree in Clinical Child and School Psychology. About half of these students choose to then apply to a Doctoral program, and the other half choose to find a job right away. Students are prepared to work with families in private practice, hospitals, or community organizations. Our students have a very high success rate of getting into doctoral programs and finding jobs.

**School Psychology Track.** Students in this track receive a Master's degree in Clinical Child and School Psychology, and then they typically stay at SIUE to receive a Specialist Degree in School Psychology. These students have a very high success rate of finding employment as school psychologists. In fact, there is a national shortage of school psychologists. Some students later choose to also pursue a Doctoral degree. o See the VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQyRMRTYEDQ>

**The Clinical Psychology master's program** "is one of the strongest clinical training programs in the St. Louis region. It prepares students for careers in mental health organizations or further graduate education in a clinical PsyD or PhD program, a counseling PhD program, or related doctoral study. Many graduates obtain positions in community mental health centers, state hospitals, research institutions, private hospitals, and other agencies that provide psychological services." o See the VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQ3n6O7xaIE>

**The Industrial/Organizational Psychology master's program** "offers a rare blend of the scientist-practitioner model, requiring students to complete both a research-based thesis and required field hours of practicum...Research experience is directed at conceptualizing and solving applied organizational problems. Required practica, which are available throughout the St. Louis area, are oriented toward giving students applied, realistic skills and experiences to develop viable and effective performance in an organizational context." o See the VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5NfzF-b3K4>

You can learn more about all of these programs here:  
<https://www.siue.edu/education/psychology/graduate/>