

9-2013

## PSYX 348.01: Psychology of Family Violence

Cameo Borntrager

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Syllabus - **Psychology 348** – Fall 2013  
Psychology of Family Violence

Meeting Location and Times: JRH 202  
TR 11:10a – 12:30p

Final Exam: TBA

Instructor: Cameo Borntrager Phone: 406.243.5191  
Email: [cameo.borntrager@umontana.edu](mailto:cameo.borntrager@umontana.edu) Office: Skaggs Building 362  
Office Hours: W 1:30-3p, starting August 28. Otherwise by appointment (please email!)

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**Prerequisites:** PSYC 100: Introduction to Psychology  
Recommended: PSYC 220: Psychological Statistics & PSYC 330: Abnormal Psychology

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**Teaching Philosophy:**

As the science of psychology evolves, I feel it is important to foster critical thinking among my students – this is a skill that will continue to benefit you throughout your career. I do not view my students as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge; rather, I view you as active participants in your own academic successes, including overcoming obstacles and problem-solving challenges along your professional development. This also means that I am biased toward students who work hard at taking an active role in their own learning. I will facilitate your learning to the best of my ability, including through class material, discussions, office hours, readings, and via **email** (please check it!) I also attempt to provide a respectful, open-minded environment in which you can enjoy being a part – please play an active role in this!

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**Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:** In accordance with the University of Montana's mission to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, I am willing to provide necessary accommodations for students with disabilities. If you require any accommodations, please make them known me, and I will work with the office of Disability Services in adapting this course.

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**Academic Misconduct:** You are expected to adhere to the University's student conduct code with regard to academic integrity. *All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.*

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**Incompletes:** Departmental and university policies regarding incompletes do not allow changing “incomplete” grades after one year has passed since the “I” was granted. If you earn an incomplete, it is in your best interest to complete the work or retake the class well before the one year mark, however.

**Credit/No Credit:** For students taking this course CR/NCR, a CR is a grade of C or above. A NCR is a grade of C- or below.

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**Course Description:** This course will explore the theoretical explanations for the presence of violence in American families, as well as cover research and interventions in the areas of child physical and sexual abuse, child neglect and maltreatment, battering of women, courtship violence, and elder abuse. You will also be expected to complete a service learning project in order to aid in the prevention and intervention efforts of family violence in our community.

**Objectives:** This course is designed to increase students’ understanding of psychology of family violence as it occurs in our society. The course will be taught in a combination of lecture format, small group discussion, with the incorporation of various media. The objective is to explore the psychology of family violence, as well as to take an active role in its prevention and intervention. In doing so we will explore theory and research that seeks to explain its occurrence. We will also briefly explore the interventions for each problem area.

**Throughout the course we will be discussing and viewing sensitive material that pertains to family violence. This may be difficult to hear or to watch. It is imperative to evaluate whether or not you are prepared to participate in this class. If not, please see me after class, and we can discuss your options. Although you might feel prepared to take this course, the sensitive nature of the material might be overwhelming at times. Please see me after class if this is the case, and we can discuss your experience. You are also free to leave the classroom during material that may be too difficult for you. This course is NOT designed to replace therapeutic work. Consequently, overly personal information should not be relayed in class discussions.**

**Finally, many topics about which individuals tend to feel very passionate will be discussed and debated throughout the course of the semester. I ask that you remain respectful of others’ opinions, even if they do not match your own or are controversial.**

**Grading/** The grading scale for this course is based on a 10-point system:

## Evaluation:

99 – 93.5 = A  
93.4 – 90 = A-  
89 – 86.5 = B+  
86.4 – 83.5 = B  
83.4 – 80 = B-  
79 – 76.5 = C+  
76.4 – 73.5 = C  
73.4 – 70 = C-  
69 – 66.5 = D+  
66.4 – 63.5 = D  
63.4 – 60 = D-  
<60 = F

Your grade in this course will be computed from **three equally-weighted exams, 10 in-class discussions (+ reflection journal completion), and your service learning project.** All exams will be administered during class. No exams will be given before the scheduled date, and there will be no make-up exams except in the event of an *emergency* (with a note documenting the emergency) or *required university-sanctioned activity*. The exams will be half multiple choice questions, but there will also be a few short answer questions for each exam. The final exam will focus primarily on material from the last few classes, but all topics covered during the course are “fair game” on the final. Exams will make up 30% of your final grade. **Bring a clean *Psychology* NCS form and #2 pencil to each exam.**

## Grading/ Evaluation (continued):

Attendance and participation in the class will constitute the additional 30% of your course grade. Class group discussions and activities will focus on the integration and application of course topics. In order to gain a full perspective on the material we will be discussing, it is very important that you attend all classes. It is noted on the course schedule what chapters and topics will be discussed each day. You are expected to have read each chapter **before it will be discussed.** Learning just from the textbook, however, will hinder your ability to gain all that this course offers, and may leave you insufficiently prepared for the exams. The small group discussions will be held randomly, and **attendance during these discussions constitutes 20% of your final grade!** Participation in these discussions will be on a credit-no-credit basis. There is no way to make up missed group discussions and activities.

In addition, numerous film clips will be shown that pertain to the topics we are discussing. Some of these films can be upsetting and all students should be aware of their limits and leave if necessary.

At the completion of each major section, the class will engage in a **journaling exercise**. This exercise is mandatory, but I will only collect your entries for completion purposes toward your participation grade and will not read the content unless you specifically give me permission to do so (**10% of participation grade**). The purpose of the exercise is to allow for processing of the difficult material presented in class, as well as to reflect on how your ideas about family violence may be impacted by what you are learning throughout the course.

There will be a few extra credit opportunities offered throughout the class (see below). On-time correct completion of the opportunity will earn the assigned credit.

Finally, the remaining **40% of your grade** will consist of a **service learning project/poster**. For this project/poster, you will be assigned to a group of 6 to 8 students and plan and engage in an activity designed to address the problem of family violence. This may be a volunteer activity at a local agency, an information campaign, a donation drive, etc. Your poster will be a visual depiction of what you accomplished. You will attach documentation of your efforts by someone at the agency or otherwise involved in the activity to the back of your poster. This assignment is an opportunity for you to become more actively involved in preventing and/or intervening in family violence in our society – be creative! A note to consider: if you want to volunteer at an agency, the agency may require a background check. This may take some time, so it will be very important for you to start early! Also, most agencies are understaffed, overworked, and a bit chaotic – do not expect your plans to go smoothly – *plan for bumps in the road*.

Some ideas for service learning projects include: volunteer at the YWCA Word Program or Secret Seconds thrift store for 1 hour per week for 10 weeks; organize a fundraising activity for Watson's Children's Shelter; organize an effort to collect clothes and other needed items for the Domestic Violence Shelter; train as a victim advocate for Crime Victims Advocacy center; join and volunteer for a current initiative of the Missoula Family Violence Council; organize and put on a holiday party for foster children; make and sell shirts to raise money for Invisible Children; organize and implement a V-Day event (<http://www.vday.org/home>); a different, creative idea of your own! **See the calendar for the project/poster timeline.**

*Poster Presentation:* Students will dress professionally for the poster session. The last day of class, students will hang a visual display of their final projects in the Skaggs Building. Posters may be constructed in many ways. The point of the posters is to visually display what you did and what you discovered doing your action project. We will invite members of the

psychology department, the College of Arts and Sciences, the University community, and other members of the community at large who are interested and invested in the issue of stopping family violence. **Your group members will be available during the course of the class period to answer questions of any individuals who come by to view your poster.**

This project will be graded on the following aspects:

**1. The Project:** How creative was your project? What was the likely impact of your activity on the respective group/agency? What was your particular role in the project? How did your group members perceive your role and effort?

**2. The Poster:** How creative were you in displaying your project? Were you able to answer questions about the type of family violence/population you focused on?

**Extra Credit:** You will have the opportunity to gain 4 points of extra credit per extra credit opportunity (total of 8 points). Opportunities:

1. Conduct a PsycInfo literature search on a topic of your choice, but related to family violence. See below, following the class schedule, for details.
2. Sign up for and participate in a research project being conducted in the psychology department during the session. Return some evidence of your participation slip to me for full credit.

**Required Materials:** 1) Barnett, O., Miller-Perin, C., & Perrin, R. (2011). *Family violence across the lifespan: An introduction*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

2) Notebook for journaling exercises

**Supplemental Materials:** The website for this course is on Moodle. Here you will find a copy of this syllabus, any materials for extra readings, study guides for the exams, and a discussion board for posing/answering questions about the class. I will also post (on the discussion board) suggestions for optional readings if you are interested in further information about a particular topic. Finally, I will send out test grades via email using your 'codename' (more information provided in class). **PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL AND RESPOND TO EMAILS** as this is my primary avenue for communication outside of class.

**A few more things...**

1. I am taking part in the Pedagogy Project with the University of Montana. The Pedagogy Project is focused on expanding and improving upon one's teaching strategies through a structured, qualitative data collection process. What this means for my students: at some point during the semester you will be asked to take part in a 'small group analysis.' This is similar to a group discussion, which will be performed by another university faculty member, and will be focused on your class experiences. At least one class may also be observed by a faculty member who is also taking part in the Pedagogy Project. You will be provided updates as the Pedagogy Project progresses!
2. I reserve the right to make any necessary changes or accommodations to this syllabus throughout the semester. You will be notified during class of any changes. However, if you miss class it is your responsibility for gaining any information regarding changes.
3. If any relevant and/or important information arises between classes I will attempt to contact the entire class through the University of Montana email, so please be aware.
4. I expect that you will remain attentive and respectful throughout class. This includes turning off all cell phones, not speaking when others are speaking, and maintaining respect for everyone in the class at all times. **This also includes staying OFF social networking while in class!**
5. Please feel free to email or call me about any questions, comments, or concerns you are having about the course.

This schedule is a dream...when reality sets in we will make adjustments as needed. All changes will be announced in class, so attendance is in your best interest!

| Date                  | Topic and Associated Reading  |
|-----------------------|---|
| 08/27/13              | Introductions<br>Syllabus Review<br>Assign service learning project groups  |
| 08/29/13              | Begin Ch 1: What is 'family violence?'  |
| 09/03/13              | Ch 1 cont'd   |
| 09/05/13              | Ch 2: Research and Theories   |
| 09/10/13-             | NO CLASS: <i>Dr. Borntrager leading a training out of town</i>  |
| 09/12/13              | GROUP WORK: Service learning project organization & 1 pg proposal writing   |
| 09/17/13              | Ch 2 cont'd<br><b>PROJECT MUST BE APPROVED BY DR. BORINTRAGER</b>   |
| 09/19/13              | Ch 4: Child Physical Abuse  |
| 09/24/13-<br>09/26/13 | Ch 4 cont'd and <i>troubleshooting service learning project</i>   |
| 10/01/13              | GUEST LECTURER: <i>Dr. Bart Klika from the School of Social Work</i><br>TOPIC: <i>Prevention of child abuse and neglect</i> |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
|           | Whitaker, Lutzker, & Shelley (2005); Jones, Jones, Perry, & Barclay (2009)   |
| 10/03/13  | Ch 5: Child Sexual Abuse<br><b>EXTRA CREDIT #1 DUE</b>   |
| 10/08/13  | Ch 5 cont'd  |
| 10/10/13  | <b>EXAM 1</b><br>Ch 3: Child Neglect & Psychological Maltreatment  |
| 10/15/13- | Ch 3 cont'd  |
| 10/17/13  | Ch 6: Abused & Abusive Adolescents   |
| 10/22/13* | Cont'd Ch 6<br>Button, D., & Gealt, R. (2010). High risk behaviors among victims of sibling abuse. <i>Journal of Family Violence</i> , 25, 131-140.                        |
| 10/24/13  | Ch 7: Dating Violence  |
| 10/29/13  |  |
| 10/31/13  | Ch 7 cont'd  |
| 11/05/13  |  |
| 11/05/13  | <b>EXAM 2</b>  |
| 11/07/13  | Ch 8: IPV & Heterosexual Female Victims  |
| 11/12/13  | Ch 8 cont'd  |
| 11/14/13  | Ch 9: IPV & Heterosexual Male Abusers  |
| 11/19/13  | Ch 10: IPV in Understudied Populations<br><i>Troubleshooting service learning project</i>  |
| 11/21/13  | NO CLASS: <i>Dr. Borntrager attending the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies annual conference</i><br>GROUP WORK: Service learning project poster planning |
| 11/26/13* | Ch 10 cont'd<br>NY Times article on Sexual Assault in Indian Country   |
| 11/28/13  | NO CLASS: HOLIDAY  |
| 12/03/13  | Ch 12: Family Violence & the Elderly   |
| 12/05/13  | <b>Poster Exhibition</b><br><b>EXTRA CREDIT # 2 DUE</b>  |
| 12/11/13- | <b>FINAL EXAM WEEK</b>   |
| 12/13/13  |  |

\*Additional readings

**Extra Credit – PsycINFO – Due 10/3/13**  
**No late submissions will be accepted!**

For one extra credit opportunity (4 points), I am asking that you conduct a search on a topic of your choice (but related to the psychology of family violence, of course) in PsycINFO. After conducting this search, turn in answers to the following questions **via email or in hard copy in class in a Word document**:

1. What are the **search terms** that you used, and how many articles were retrieved for your search?



2. Select one article (preferably a journal article, which is indicated by the “publication type” field and is typically labeled “peer-reviewed journals”) and access the full text of the article. Print out the first page of the article, copy and paste it into another document, OR email the full-text article with the rest of this assignment to indicate that you were able to access the article and turn it in with your assignment.
3. Read this article and **write a brief (1 paragraph) summary** of the article you chose in lay language. DO NOT copy any part of the abstract; this, of course, would constitute plagiarism.
4. **List three different search terms** (or combinations of search terms) that you might use if you were to research this topic further

**Extra Credit – Research Participation – Due 12/5/13**  
**Last day of class!**

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By choosing to participate in a study here in the Psychology Department, you may receive 4 points of Extra Credit. E-mail or visit my office hours and we’ll get you in touch with the right person! Be sure to do this early in the semester as schedules for research participation may vary depending on the number of slots needed/available. *I cannot control when or how often research studies occur, however, so if no research opportunities are available then this extra credit is not an option.*

Frequently Asked Questions:

**1. What the heck is PsycINFO?**

PsycInfo is an online tool for searching articles, book chapters, etc. in the field of psychology.

**2. How do I access PsycINFO?**

You must be online on campus, or have your browser configured to work with a proxy server so that you can access campus resources off-campus. Go to <http://www.lib.umt.edu/>, select “Databases A to Z,” “P,” then you can find “PsycINFO.”

**3. What if my search turns up too many articles?**

Part of this assignment is figuring out how to do a “good” search in PsycINFO. You may narrow your search by adding other constraints, such as the publication type or year, or by adding another keyword to your search. For example, “substance use” would yield thousands of articles, but adding the keyword “bipolar disorder” would narrow this down considerably.

**4. What if I can’t access the article I want to read online?**

Although many articles are available online, some require going to a print copy of the article (e.g., actually FINDING a journal in the library, then OPENING it, and then perhaps PHOTOCOPYING the article so that you can read it. You can do it!). We don’t have every journal in our library, so if there’s one you want but can’t get here, then select another article.

**5. What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?**

The answer to this question is beyond the scope of this course.