

**JAMESTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**State University of New York**

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**INSTITUTIONAL COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Title:** Intro to Family Systems

**Course Abbreviation and Number:** HUS 1280

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Course Type:** Lecture

**Course Description:** Students will examine the systems theory approach to family organization and functioning, integrating the theory and beginning clinical interventions used in working with families. Topics include the family life cycle, family structure, assessment techniques, family crises, and parent-child interaction.

Prerequisite/Corequisite: ENG 1510.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and utilization of the theoretical approaches to family systems theory.
  2. Identify and explain various family dynamics to develop a knowledge base and appreciation of various factors and influences effecting family functioning, including poverty and culture.
  3. Apply critical thinking skills by analyzing and demonstrating family diagramming and assessment techniques such as genograms and ecomaps.
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**Topics Covered:**

- Exploring Family Structure
    - Defining “family”
    - Family Types
    - Historical perspectives of families
    - Family in modern society
      - Composition and role/responsibility
      - “Real” vs. “Ideal” family
      - Characteristics of families
      - Ethnic/Cultural considerations
  - Introduction to Family Systems Theory
    - Evolution of Family Systems Theory
    - Define Family Systems Theory and address therapeutic implications
    - Families comprised of individuals with individual needs and developmental tasks
      - Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
      - Erickson’s 8 Stages of Man
    - Family Life Cycle
    - Development of basic understanding/appreciation of family functioning and homeostasis
  - “open” vs. “closed” families
  - “exploded” families
  - Tools to explore and understand families
    - Use of Family Genogram
    - Social Networks; Use of Family Ecomap
  - Dynamics of Family Systems Theory
    - Individuation
    - Separation
    - Cut-offs
    - Triangulation
    - Family Rituals
    - Family Secrets
    - Multigenerational Effects
    - Birth Order/Sibling Relationships
    - Attribution/Equity Theory
    - Family Communication & Problem Solving
  - Contemporary Family Issues
    - Divorce
    - Single Parent Families
    - Step Families/Blended Families
    - Alcohol & Substance Abuse
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**Information for Students**

- Expectations of Students
  - [Civility Statement](#)
  - [Student Responsibility Statement](#)
  - [Academic Integrity Statement](#)
- [Accessibility Services](#)

Students who require accommodations to complete the requirements and expectations of this course because of a disability must make their accommodation requests to the Accessibility Services Coordinator.

- [Get Help: JCC & Community Resources](#)
- [Emergency Closing Procedures](#)

- Course grade is determined by the instructor based on a combination of factors, including but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, projects, and participation. Final course grade can be translated into a grade point value according to the following:

A=4.0	B+=3.5	B=3	C+=2.5	C=2	D+=1.5	D=1	F=0
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- Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, VA appointments) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these to the instructor.

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**Effective Date:** Fall 2021