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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM 2001-2002

NON-GENERAL EDUCATION PROCESS A

***DEADLINES:** Deadline dates for 2001/2002 submissions: Regular proposals: October 19, 2001 to be implemented in Fall 2002; Short-Term proposals: December 7, 2001 to be implemented in Fall, 2002; Regular proposals February 15, 2002 to be implemented in Spring, 2003; March 22, 2002 for short-term courses to be implemented in Spring 2003.

PROPOSAL TITLE: FAMILY COMMUNICATION 0661-392

SPONSOR(S): LORIN BASTEN ARNOLD + CINDY CORISON

DEPARTMENT: COMMUNICATION STUDIES

COLLEGE: COMMUNICATION

IF LAS CHECK ONE: History/Humanities Math/Sciences Social/Behavioral Sciences

Check one: Undergraduate Graduate

THE ATTACHED **NON-GEN-ED** PROPOSAL IS BEST DESCRIBED BY THE ITEM(S) CHECKED.

New non-gen-ed course

Short-term non-gen-ed course

Minor curricular changes (fewer than three) to:

- existing non-gen-ed course
- non-gen-ed degree requirements
- major
- minor, specialization, concentration, track, certificate program

DEPARTMENT
(Signature indicates approval)

Cynthia L. Corison 10/11/01

Dept. Curriculum Chair / Date

Cynthia L. Corison 10/15/01

Dept. Chairperson / Date

CADEMIC DEAN

Approved Not Approved Comments:

Dean's Signature/Date [Signature]
11-8-01

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Date of open hearing (if necessary) _____ Approved Not Approved _____

Comments:

signature of College Chair/Date: David Hill 2/14/02

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Date Received/Processed _____

Comments:

Curriculum Chair Signature Jamie M. Reeves Date Announced At Senate 11/29/02

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/PROVOST

Approved _____ Not Approved _____ If no, reasons are as follows:

Student Credit Hours _____ Faculty Load Hours _____ Equalized Credit Hours _____

Official Copy & Approval Sheet Filed (Date): _____ Executive VP/Provost Signature/Date Kellen J. Lee
1/12/02

REGISTRAR

Date Approved Course Description Received _____ Hegis Taxonomy & Course Number Assigned 0601:399

Registrar Signature/Date E.C. Egerholze 10/15/02

NOTIFICATION FORWARD

Senate Curriculum Committee Chairperson

Academic Dean(s)

CAP
Instit. Rep.
T 10/24/02

Department Chairpersons

Registrar

Sponsor(s)

(Signature)

Course Proposal

1. Details

- a) Course Title: Family Communication
- b) Sponsor: Lorin Basden Arnold, Assistant Professor,
and Cindy Corison, Chair, Communication Studies
Department, College of Communication
- c) Credit Hours: 3 credit hours
- d) Course Level: 300-level undergraduate
- e) Curricular Effect: As part of a curricular change in the Department of
Communication Studies, this class will be a
recommended course for students pursuing the
Interpersonal/Organizational track within
the department. The class will also have utility for
students pursuing degrees in the college of Liberal
Arts and Sciences.
- f) Prerequisites: Comp II and 60 Credit Hours Completed
(1501.112)
- g) Time/Scale of Implementation: Spring 2003 one section
- h) Resources: The Department of Communication Study currently has
faculty qualified to teach this course. The course should
not require new facilities or computer equipment.
Additional library acquisitions, via books, journals, and
databases may be required in time.

6. Course Description

Family Communication

Prerequisite: Comp II and Credit Hours Completed
(1501.112)

Family Communication will focus on how scholars and researchers study and understand the communication patterns and relationships in families. Family types, roles, and ongoing communication processes will be discussed. Students will be asked to consider a variety of perspectives and theories of family communication while comparing them to each other and to their own experiences as family members.

2. Rationale

The Department of Communication Studies is currently undergoing a reorganization of curriculum. The new curriculum will have two “tracks” or areas of emphasis that students may pursue. One of these tracks is a focus on interpersonal and organizational communication. In addition to basic courses in interpersonal and organizational communication, this track also needs courses that deal more specifically with particular interpersonal/organizational settings and issues. Family communication is such a class.

In the past two years, as part of the Senior Seminar in Communication Studies, family communication has been offered as a special topic. Students have responded well to this course and have indicated its utility in their understanding of the field of communication studies, as well as their own lives. Providing the class at the 300 level would allow other students, in addition to Communication Studies students, to get a grounding in the basics of family communication theory and research.

Family communication is an important aspect of the communication theory and research discipline. Of the top 10 schools for Communication Theory and Research (National Communication Association, 1996), seven offer courses with a principle focus on family communication (Michigan State University, 2001; Northwestern University, 2001; Purdue University, 2001; University of Arizona, 2001; University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001; University of Iowa, 2001; and University of Texas, Austin, 2001). This area also is represented as one of the major divisions of the National Communication Association.

In addition to having a strong academic and scholarly position in the field, the study of family communication offers pragmatic value to students. The over 600 results in a search on Amazon.com for “family communication,” and the popularity of authors such as Deborah Tannen, John Gottman, and John Gray, suggest that concern with becoming better communicators in parental and marital relationships is prominent in U.S. culture. Additionally, while not all of our students will go to graduate school, work in the film industry, be journalists, write poetry, etc., they will all engage in family communication in some form. The study of research and theory regarding family communication will allow students to assess the field, select information that has pragmatic utility for them in regard to understanding or improving family relationships, and utilize that material in their own lives.

Thus, for reasons both scholarly and pragmatic, a family communication course is a good addition to the offerings in the Communication Studies department and the College of Communication. Due to our focus on interpersonal and relational communication research and theory, the Department of Communication Studies, within the College of Communication, offers the best resources for this course and this track. The department possesses the faculty needed to teach this course and anticipates further strengthening of this aspect of the faculty. Although this course is best served by positioning within the Department of Communication Studies, we are excited about the potential of discussion and exchange of ideas with other programs (such as Sociology, Psychology, and Women’s Studies) in the creation of this course.

3. Essence of the Course

a) Objectives

The proposed course has three primary objectives

- (i) To facilitate an in-depth discussion of the various approaches to research and theory in the field of family communication.
- (ii) To engage students in the process of reading, understanding, synthesizing, and applying family communication theory and research.
- (iii) To help students develop critical thinking skills as they assess and evaluate family communication theory and research.

b) Topical Outline

This course offers the following components:

- (i) **Course Introduction:** Students will be introduced to the field of family communication and the study will be positioned within the scholarly and pragmatic realms.
- (ii) **Families as Human Systems:** The course will give students a background in the systems approach to family interaction and explore the ways scholars position the relationship between family processes and communication. Various systems perspectives may be considered including: Cybernetic Theory, the Ecosystem Approach, the Dialectic Perspective, Social Construction Theory, and the Narrative Perspective.
- (iii) **Communication in Families:** Various aspects of the communication process in families will be discussed and studied. Topics to be considered include: courtship, parenting, roles, socialization, conflict, ritual, intimacy, power, and decision making
- (iv) **Family and Culture:** Consideration will be given to the ways in which families reproduce and are affected by larger cultural paradigms. Within this discussion, family types and configurations will also be addressed. Some of the issues to be discussed may include: race, ethnicity, gender, divorce, step-parenting, gay/lesbian parenting, adoption, socioeconomics, and disability.
- (v) **Family Communication about Sensitive Issues:** Because families are primary in the segment of life designated as “private,” communication about topics of a sensitive nature is of paramount importance. This course will consider the findings of research related to

communication about such issues. Topics that may be addressed include: drug and alcohol use and abuse, sexuality, family abuse, religion, and media use.

c) Course Assignments

Course assignments will reflect the Department of Communication Studies' focus on critical thinking, research, and writing. As such, students will be asked to complete various assignments including:

(i) Examinations that test students' understanding of the theories and their ability to synthesize, critically analyze, and utilize the information.

(ii) A research paper project that will consist of several stages or steps that will reflect the writing/research process engaged in by communication scholars. This project will allow students to develop their understanding of a particular aspect of family communication with more depth. They will be asked to engage in primary research as well as critical analysis of literature.

(iii) Reflection/respondent papers and projects that require students to read course texts with depth and responsivity.

(iv) Classroom exercises and participation designed to promote collaborative learning among students and strengthen critical thinking abilities.

d) Sample Course Outline

Week 1	Go over the syllabus, etc. Do "get to know you" exercises. Discuss paper assignment in greater detail Discuss the general study of family communication
Week 2-5	Discuss the systems approach to family communication Consider various perspectives including Cybernetic Theory, Social Construction Theory, the Ecosystems Approach, Dialectic Theory, and Narrative Perspective
Week 6-8	Discuss courtship and marriage research. Address intimacy concepts as well as issues of spousal abuse and divorce. Include information related to the role of gender in this process as well as race and ethnicity. Consider the impact of gay/lesbian courtship and marriage and the research that has/has not been conducted in that area.
Week 9-11	Discuss research on parenting. Consider family additions via birth, adoption, fostercare, and step-parenting. Address the issue of socialization in the family. Address concepts related to power and discipline. Look at

the aging process and how it affects family relationships. Consider the impact of sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomics, disability, step-parenting, and divorce on parenting practices.

- Week 12-14 Discuss communication about sensitive topics. Topics to be addressed include sexuality, religion, drug/alcohol abuse, and media use.
- Week 15 Provide course wrap-up and discuss student research.

e) Evaluation and Grading Procedures

The final course grades will be based on faculty evaluation of student work throughout the duration of the class. Course participation grades will be assessed on student activity during general classroom discussion, group exercises, and student presentations.

f) Course Evaluation

The proposed course will be evaluated using the College of Communication student evaluation. Student response will provide information concerning the quality and suitability of course content, teaching effectiveness, assignments, and course texts. In addition, faculty members in the Department of Communication Studies will engage in ongoing evaluation of the course via observation in the classroom, syllabus review, and discussions during faculty meetings.

4. Results of Consultations

- a) Consultants: Susan T. Taber, Chair, Elementary/Early Childhood Education; Tony Sommo, Acting Chair, Sociology; Janet Moore Lindman, Coordinator, Women's Studies Program; Monica Greco, Chair, Psychology; D. Mark Meyers, Chair, Secondary Education/Foundations of Education; Carl Hausman, Chair, Journalism
- b) Consultants' Written Statements: See Attached documents

5. Additional Supporting Information

a) Recommended Texts

Texts recommended for this class would be based primarily in family communication theory and research. Texts should take an in-depth look at the major theories in the field. Texts that are solely intended as behavioral guides for families or self-help texts would not be appropriate for this course. Some suggested texts that would fulfill the course goals include:

Galvin, K. M., & Brommel, B. J. (2000). *Family communication: Cohesion and change*, 5th ed. New York: Longman.

Olson, D. H., & DeFrain, J. (2000). *Marriage and the family: Diversity and strengths*, 3rd ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Turner, L. H., & West, R. (1998). *Perspectives on family communication*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Yerby, J., Buerkel-Rothfuss, N., & Bochner, A. P. (1998). *Understanding family communication*, 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

b) Additional Course Resources

(Note: I have included some books in this list that may be good primary texts if an updated edition became available)

Adams, D. W., Corr, C. A., Davies, B., Deveau, E., et al. (1999). Children, adolescents, and death: Myths, realities, and challenges. *Death Studies*, 23 (5), 443-463.

Arliss, L. P. (1993). *Contemporary family communication: Messages and meanings*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Blake, S. M., Simpkin, L., Ledsy, R., Perkins, C., & Calabrese, J. M. (2001). Effects of a parent-child communications intervention on young adolescents' risk for early onset of sexual intercourse. *Family Planning Perspectives, 33* (2), 52-61.
- Casper, L., & Bianchi, S. (2001). *Continuity and change in the American family: Anchoring the future*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Caughlin, J. P., Golish, T. D., Olson, L. N., Sargent, J. E., et al. (2000). Intrafamily secrets in various family configurations: A communication boundary management perspective. *Communication Studies, 51* (2), 116-124.
- Chambers, D. (2001). *Representing the family*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Dore, M. M., Lee, J. M. (1999). The role of parent training with abusive and neglectful parents. *Family Relations, 48* (3), 313-325.
- Duncan, R. D. (1999). Maltreatment by parents and peers: The relationship between child abuse, bully victimization, and psychological distress. *Child Maltreatment, 4* (1), 45-55.
- Eleweke, C. J., & Rodda, M. (2000). Factors contributing to parents' selection of a communication mode to use with their deaf children. *American Annals of the Deaf, 145* (4), 375-383.
- Ennett, S. T., Bauman, K. E., Foshee, V. A., Pemberton, M, & Hicks, K. A. (2001). Parent-child communication about adolescent tobacco and alcohol use: What do parents say and does it affect youth behavior? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 63* (1), 48-52.
- Ford, L. A., Ray, E. B., & Ellis, B. H. (1999). Translating scholarship on intrafamilial sexual abuse: The utility of a dialectical perspective for adult survivors. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 27* (2), 139-158.
- Greenstein, T. (2001). *Methods of family research*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Hutson, T. L. (2000). The social ecology of marriage and other: Intimate unions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62* (2), 298-320.
- Jaccard, J., Dittus, P. J., & Gordon, V. V. (2000). Parent-teen communication about premarital sex: Factors associated with the extent of communication. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 15* (2), 187-208.
- Jordan, T. R., Price, J. H., & Fitzgerald, S. (2000). Rural parents' communication with their teen-agers about sexual issues. *The Journal of School Health, 70*, 338-344.

- Kesner, J. E., & McKenry, P. C. (2001). Single parenthood and social competence in children of color. *Families in Society*, 82 (2), 136-144.
- Laing, R. D. (1972). *The politics of the family and other essays*. New York: Random House.
- Lehr, S. T., DiIorio, C., Dudley, W. N., & Lipana, J. A. (2000). The relationship between parent-adolescent communication and safer sex behaviors in college students. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 6 (2), 180-196.
- Lindahl, K. M., Malik, N. M. (1999). Observations of marital conflict and power: Relations with parenting in the triad. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61 (2), 320-330.
- Martin, M. M., Anderson, C. M., Mottet, T. P. (1999). Perceived understanding and self-disclosure in the stepparent-stepchild relationship. *The Journal of Psychology*, 133 (3), 280-290.
- McAdoo, H. P. (Ed.) (1999). *Family ethnicity: Strength in diversity*, 2nd ed. Newbury Park: Sage.
- McLoyd, V. M., Cauce, A. M., Takeuchi, D., & Wilson, L. (2000). Marital processes and parental socialization in families of color: A decade review of research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62 (4), 1070-1093.
- Meschke, L. L., Bartholomae, S., & Zentall, S. R. (2000). Adolescent sexuality and parent-adolescent processes: Promoting healthy teen choices. *Family Relations*, 49 (2), 143-155.
- Morman, M. T., & Floyd, K. (1999). Affectionate communication between fathers and young adult sons: Individual- and relational-level correlates. *Communication Studies*, 50 (4), 294-309.
- Noller, P., Fitzpatrick, M.A. (1993). *Communication in family relationships*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Olsen, S. F., Marshall, E. S., Mandleco, B. L., Allred, K. W., et al. (1999). Support, communication, and hardiness in families with children with disabilities. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 5 (3), 275-291.
- Pearson, J. C. (1993). *Communication in the family: Seeking satisfaction in changing times*, 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Pearson, J. C. (1995). *Marriage after mourning: The secrets of surviving couples*.

Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt.

- Rodgers, K. B. (1999). Parenting processes related to sexual risk-taking behaviors of adolescent males and females. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61 (1), 99-109.
- Smart, C., Neale, B., & Wade, A. (2001). *The changing experience of childhood: Families and divorce*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Socha, T. J., & Stamp, G. H. (1995). *Parents, children, and communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Stone, E. (1988). *Black sheep and kissing cousins: How our family stories shape us*. New York: Penguin.
- Thompson, R. A., & Amato, P. R. (1999). *The postdivorce family: Children, parenting, and society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Vogl-Bauer, S., Kalbfleisch, P. J., & Beatty, M. J. (1999). Perceived equity, satisfaction, and relational maintenance strategies in parent-adolescent dyads. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 28 (1), 27-49.
- von der Lippe, A. L. (2000). Family factors in the ego development of adolescent girls. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29 (3), 373-393.
- Walsh, A., Parker, E., Cushing, A. (1999). "How am I gonna answer this one?": A discourse analysis of fathers' accounts of providing sexuality education for young sons. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 8 (2), 103-114.
- Watt, D., & White, J. M. (1999). Computers and the family life: A family development perspective. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 30 (1), 1-15.
- Whitaker, D. J., & Miller, K. S. (2000). Parent-adolescent discussions about sex and condoms: Impact on peer influences of sexual risk behavior. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15 (2), 251-273.
- White, F. A. (2000). Relationship of family socialization processes to adolescent moral thought. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 140 (1), 75-91.

Sources Noted

Michigan State University. (2001). *Michigan State University*. <<http://www.msu.edu/home/>> (2001, June 18).

National Communication Association. (1996). A study of the reputations of doctoral programs in communication. *National Communication Association Website*. <<http://www.natcom.org/ComProg/GPDHTML/Scripts/reputationstudy.htm>> (2001, June 15).

National Communication Association. (1998). How Americans Communicate. *National Communication Association Website*. <http://www.natcom.org/research/Poll/how_americans_communicate.htm> (2001, June 15).

Northwestern University. (2001). *Northwestern University*. <<http://www.northwestern.edu/>> (2001, June 19).

Purdue University. (2001). *Purdue University*. <<http://www.purdue.edu/>> 2001, June 19).

University of Arizona. (2001) *University of Arizona*. <<http://www.arizona.edu>> (2001, June 19).

University of California, Santa Barbara. (2001) *University of California, Santa Barbara*. <<http://www.ucsb.edu/>> (2001, June 19).

University of Iowa. (2001). *University of Iowa*. <<http://www.uiowa.edu/>> (2001, June 19).

University of Texas at Austin. (2001) *University of Texas at Austin*. <<http://www.utexas.edu/>> (2001, June 18).



*Elementary/Early Childhood Education
College of Education*

October 11, 2001

Lorin Basden Arnold
Department of Communication Studies
Bozorth Hall

Dear Dr. Arnold,

I have read the course proposal for a new course in Family Communication. I believe it will be a valuable course for our Elementary / Early Childhood Education students if they have room in their programs for an elective course.

Thank you for bringing this course proposal to our attention.

Sincerely,

Susan T. Taber, Ph.D.
Chair, Elementary / Early Childhood Education



Sociology

From: Tony Sommo, Acting Chair Sociology
To: Lorin Basden Arnold Communication Studies
Re: Family Communication

I've reviewed your proposal for the upper-level Family Communication course. As part of the interpersonal/organizational track, the first section, will be offered in the spring of 2003. Your approach to family communication covers a wide intellectual berth. You have selected salient content areas--a systems approach, processes of communication, cultural effects on the family and sensitive or private issues--which, I think, fill out a fifteen-week course with more than enough substance to spare. This exhaustive approach to the topic, integrating theory, application and primary student research nicely complements our own lower-level course on the family. The subject matter of the sociology of the family is contingent upon who is teaching the course. For example, Dr. Hutter uses his own textbook and emphasizes a cross-cultural approach to family processes and structures. Others limit themselves to the family as an institution in the United States focusing not only on the changing role of the family in American life but also on the third content area of your course which examines how the overriding culture affects issues in the family.

Somewhere down the road your course should fit very well into the new, interdisciplinary, coordinate majors specialization in early childhood (P-3) which will be offered by elementary education starting this spring, 2002.

Students become more involved if they participate directly in the learning process. Judging from your proposal, classroom exercises and an ongoing research paper will engender critical thinking especially if feedback is given by both faculty and students alike.

The sociology department approves of this new exciting and academically challenging addition to the curriculum. We look forward to consulting with you on co-teaching a hybrid or merger of the two Families in the near future.

Date: 10-1-01



History Department

October 1, 2001

TO: Members of the Curriculum Committee

FROM: Janet Moore Lindman, Coordinator, Women's Studies Program

RE: New Course Proposal, "Family Communication"

I am writing to support the course proposal, "Family Communication" put forth by Lorin Basden Arnold and the Department of Communication Studies. As part of a curricular revision to create a new track in the area of interpersonal and organizational communication, this course will provide students access to current research and theory on family communication. This course will engage in analysis of the family in various permutations and from many angles, including the impact of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, and disability on family relations. Such a focus will be of definite interest to students in the Women's Studies concentration. I heartily endorse the adoption of this new course, "Family Communication," in the College of Communication.



Department of Psychology

To: Lorin Basden Arnold, Department of Communication Studies

From: Monica Greco, Chair Department of Psychology

Re: Proposed Course in Family Communication

Date: September 17, 2001

Upon reviewing the new course proposal for Family Communication, the Psychology Department supports its inclusion in the undergraduate course offerings. While a course in the theory and research of communication within families does not directly impact Psychology majors, it would be an appropriate elective for those Psychology majors wishing to enter into family and marital counseling careers. Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal and if we can be of any additional assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.



Department of Secondary Education/ Foundations of Education

October 4, 2001

Lorin Basden Arnold
Department of Communication Studies
Bozarth Hall

Dear Dr. Arnold,

Thank you for asking for our department's consultation on your curriculum proposal for a course in family communication. I agree that this course would be an excellent elective opportunity for students in our certification program. We support this proposal without reservation.

Families are a vital aspect in education, one that is often neglected, unfortunately, by classroom teachers. The proposed course of study would allow prospective teachers the opportunity to learn the background and methods for family communication while hopefully allow them to connect these materials to their own instructional methodology.

The only difficulty for this course might be in the opportunity for secondary education students to take the course. Since our program is not a major, our students are adding our program to another major program of study. This does not leave room for open electives. We can make the recommendation to take the course, but we cannot predict the number of students who will enroll.

Thank you again for consulting us.

Sincerely,

D. Mark Meyers
Chairperson
Department of Secondary Education/Foundations of Education



Date: Oct. 10, 2001
To: Dr. Cynthia Corison
From: Carl Hausman, Chair, Journalism and Creative Writing
Re: Family Communication

I find significant merit in your proposal for a course in family communication.

While I am no expert in the field, I can assert that such a course would be valuable for the study of communication in general because so much “opinion leader” theory, which seems to dominate communication-effects models in various communication fields, must by its nature focus on the family. And while I can’t speak directly for fields such as advertising, I do know that much persuasion research deals with opinion formation in the family unit.

From my perspective as a journalist, I can attest to the fact that with the exception of recent war developments, there is no more prevalent issue than family-related stories. (In fact, I note how many war-related features deal with family issues.)

I would wholeheartedly recommend that journalism students consider a course such as this.